
Client Informed Consent – Minor

Welcome to Soul Care, the professional counseling ministry at Bridgeway Christian Church. This Informed Consent is provided to ensure each parent/guardian and minor client are well informed of the counseling experience. We strongly encourage you to take the time to thoroughly read through this form. We have found that understanding fully this information increases the enrichment of the overall counseling experience.

To begin counseling, the parent/guardian of a minor client is required to sign this form and submit to the minor client's counselor at the beginning of the first session. Please note that if the counseling participant is an adult, or participating in a counseling group, there is a separate Informed Consent to be completed.

Treating a Minor

The undersigned is the responsible parent or legal guardian and hereby authorizes Soul Care at Bridgeway Christian Church and its staff to provide counseling to the minor stated below. Therapists generally require the consent of both parents prior to providing any services to a minor. If any questions arise regarding the authority of the minor's representative to give consent for psychotherapy, the therapist will require that representative to submit supporting legal documentation, such as a custody order, prior to the commencement of services.

A minor client will benefit most from psychotherapy when his/her parents, guardians, or other caregivers are supportive of the therapeutic process.

Parents/guardians should be aware that the therapist is not a conduit of information from the minor. Psychotherapy can only be effective if there is a trusting and confidential relationship between the therapist and the minor client. Although the parents/guardians can expect to be kept up to date as the minor client's progress in therapy, he/she will typically not be privy to detailed discussions between the therapist and the minor client. However, parents/guardians can expect to be informed in the event of any serious concerns the therapist might have regarding the safety or well-being of the minor client.

The therapist will not make any recommendations as to custody or visitation regarding minor clients. Furthermore, the therapist will make efforts to be uninvolved in any custody disputes between minor client's parents.

Parents/guardians should also be aware that some young children benefit from shorter sessions, rather than the full 50-minute session. In either case, the parent/guardian recognizes that the transportation to and from, and the supervision of the children before and after session are the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian, furthermore releasing Soul Care and Bridgeway Christian Church from any liability in these areas.

Confidentiality

All information disseminated within this counseling setting is held in the strictest confidence and will not be revealed to any other person or agency without your written permission. If for some reason there is a need to share information in your record with third party, such as another health care professional, you will first be consulted and asked to sign a Release of Information Form authorizing transfer of the information.

There are, however, exceptions to this confidentiality, as is mandated by California law, requiring professional counselors to disclose information to other persons or agencies without your expressed permission or consent. These situations include:

- Harm to Self
 - If a client expresses intention and imminence to commit bodily harm to one's self, such as suicide, we are mandated by law to inform necessary individuals and/or agencies to prevent harm.
- Harm to Others
 - If a client is gravely disabled, threatens bodily harm or death to another person, we are required to inform the intended person, as well as appropriate law enforcement agencies.

- Suspected Child Abuse and/or Elder/Dependent Abuse
 - If there is sufficient information presented within a counselor’s professional duties to suspect that a child, dependent, or elderly person is being, or has been, neglected or abused either physically, sexually, or emotionally, the counselor is required to report the “reasonable suspicion” of such abuse to appropriate authorities.
- Exceptions to “Privilege” in a court proceeding
 - These exceptions include:
 - A court of law issues a legitimate subpoena;
 - Counseling is court ordered by a judge, to a specific counseling agency, or to a specific counselor;
 - The client is a “ward of the court” (i.e., foster care, probation); or
 - A client has made his or her mental health a condition of a lawsuit.
 - If any of these situations are present, we are required by law to release the information specifically requested by the court system.

HIPAA and Confidentiality

Soul Care is dedicated to maintaining the privacy of your Personal Health Information (PHI) as part of providing professional care. We are also required by law to keep your information private. Upon the start of your counseling experience, you will be provided with a Notice of Privacy Practices outlining in detail how your medical information is stored, shared with and without your permission (please also see above), our commitment to you, and your rights, per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Should you misplace this notice, it is also posted on our website at www.bridgeway.church/soul-care/. Your signature at the end of this Informed Consent acknowledges that you have received the notice and agree to our Privacy Practices.

Files are kept securely locked, physically and electronically, always. The clinical supervisor periodically reviews files to make sure they are ethically and legally sufficient.

Most counselors are willing to maintain contact with you via text, email, or other electronic means. Although we cannot be certain that this information will not be intercepted, we will do our part to protect your confidentiality. Your signature at the end of this Informed Consent indicates that you understand the risk of communicating with your counselor by electronic means, you still wish to do so, and consent to electronic communication with your counselor.

