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### Corona Virus (COVID-19) Statement

In the light of the latest government guidance regarding the Corona virus pandemic and current levels of restriction and having considered my ethical commitments and responsibilities, this statement sets out my current policy regarding availability of face-to-face counselling. I am now able to offer face-to-face counselling sessions for adults in situations where remote working is ineffective or impossible and face-to-face counselling forms an essential contact to support your mental health and emotional wellbeing. that are compatible with current public health advice.

Adjustments I am making that are compatible with current public health advice include:

- Maintaining a social distance of 2 metres in the counselling room and for entry/departure.
- Avoiding all hand-shaking or other physical contact.
- Washing my hands thoroughly before and after each session and providing facilities for you to do the same immediately on arrival.
- Providing tissues in individual batches to cover your mouth and nose if you cough or sneeze so you can "catch it, bin it, kill it".
- Providing a bin to dispose of tissues which is emptied between sessions appropriate hygiene if you do not take your tissues home and dispose of them yourself.
- Providing hand sanitiser and clean sealed bottled water.
- Airing out the counselling room prior to and after sessions and maintaining air circulation with open windows. You are advised to bring extra layers if you feel the cold from open windows.
- Limiting the number of face-to-face sessions per day so that adequate cleaning and airing of the counselling environment can be done.
- Cleaning down between counselling sessions including disinfecting door handles, any resources and equipment used, surfaces and changing coverings on seating.

As it is possible to maintain a two-metre distance between seats and upon arrival and when leaving, it is not mandatory that we wear face coverings. However, if you feel more comfortable wearing a form of face-covering, I am also willing to do this although this may affect the quality of our communication.

**I will not be providing masks for clients so please provide your own if you wish to wear one.**

If you are clinically vulnerable in a high-risk group or caring for somebody who is sheltering, please consider carefully the risks of attending counselling including walking, driving or using public transport to get here before making a decision to

attend in person. Online and phone counselling is also available. If you do decide to attend, please take necessary precautions.

In the event that I need to self-isolate, I will inform you via our normal agreed method of communication. I request that you also inform me if you need to self-isolate because you believe you may have been exposed to the virus or because you have symptoms and if so to cancel counselling sessions.

If I were to contact the Corona virus, due to the need to comply with the government Test and Trace tracking system, I would have to break confidentiality relating to the balance of public interest in limiting infection, by providing your contact details so that you could be approached and tested. Under these circumstances I would provide the minimum information for health professionals to be able to contact you and I would as far as possible, not disclose details of our professional relationship. More information about Test and Trace is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>.

If you need to cancel a session within my normal notice period of 48 hours due to Coronavirus concerns, I will review this sympathetically within my cancellation policy.

If you or I are self-isolating as a precaution rather than due to illness, I am able to offer telephone, text, email or online support depending on circumstances if face to face meetings are not possible. However, if either party is unwell and experiencing symptoms of coronavirus, the best option would be to take a break from therapy until fully recovered in line with health guidance. I will continue to review public health and government directives and adjust my working practice accordingly.

This statement is subject to change at any time in line with government health advice.

Further information:

NHS information

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>)

Government Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>

BACP (professional body) guidance for counsellors

<https://www.bacp.co.uk/news/news-from-bacp/coronavirus/faqs-about-coronavirus/>

For more counselling information and resources please visit my website at [www.life-chance.co.uk](http://www.life-chance.co.uk)

Sue Seager October 2020