

Name of Counsellor: DOMINIC QUINN MBACP, MSc ,PgDip, PgCert  
0754658104

## Counselling Agreement

### About Me

#### Hello and welcome !

I am a registered member of the BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) and I work to their Ethical Framework for Good Practice and am bound by their Code of Ethics and Practice, a copy of which can be made available or found at [www.bacp.co.uk/ethical\\_framework/](http://www.bacp.co.uk/ethical_framework/). I am also subject to the BACP complaints procedure.

There is a lot more information about me on my website –

[www.lakestherapy.co.uk](http://www.lakestherapy.co.uk)

My training is within the Person Centred Approach – what this means is that I aim to offer a warm and understanding environment in which you can discuss concerns and issues about your life. It is an opportunity for you to make sense of your life and experiences and to develop self-awareness.

The Person Centred approach means that I will not advise you or tell you what to do (unless the session involves practical advice which you specifically asked for and which I am able to offer). But I do aim to be alongside you, in a very attentive and immediate way whilst you make your own discoveries – I believe that the client is the expert on their own life.

In addition, I am able to offer support to help manage the distressing symptoms of trauma, having been trained by the Human Givens Institute to deliver rewind therapy which is a recognised gentle exposure therapy to help unhook the distressing feelings from traumatic memories. (Rewind therapy is only appropriate in face to face counselling) I will explain how this works and whether it is appropriate in your unique circumstances. I can also offer a CBT based approach, if we both agree that it could be beneficial.

### What is on line counselling

I also provide counselling services on line. Online counselling is an alternative way to get support from a professional counsellor. It is an opportunity to explore difficulties, express feelings and untangle troubles in a safe, professional space without judgement. Perhaps you have difficulties with mobility or prefer to communicate by text or via skype live chat or instant messaging. On line counselling can provide professional and effective counselling without meeting in person. You might even prefer a blended approach where some of the sessions are on line and some in person.

Further information can be obtained from my website [www.lakestherapy.co.uk](http://www.lakestherapy.co.uk) This also includes an on line contract and initial assessment form which I would invite to complete and forward to me

## How does on line counselling work

We will agree an 'appointment time'. This is the time when you will receive my email reply, or the time agreed to meet in real time using Skype. This could be weekly or more frequently if you request this. As I will need some time to read your previous email I will need you to send in your email at least 48 hours before I send you my reply.

If you have made payment for a session but are unable to meet at the appointed time I will retain the fee for the session unless we have experienced a technological breakdown which prevents us meeting online or exchanging emails. In the event of this occurring we would discuss how to re-arrange the scheduled appointment. Where a block of four appointments are purchased these are valid for a period of 2 months.

We would agree to respect the privacy of all online communications. We agree not to share or publish any transcript, or email content online.

If you choose email exchange counselling, we can use encrypted email like [www.hushmail.com](http://www.hushmail.com) which is free, encrypted and more secure. Or we can use password protected email attachments where I mail you the password separately.

Online counselling may be able to help with a wide range of issues including, , abuse, anxiety, stress, depression, eating difficulties, loneliness, relationship problems, bereavement, self-esteem, sexual orientation, sexual abuse, discrimination, traumas and many more.

Not all types of issues can be resolved through online counselling and I will advise you if face to face counselling, or some other form of support might be more suitable for you. Where I consider that online counselling would not be the most suitable means of support I will make every effort to assist you in a referral to a suitable alternative source of support.

I am not able to provide online counselling to any person who is under the age of 18. If this applies to you I can help with information on referral to other agencies providing face to face counselling services or online work which is specifically directed to a younger age group.

## Skype

If you choose webcam sessions, we can meet on Skype [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com) but it is important to know that Microsoft cannot guarantee Skype 100% secure.

You may occasionally see me online on Skype – I do a lot of work this way - but I can only talk to you at the time we agreed for our own session. If you do need to contact me in between sessions, please send e-mail.

If we work together on Skype it can be by text or live session as you prefer. We will agree an appointment time for you and I will meet you on Skype at that time for 1 hour.

If you need to cancel or change an appointment for any reason would you please try to give me reasonable notice. Unfortunately, if you do not give at least 24 hours' notice, without good reason, I will need to charge you the normal fee for the session.

## Privacy

It's important to ensure you have sufficient privacy and safety when in skype counselling or composing a counselling email so I would recommend you choose somewhere that you are unlikely to be disturbed or that others can view your screen while typing.

Similarly, I will respect your privacy where no one can see my computer screen, I am the sole user of it and it is password protected with up to date anti-virus and firewall protection.

