

Melissa Rauch NCC LPC

Prescott Professional Counseling and Consulting

Professional Disclosure Statement and Informed Consent

Welcome, and thank you for choosing me as your provider for counseling services. This document is designed to tell you about my background and to help you understand our professional relationship.

About Your Therapist: I am a licensed professional counselor (LPC) in the state of Arizona and a national certified counselor (NCC) with a master's degree in mental health counseling. I have nearly 20 years experience in the human services field and over 5 years providing counseling services for adolescents, adults, couples and groups. I have counseling experience in private practice, inpatient and community agency settings.

Philosophy and Approach: I believe in the healing power of telling one's story in a safe space. My approach to psychotherapy is eclectic and trauma-informed, drawing upon cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), motivational interviewing (MI), art therapy and eye movement desensitization reprocessing (EMDR). I use a strengths-based approach and an empathetic, non-judgmental style.

The Therapeutic Relationship: A therapeutic relationship between a counselor and client is a professional relationship in which the counselor helps the client to make positive changes in his or her life. Research consistently shows that it is the quality of the therapeutic relationship, more than any other factor including the method of therapy, that best predicts clients' ability to use therapy to help them make positive life changes. It is a unique relationship in that while the client typically shares very personal information with the counselor, in an atmosphere of warmth and trust, the relationship takes place solely within the fifty-minute therapy appointments and within the boundaries of the therapeutic contract. It is, in fact, the adherence to these boundaries which makes therapy possible and gives it the potential to effect change. Possible benefits of therapy may include relief from symptoms of anxiety, depression or grief, improved relationships with yourself and others, and increased satisfaction in life. While therapy has as its goal helping clients live lives that they are happier with, it is still work, and may at times feel uncomfortable or difficult. Symptoms may worsen before they improve; new symptoms may arise during the course of therapy. New behaviors may upset old relationships. Therapy is not a "magic bullet" but it does have a powerful potential to facilitate growth. Not every session will lead to brilliant, life-changing "a-ha" moments; however, if someone were to ask you how your therapy is going, I would expect you to be able to honestly say that it is the best thing you could possibly be doing with your time and your money. If you are in therapy with me and that is not how you would describe it, please talk to me about your experience so we can correct our course. Therapy does not always solve the problems that are brought to it, but there is the best chance for success when there is a strong therapeutic relationship. Your participation in therapy is entirely voluntary. If I am not ultimately the right therapist for you I will help you find the one that is, so that you may get the most possible from your therapy experience.

Confidentiality:

It is my legal and ethical obligation to keep any information about you and your therapy confidential. There are certain limits to your right to confidentiality and times when the law requires me to share specific information:

*If you make a serious threat to harm yourself or another person, the law requires me to protect you or that person.

*If I have reason to believe a child or any elderly adult has been or will be abused or neglected, I am legally required to report this to the proper authorities.

*If you are or will be in court proceedings and my records are ordered by a judge.

In these situations, I would reveal only what is necessary to protect you or the other person. I would not share everything you have told me.

Please be aware that email is not a secure form of communication, and for that reason I prefer to communicate with you by telephone. You may leave any message on my voice mail; it is confidential. Although I do check my messages regularly, please be aware that I may not be able to return your call until the next business day. (If you are having an emergency, please do not wait for a return call, but dial 9-1-1 or go to the nearest emergency room if you can get there safely.) When I leave messages for you, I will be as discreet as possible; please keep me updated regarding any change in telephone instructions. If I have no contact with you for three months I will inactivate your file and you will no longer be my client.

In the event that I happen to see you in public, for reasons of maintaining your confidentiality I will not greet you unless you greet me first. You are free to greet me or not, but please be aware that my ability to maintain your confidentiality becomes more difficult if either one of us is with another person at that time.

As part of my commitment to quality and professional growth, I do take part in regular peer supervision meetings with a small group of mental health providers, for the purpose of consultation and support. In these meetings I do not reveal any identifying data regarding my clients and make every effort to obscure their identities.

Code of Ethics: As a Licensee of the Arizona Board of Behavioral Health I abide by its Code of Ethics. To maintain my license I am required to participate in ongoing continuing education, taking classes relevant to this profession, including periodic ethics updates.

Grievance Procedure:

If you are not satisfied with any area of our work I ask that you communicate with me directly so that I will be informed and have an opportunity to respond and resolve any potential issues. If you feel that I, or any other counselor, have treated you unfairly or violated professional ethics, please tell me. You also have the right to file a formal complaint with the state licensing board.

Fees: My fee is \$60-\$80 per 50-minute appointment. I do not typically charge for occasional, brief telephone time, however I do charge for appointments conducted by telephone. If you will not be able to keep an appointment, please let me know at least 24 hours in advance. Full fee will be charged for missed appointments and cancellations of less than 24 hours' notice; however, exceptions may be made in cases of emergency or sudden illness.

You may use cash, personal check, credit or debit card for payment.

