

Limitation on Confidentiality when Providing Therapy to Partners in a Relationship

There are slightly different expectations and limits about confidentiality in relationship therapy than there are in individual therapy. When I agree to treat a relationship I consider that relationship to be the client. For instance, if there is a request for the treatment records of the relationship, I will need the authorization of all partners before I release confidential information. Also, if my records are subpoenaed, I will assert the psychotherapist-patient privilege on behalf of the relationship, not just for an individual.

During the course of my work with a relationship, I may see a partner alone for one or more sessions. These sessions are a part of the work that I am doing with the relationship, unless otherwise indicated. If you are involved in one or more of these sessions with me, please understand that generally these sessions are confidential in the sense that I will not release any confidential information to a third party unless I am required by law to do so, or unless I have your written authorization. In fact, since those sessions can and should be considered a part of the treatment of the relationship, I would also seek the authorization of all other partners before releasing confidential information to a third party.

However, I may need to share information learned in an individual session with any or all partners in the relationship, if I am to effectively serve the relationship being treated. I will use my best judgment as to whether, when, and to what extent I will make such disclosures and will also, if appropriate, first give the individual the opportunity to make the disclosure. Thus, if you feel it necessary to talk about matters that you want to be shared with no one else, you will probably want to consult with a different therapist who can treat you separately.

This “no secrets” policy is intended to allow me to treat the relationship more effectively by preventing, to the extent possible, a conflict of interest that might arise if an individual’s interests are not consistent with the interests of the relationship being treated. For instance, information learned in the course of an individual session may be relevant or even essential to the proper treatment of the relationship. If I am not free to exercise my clinical judgment regarding the need to bring this information to the relationship during the therapy, I might be placed in a situation where I would have to terminate treatment. This policy is intended to prevent the need for such a termination.

We acknowledge by our individual signatures below, that each of us has read this policy, that we understand it, that we have had an opportunity to discuss its contents with Eric Albert, MA, LMHC, and that we enter into relationship therapy in agreement with this policy.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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