## What happens next

1. Once you contact me by email , website or phone, I will reply to you as soon as possible and usually within 24 hours
2. I will send you a form to fill in and mail back. Depending on your preferred format for therapy i.e. in person, email or skype we will arrange to meet at an agreed time on skype or agree a day for me to receive your first email and I will send the therapeutic reply within 48 hours on an agreed day, which ever you prefer. A counselling email can be as much as you wish to type for about an hour as though you were in a face to face counselling session. When I reply to you I will also work for 1 counselling hour. We can regularly check out how it is working for you and if you wish to continue.
3. If you are happy to continue and I am able to offer you support through the format you have requested we will then agree on times for future weekly sessions.
4. You can send e-mails on whatever day of the week suits you. I will send you a short e-mail to tell you I have received it. It would be helpful if you could also do this so we both know the technology is working. I will then respond to you with a full reply within **48 hours on a working week** – Monday to Friday

## First Meeting free first ½ hour in person

Our first meeting is to help us discuss whether you want to start counselling with me and whether I am the best person to help you or whether another person or agency would be better suited to you. We discuss how counselling might help you and the issues which you might want to begin to talk about so that we can agree, between us, on a way of working, bearing in mind my person centred approach and the reasons that might bring you to counselling.

All in person counselling sessions take place in counselling offices in Kendal, Cumbria. I will send further details when we start.

## Confidentiality and records

The contents of the sessions are confidential to you and me. I will need to discuss our work with my supervisor as part of the BACP guidelines but I will not identify you by name when I discuss our work together.

In accordance with BACP guidelines my work is regularly supervised. On all occasions you will not be referred to by name nor will information be given which would result in identification being made. All efforts will be made to protect your confidentiality.

If we discover there is a need to communicate with other professionals, this will only proceed after I have sought your permission and knowledge of what may be discussed. I make brief notes after each session as this helps me to monitor my work and continue to learn. You will not be identified from these records and they are securely stored. If I believe you may cause serious physical harm to yourself or another person then I will not be able to retain confidentiality. Confidentiality would also be broken in the event of a breach of national security and money laundering.

I am a registered with the data commissioner's office as a data controller which means that you can be assured that I comply with statutory requirements for the safe and secure handling of client data which is destroyed after 7 years and available to clients to view on request.

## Sessions and themes

Sessions will be for 60 minutes every (to be agreed). It is agreed that our sessions will begin on time. A session which begins after this time cannot be extended beyond the finishing time. For on line work I will remain available for 30 mins in the event of your missing the start. Counselling cannot take place whilst a client is under the influence of non-prescribed drugs, including alcohol. If you threaten, or cause, damage to premises or a person then counselling will be stopped immediately.

## Cancellation

If you wish to cancel a session 24 hrs notice is needed unless due to illness in which case a message would be appreciated and would enable me to be informed and the counselling slot rebooked.

Unfortunately if you do not give at least 24 hours notice, without good reason, I will need to charge you the normal fee for the session.

If I need to cancel your session due to illness, I will give you as much notice as possible and offer you an alternative time.

If you have not told me you have received my e-mail within 3 days I will assume there has been a problem with technology and I will send a further e-mail. If I don't hear from you by the following week I will assume that you have decided to end the therapy.

If you wish to cease counselling, you may do so at any time, but I would encourage you to attend one session to enable you to have a proper ending.

## Fees

Fees are for a counselling hour live text or Skype session or an e-mail exchange. You can find current fees on my website [www.lakestherapy.co.uk](http://www.lakestherapy.co.uk) where you can pay via PayPal or bank cards. I will give you further details about this when we agree to start working together.

Counselling with me can start as soon as payment has cleared. Please be aware that this may take 3-4 days. You may prefer to pay for a block of sessions rather than each individual session as we go and payment by this method is discounted. This means that you can have an email exchange or a session when you need it rather than waiting for a payment to clear.

I will not charge you for this exchange for contracting and assessment.

I review fees each year but once counselling has started the fee remains fixed at the lower starting rate for the duration of our sessions together. You can therefore have confidence the fees will not go up while we are in therapy together for that period.

## Technology

Sometimes technology can fail to live up to our expectations. If you cannot get online for your session with me then you may text me. The number to text is at the top of this agreement. These texts are charged at local call rate within the UK. I ask you for a mobile telephone number for the same reason. This contact is really important in case either of us is unable to get online for a live session.

The number above is for text only in the event of a technical difficulty if you cannot reach me by email or Skype, and cannot be used for therapy or other contact please.

## What to do in an emergency

### Guidelines for Emergency Contact

Counselling **cannot** provide an emergency service for clients but there are alternatives of you feel in crisis.

In the event of an emergency arising whilst you are engaged in online work or if you were experiencing suicidal thoughts, I would discuss with you the appropriate support that you could access during this period. If you found yourself in a major crisis and were considering serious self harm it would be vital to get immediate help. This could include contacting your GP, or your nearest accident and emergency service (A & E).

You could also call the Samaritans on 0345909090 or email them on [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

The Cumbria CHOC doctor service is 0300 247247

The Cumbria CRISIS home support team are on 01228 603890

Our agreement shall be construed and governed in all respects in accordance with the laws of England and Wales and any dispute, differences, or ethical complaints in relation to this agreement or therapeutic work shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English Courts.

Please complete and email the form to [Dominic.quinn232@btinternet.com](mailto:Dominic.quinn232@btinternet.com)

**Your completing and returning this form signifies your agreeing to be bound by the contents**

**Name :**

**Date:**