

**LMFT PROFESSIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**  
**John Benson Rowe, PhD, LMFT**  
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I am pleased that you have selected me as your counselor. This document is designed to inform you about my background and to ensure that you understand our professional relationship.

Prior to my clinical training, I received a **Master of Divinity** degree from Duke Divinity School (1978). My clinical training as a counselor was done at **the Pastoral Counseling Center of North Carolina Baptist Hospitals, Inc.** in Winston-Salem, NC (1986-89). In 1993, I completed a **Masters Degree in Pastoral Counseling** through Wake Forest University. In 2006, I completed a **Doctor of Philosophy degree in Depth Psychology** from Pacifica Graduate Institute. I have been a professional counselor since 1989.

My professional credentials include **State Licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist** since 1989 (#498), national certification as a **Fellow in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors** since 1994, and I have been registered as a **Clinical Member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists** since 1989.

As a pastoral counselor, I am professionally trained to integrate the insights of both theology and psychology for the purpose of assisting persons in situational crises, interpersonal conflict, spiritual distress, and life stage transitions. It should be understood that I avoid imposing my beliefs on others, though I may express them where appropriate as part of the therapeutic process.

#### **COUNSELING SERVICES OFFERED-THEORETICAL APPROACHES**

Knowing something about the practice of therapy will help you as you begin this important process. There is no magic formula to therapy, but there are certain aspects of therapy that do assist in the course of change and growth. First of all, you will be treated with respect, and I will make every effort to understand your goals and hopes from your perspective. The initial sessions will be a time of assessment as we work together to clarify what it is you want and as we try to understand what is getting in the way of progress towards your goals. Your openness and willingness to discuss your situation frankly will be significant. You can expect from me honest feedback and an effort to work with you towards measurable progress.

I believe that growth and change happen as a result of experiencing acceptance, gaining insight, taking risks, and growing in one's self-confidence as new attitudes and behaviors are developed. Sometimes clients seek counseling to address particular problems or to relieve particular symptoms, such as depression or anxiety. Short-term therapy (10 sessions or less) may be appropriate in these instances. However, because I use a style of therapy that treats not only symptoms, but also the whole person, clients sometimes decide to continue beyond symptom relief to more in-depth work. We will reassess and evaluate your treatment along the way to decide what progress you are making towards your stated goals, and to set new goals as appropriate.

I take an approach to therapy that is based on psychodynamic principles developed by the Object Relations school of psychotherapy, particularly those principles developed by D.W. Winnicott. This approach is different from Freudian psychotherapy in that I will not remain aloof and neutral. I will actively seek to understand the material you bring to each session, and together we will work to make sense of what is going on in your life. Through this partnership, being present to the immediate thoughts and emotions that you experience will enhance your capacity to communicate clearly, to understand your inner experience, and to make informed choices for new directions in living. In addition, I believe there is a sacred dimension to healing. Thus, I utilize concepts developed by Carl Jung, who believed that our symptoms and problems are often rooted in blocked needs for creativity and spiritual

development. Opening up to your own spiritual sensibilities can further your emotional well-being, and I will work with you to integrate the resources of body, mind, heart, and soul as you work towards your goals.

In my work with couples and families, I vary my approach by focusing on helping individuals to work towards understanding each other. I will work to understand and to accept the feelings and the points of view that each person brings. However, the goal is to enhance a family's capacity to understand and to accept each other and to open their hearts to each other. Change does not depend on our efforts to control others, but depends ultimately on our ability to take responsibility for our own feelings and actions and our capacity to develop behaviors that encourage intimacy and self-disclosure.

In order to work together, we will need to specify the goals, methods, risks, and benefits of therapy, the approximate time commitment involved, costs and other aspects of your particular situation. I expect us to agree on a plan to which we will both adhere. Periodically, we will evaluate our progress and, if necessary, redesign our plan.

As with any powerful intervention, there are both risks and benefits associated with counseling and therapy. Risks might include experiencing uncomfortable levels of feelings like sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, or fear. Or you may feel, at times, that the therapy isn't going anywhere, at which time your willingness to discuss your dissatisfaction will be crucial for us to work through these feelings. Sometimes, change may be exciting, but change can also mean facing realities that feel unpleasant (such as the reality that a person you care about may not be able to change negative attitudes or behaviors).

