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### THERAPY PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Welcome to Vendetti Wellness Group. This document contains important information about our 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.

# THERAPY SERVICES

Therapy is not easily described in general statements. It varies depending on the personalities of the therapist and client, and the particular challenges you bring forward. There are many different methods that I may use to deal with the challenges you hope to address. Therapy 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.

Therapy can have benefits and risks. Since 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, therapy 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 of what you will experience.

The 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 of whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a large commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be very careful about the therapist you select. If you have questions about my procedures, we should discuss them whenever they arise. If your doubts persist, I will be happy to help you set up a meeting with another behavioral health professional for a second opinion.

**MEETINGS**

I normally conduct an evaluation that will last from 2 to 4 sessions. During this time, we can both decide if I am the best person to provide the services you need in order to meet your treatment goals. If therapy is begun, I will usually schedule one 45-50-minute session (one appointment hour of 45-50 minutes duration) per week at a time we agree on, although some sessions may be longer, more frequent or less frequent

# INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT

In order for us to set realistic treatment goals and priorities, it is important to evaluate what resources you have available to pay for your treatment. If you have a health insurance policy, it will usually provide some coverage for behavioral health treatment. I will fill out forms and provide you with whatever assistance I can in helping you receive the benefits to which you are entitled; however, you (not your insurance company) are responsible for full payment of my fees. Here at VWG we have a unique and specialized service that assists you in navigating the complexities of your behavioral health care plan.

Once we have all of the information about your insurance coverage, we will discuss what we can expect to accomplish with the benefits that are available and what will happen if they run out before you feel ready to end our sessions. \*You may at any time during our work together decide to privately pay for your therapy services.

You should also be aware that insurance companies require you to ***allow*** me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. Sometimes I have to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries, or copies of the entire record (in rare cases). This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. Though all insurance companies claim to keep such information confidential, I have no control over what they do with it once it is in their hands. I will provide you with a copy of any report I submit, if you request it. I will only provide required information limited to the minimum necessary***.***

# PROFESSIONAL FEES

VWG in compliance with national standards of ethics, is required to disclose all billing and financial matters regarding therapy services. We are further required to have financial matters reviewed on a regular basis. As a client of VWG you understand:

Insurance does not pay for correspondence and non-therapy meetings. We do charge for our time when you request or require these services. Correspondence is defined as, but not limited to, letters to other practitioners, disability applications, report writing, telephone, email communications and consults and the time spent performing any other service you may request of me. We consider the first 5 minutes of correspondence as a professional courtesy to our relationship. Thereafter, correspondence is billed at a rate of $100/hour and according to the amount of time utilized to the closest quarter hour. There will be a minimum fee of $25.00 for written correspondence. Because insurance does not pay for non-therapy meetings, we do charge for these meetings, associated preparation and travel at the rates noted above. \*Please reference the additional VWG informed consent and participation agreement, outlining private payment for those services not covered by insurance\*.

\*If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for my professional time even if I am called to testify by another party. Because of the difficulty of legal involvement, I charge $200 per hour for preparation (which may include any of the above named tasks), travel and attendance at any legal proceeding.

**BILLING AND PAYMENTS**

You will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held, unless we agree otherwise or unless you have insurance coverage which requires another arrangement. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to when they are requested. In circumstances of unusual financial hardship, I may be willing to negotiate a fee adjustment or payment installment plan.

If your account has not been paid for more than 15 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. If such legal action is necessary, its costs will be included in the claim. In most collection situations, the only information I release regarding a patient’s treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due. \*The fee for any returned check will be billed to you in the amount of $30.00

**CREDIT CARD POLICY**

Our practice makes a strong request to have a credit card securely stored on file with VWG.

If you choose to have a credit card on file, you are agreeing to have it securely stored and give permission to The Vendetti Wellness Group to run your card on file for any balances due.

If you choose to not have a credit card on file, please note that services are subjected to suspension or termination, as a result of delayed payment or non-payment.

\*Please plan to bring an active form of payment to every appointment.

If you are using a credit card on file for payment of services, please note that your card will be charged within 7 business days following the service rendered.

**CANCELLATIONS**

I ask for 24 business hour notice (8am-8pm Sunday through Saturday) to cancel or postpone an appointment in order to avoid a **fee of $90 charged for that meeting**, unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to emergency circumstances beyond your control. Notice is accepted by email and/or a voicemail. When possible, I will try to find another time to reschedule the appointment. Any outstanding balance must be paid prior to additional services being delivered. \*Insurance does not pay for missed appointments

**CONTACTING ME**

I am often not immediately available by telephone. I cannot answer the phone when I am with a client. When I am unavailable, my telephone is answered by a voicemail service that I monitor frequently. I will make every effort to return your call on the same day you make it, with the exception of weekends and holidays. If you are difficult to reach, please inform me of some times when you will be available. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you can’t wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychiatrist on call. If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary.

## PROFESSIONAL RECORDS

The laws and standards of my profession require that I keep treatment records. You are entitled to receive a copy of your records, or I can prepare a summary for you instead. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted and/or upsetting to untrained readers. If you wish to see your records, I recommend that you review them in my presence so that we can discuss the contents. Patients will be charged an appropriate fee for any professional time spent in responding to information requests.

## MINORS

If you are under eighteen years of age, please be aware that the law may provide your parents the right to examine your treatment records. It is my policy to request an agreement from parents that they agree to give up the right to access to your records. If they agree, I will provide them only with general information about our work together, unless I feel there is a high risk that you will seriously harm yourself or someone else. In this case, I will notify them of my concern. Before giving them any information, I will discuss the matter with you, if possible, and do my best to handle any objections you may have with what I am prepared to discuss. \*Please note there are additional documents for review and signature if the client is a minor\*

## CONFIDENTIALITY

In general, the privacy of all communications between a client and therapist 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.

**There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to take action**

\*These situations are unusual in my practice. If such a situation arises, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action and I will limit my disclosure of information to what is necessary.

If I have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subject to abuse, the law requires that I must report it to the Department of Children and Family Services. Once such a report is filed, I may be required to provide additional information.

If I have reasonable cause to believe that a vulnerable adult is the subject of abuse, neglect or exploitation, and I believe that the disclosure is necessary to prevent serious harm to the client or other potential victims, I may report the information to the county adult protective services provider. Once such a report is filed, I may be required to provide additional information.

If a client communicates a threat, or if I believe the client presents a threat of imminent serious physical violence against a readily identifiable individual, I may be required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the client.

If I believe the client presents a threat of imminent serious physical harm to him/herself, I may be required to take protective actions. These actions may include contacting the police or others who could assist in protecting the client or seeking hospitalization for the client.

These situations have rarely occurred in my practice. If a similar situation occurs, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action.

In most legal proceedings, a client may assert the Provider-Client privilege to protect information about his or her consultation. However, certain court proceedings or other legal activity may limit a therapist’s ability to maintain confidentiality. If you are involved in a legal proceeding, please speak with your attorney about the limits of confidentiality.

I may occasionally find it helpful to consult other professionals about a case. During a consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of my patient. The consultant is also legally bound to keep the information confidential. If you don’t object, I will not tell you about these consultations unless I feel that it is important in our work together.

While this written summary of exceptions to confidentiality should prove helpful in informing you about potential circumstances, it is important that we discuss any questions or concerns that you may have at our next meeting. I will be happy to discuss these issues with you if you need specific advice, but formal legal advice may be needed because the laws governing confidentiality are quite complex, and I am not an attorney.