Counselors and psychotherapists within Soul Care may also attend Bridgeway church services on the weekend or be involved in areas of ministry. Should you see your counselor around the church campus, please know that he/she will take great care in protecting your confidentiality. He/she will only be able to greet you if you desire and initiate the connection. Your counselor may discuss this with you in session to determine your preference should the situation arise to best serve you.

To ensure quality of care and coordinated services across the Care and Compassion Department of Bridgeway Christian Church, your information may be shared with the Department Manager and/or Administrative Liaison for the sole purpose of providing increased resources and/or services, with the continuation of HIPAA compliant practices as described above. Should a need arise for additional services within the department during your counseling experience, your counselor will collaborate with you prior to this release. Your signature on this form provides consent to this release of information solely to expedite services for you.

Our Counselors

Soul Care is a training facility for clinicians seeking California State licensure as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), and/or a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW). MFT Trainees/Interns, PCC Trainees/Interns, and Associate Social Workers (ASW) are either a volunteer or employee of Bridgeway Christian Church. He or she function in this role as therapist and are strictly under the jurisdictions of the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Each counselor has extensive training and competency in providing psychotherapy services for individuals, couples, and families.

Counselors are supervised weekly by a licensed therapist and Board of Behavioral Sciences certified clinical supervisor. During these supervision meetings, your information may be discussed between counselors and with the supervisor to gain understanding and build skill and knowledge related to psychotherapy. We greatly value your confidentiality and will always handle your information respectfully and honorably, without disclosing any identifying information.

Counseling Services

Soul Care offers professional counseling and psychotherapy services. We are a ministry of care, nurture, healing, guidance, and restoration for all. All counselors are equipped to provide a unique integration of psychotherapy and biblical principles, as desired by the client(s). By signing this form, you are acknowledging that Soul Care and its counselors aim to offer a biblical therapeutic context in which clinical services, filled with God's grace and mercy, are uniquely tailored to your individual journey.

Fees and Payment

Soul Care strives to offer quality counseling at an affordable fee. The financial fee for a 50-minute professional counseling session is based upon a sliding scale, determined by monthly gross household income and ability to pay.

Monthly gross income includes all forms of household income such as pension, disability, unemployment, stipends, commission, salary, etc. Payment of fees will be due at each session by cash, check, or credit card. Clients paying with cash or check will receive a \$3 discount on the established session fee. There is a \$10 fee for any returned check.

I understand that my session fee per 50-minute session is \$_____.

Currently Soul Care does not bill any form of insurance for counseling services. Third-party payers may be accepted, upon discretion of Soul Care. However, if for any reason, the third-party payer does not pay for the services provided, the respective client will be responsible for the payments.

Soul Care does not ethically allow balances to grow beyond two unpaid sessions. Should you have a balance of two sessions, you will be required to clear the balance prior to resuming counseling.

Cancellations

Cancellations must be made at least 24-hours in advance from appointment start time. If an appointment is canceled or missed without 24-hour notice, you will be charged your session fee for that missed session and the session will count against your limited number of sessions, if applicable.

Your Counseling Experience

Counseling and psychotherapy are unique and highly individualized experiences. It is an opportunity to learn about yourself, your relationships, and the world around you. Most people seeking counseling are hoping for improvement in at least one area of his or her life and this is possible through dedication and consistent counseling sessions. Although you may want immediate relief, it is common for symptoms to get worse before they get better. Remember that it may have taken time for your struggles to develop, and it may also take time for you to begin to feel better.

Counseling involves change, which may feel threatening, not only to you, but also to those people close to you. The prospect of giving up old habits, no matter how destructive or painful, can often make you feel very vulnerable. At the same time, counseling can aid you in discovering tools and techniques, which can be utilized to improve the quality of your life and relationships. As the person involved in this process, you have the right to ask your counselor questions about his/her professional experience, background and theoretical orientation.

Please ask for any clarification as needed for any item outlined above.

_____ Minor Client Printed Name	_____ Minor Client Signature	_____ Date
_____ Parent/Guardian Printed Name	_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Date
_____ Parent/Guardian Printed Name	_____ Parent/Guardian Signature	_____ Date
_____ Counselor Printed Name	_____ Counselor Signature	_____ Date