

Elizabeth Dear, M.A.
Marriage and Family Therapist
Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug Counselor

527 Plumas Street
Reno, NV 89509
Tel/FAX 775-348-4696

THERAPEUTIC CONTRACT

The Therapy Process • Participating in therapy can result in a number of benefits to you, including a better understanding of your personal goals and values, improved interpersonal relationships, and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek therapy. Working toward these benefits, however, requires effort on your part and may result in considerable discomfort. Change, even when it is desired, is usually difficult and often slower than expected. Remembering and resolving significant life events in therapy can bring strong feelings of anger, depression, or fear. Attempting to resolve issues between marital partners, family members, and other individuals can also lead to discomfort and may result in changes that were not originally intended. It is always your decision what actions to take or not take. I may suggest different methods in order to facilitate change, including art therapy, sand tray, dream work, role-plays, cognitive-behavioral assignments, EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing), journaling, and insight-oriented talk therapy.

Guiding Principles

- You have the right to a confidential relationship with me. Within certain legal and ethical limits, information revealed by you during the course of therapy will be kept confidential and will not be revealed to any person without your written permission. Office staff and any professionals who work with or for me are also bound by this confidentiality agreement.
- With your written consent, I can release information about our work together to a person you specify.
- I have a legal and ethical duty to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect of children and dependent or elderly adults. Also, if you are in danger of harming yourself or someone else, I will take steps to protect those in danger. This may include making an emergency call to family, notifying law enforcement personnel and the intended victim, contacting a friend or relative, hospitalization, or referral for medical assessment.

- To provide the best possible treatment, I regularly consult with other clinicians about my cases; no identifying information about you will be given in these consultations.
- If I am working with you as part of a couple or family, I will not hold harmful secrets for any individual. I will work with you to help you disclose information in order to facilitate open and honest relationships.
- If your mental status is raised in a court of law, the information in your case file can be subpoenaed and I can be compelled to testify about your treatment and mental health. I will not release information to the court without your permission unless I am ordered to do so by a court order. I do not provide legal opinions on issues of custody.
- Should you choose not to enter or continue therapy with me, I will provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer. You are free to end therapy with me at any time; however, I hope you will discuss this with me prior to stopping. Making the commitment to yourself to stay engaged and to communicate your needs enriches the process.
- If you have a complaint about the services I provide or think I have acted in an unprofessional manner, you may contact the Nevada Board of Marriage and Family Therapist Examiners or the Board of Alcohol and Drug and Gambling Counselors.
- If I believe that therapy is no longer beneficial to you, that you will be better served by another professional, or you have not met your financial obligations to me by more than two sessions outside our agreement, I may choose to discontinue therapy with you and provide you with referrals to other therapists.

I have read, reviewed, and understood the above descriptions of the risks and benefits of therapy, the limits of confidentiality, and the guidelines for therapy.

Date _____ Client's Signature _____

Date _____ Therapist's Signature _____