



## Company Policies

Welcome to OpenWorld. This document contains important information about my professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully and jot down any questions you might have so that we can discuss them at our next meeting. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

### **Psychological Services**

Psychotherapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the psychologist and patient, and the particular problems you hope to address. At OpenWorld, we use many different methods to address what those problems. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home.

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Because therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But, there are no guarantees as to what you will experience.

Our first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of the evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include and a treatment plan to follow, if you decide to continue with therapy. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions about whether you feel comfortable working with me. At the end of the evaluation, your provider will notify you if they believe they are not the right therapist for you and, if so, will give you referrals to other practitioners within or beyond OpenWorld.

### **Meetings**

The first session is a 50-60 minute intake, during which you and your therapist will collaborate on a treatment plan. Care can look different for everyone, but it is typically one 50 minute session per week, at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be longer or more frequent. Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 24 hours advance notice of cancellation unless you and your therapist agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control.

### **Professional Fees**

Therapy sessions are \$225 per 50 minute session. OpenWorld charges the same rate for other services related to your care, including telephone conversations lasting longer than 20 minutes, attendance at meetings with other professionals you have authorized, preparation of treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other service you may request of one of our therapists. If you become involved in legal proceedings that require your therapist's participation, you will be expected to pay for any professional time spent on your legal matter, even if the request comes from another party.

### **Billing and Payments**

You will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held, unless we agree otherwise. OpenWorld does not presently accept insurance. More information about insurance

reimbursement is available on our website. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to when such services are requested.

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, OpenWorld has the option to use legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. In most collection situations, the only information released regarding a patient's treatment is his/her name, the dates, times, and nature of services provided, and the amount due.

### **Contacting your Therapist**

Your therapist will often not be immediately available by telephone. If you have any administrative questions about scheduling or billing, the best resource is an email to our main address ([hello@openworldtreatment.com](mailto:hello@openworldtreatment.com)) or reaching out to your therapist via their direct number. If you are difficult to reach, please inform your therapist of some times when you will be available. If you are unable to reach us and feel that you cannot wait for a return call, contact 911, your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call.

### **Text Messaging and Social Media**

Because text messaging is a very unsecure and impersonal mode of communication, our OpenWorld therapists do not communicate via text message. We are ethically obligated to protect your privacy on social media so therapists will not connect with patients on social media.

### **Confidentiality**

In general, the privacy of all communications between a patient and a psychologist is protected by law, and I can only release information about our work to others with your written permission. But there are a few exceptions.

In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. In some legal proceedings, a judge may order my testimony if he/she determines that the issues demand it, and therapists must comply with that court order.

There are some situations in which therapists are legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if they have to reveal some information about a patient's treatment. For example, if an OpenWorld therapist believes that a child, elderly person, or disabled person is being abused or has been abused, they must make a report to the appropriate state agency.

If a therapist believes that a patient is threatening serious bodily harm to another, they are required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the patient. If the patient threatens to harm themselves, a therapist may be obligated to seek hospitalization for them or to contact family members or others who can help provide protection. If a similar situation occurs in the course of our work together, I will attempt to fully discuss it with you before taking any action.

At OpenWorld, we may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation, we make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of patients. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential.

### **Your Confidentiality in the Case of COVID-19 Infection**

If you have tested positive for the coronavirus, your therapist may be required to notify local health authorities that you have been in the office. If they have to report this, they will only provide the minimum information necessary for their data collection and will not go into any details about the reason(s) for your visits. By signing this form, you are agreeing that OpenWorld may do so without an additional signed release.

Although this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality is intended to inform you about potential issues that could arise, it is important that you discuss any questions or concerns that you may have with your therapist.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship.

**I have read the above General Information and Fee Agreement carefully, understand, and agree to comply with them.**

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**Patient Name**

**Date**

**Signature**