Clients I work with are reasonably healthy and seek counseling for difficulties due to normal life events. I do not take on clients whom, in my professional opinion, I cannot help using the techniques I have available. I will enter our relationship with optimism and an eagerness to work with you. I have a special interest in working with adults who are facing transitions, those dealing with marital or family issues, and men who are seeking to handle their particular stressors. At times, I collaborate with other professionals, such as psychiatrists and psychologists, when it may be necessary to combine talk therapy with medication or testing. Such an approach is widely supported by research and practice.

### **LENGTH OF SESSIONS**

I assure you that my services will be rendered in a professional manner consistent with accepted ethical standards. Sessions are 50-55 minutes in duration. We will schedule our sessions by mutual agreement. If you are unable to keep an appointment, please call to cancel or reschedule at least 24 hours in advance. If I do not receive such advance notice, you may be responsible for paying for the session that you missed. Please note that it is impossible to guarantee any specific results regarding your counseling goals. However, we will work to achieve the best possible results for you.

### **FEES-METHODS OF PAYMENT**

In return for a fee of \$150 per hour, I agree to provide counseling services for you. Initial sessions are 90 minutes in length, and the fee is \$195. My fee may be adjusted based on family income. I would prefer that you pay for each session at the conclusion of each session. Cash, credit cards, or personal checks are acceptable for payment. You may request a monthly statement if you need this for your records.

### **BILLING-INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT**

If you wish to seek reimbursement for my services from your health insurance company, I will be happy to have your sessions filed through our office manager. You will need to sign a form that allows insurance reimbursements to be paid directly to me, and you will be expected to make whatever copayment and deductible payments your insurance specifies.

Some health insurance companies will reimburse clients for my counseling and some will not. You should be aware that insurance coverage for mental health is sometimes case managed, and the length and frequency of your sessions is determined by their guidelines. Please discuss with me any concerns you may have about your insurance. Also, please remember that you are responsible, and not your insurance company, for paying the fees agreed upon.

### USE OF DIAGNOSIS

Most insurance companies require a diagnosis of a mental-health condition and indicate that you must have an “illness” before they will agree to reimburse you. Some conditions for which people seek counseling do not qualify for reimbursement. If a qualifying diagnosis is appropriate for your case, I will inform you of the diagnosis before we submit it to the health insurance company. Any diagnosis made will become part of your permanent records.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

I regard the information you share with me with the greatest respect, so I want us to be as clear as possible about how it will be handled. Generally, I will tell no one what you tell me. The privacy and confidentiality of our conversations, and my records, is a privilege of yours and is protected by state law and my profession's ethical principles, in all but a few circumstances. There are two circumstances in which I cannot guarantee confidentiality, legally and/or ethically: 1) when I believe you intend to harm yourself or another person; and, 2) when I believe a child or elder person has been or will be abused or neglected. In rare circumstances, professional counselors can be ordered by a judge to release information. Otherwise, I will not tell anyone anything about your therapy, diagnosis, history, or even that you are a client, without your full knowledge and a signed “Release of Information” form.

In those rare instances, when family or friends voluntarily share with me information about you without your knowledge, I will inform you of this so that I am not participating in “keeping secrets,” and to follow through on my commitment to treating you with honesty and respect. In addition, I will encourage those who volunteer information to discuss stated matters with you.

### EMERGENCIES

During our work together, there may be instances that are of a crisis nature, and you will be encouraged to reach me by phone. My usual way of handling such situations is to give you my cell phone number at the beginning of your therapy. When you call me, I will respond to your call within one hour. At that time, I will either talk with you to assist you through crisis, or I will arrange a time that we can talk. If you cannot reach me for some reason, please ask a friend or family member to take you to the nearest hospital emergency room.

### COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our work, please inform me immediately. I abide by the ACA Code of Ethics (<http://www.counseling.org/ResourcesCodeOfEthics/TP/Home/CT2.aspx>), and if you think that you have been treated unfairly or unethically by me, and cannot resolve this problem with me, you can contact the

**North Carolina Board of Marriage and Family Therapy at P.O. Box 1369, Garner, NC 27529,**

**Fax: (919) 3366-5156, E-mail: [ncbmft@ncbmft.org](mailto:ncbmft@ncbmft.org)**

for clarification of clients rights as I've explained them or even to lodge a complaint.

If you have questions, feel free to ask. Please sign and date both copies of this form. A copy for your records will be returned to you. I will retain a copy in my confidential records.

Counselor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Client's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_