

Ros Best Counselling

Rosalyn Best, RCC, CAC, MoC, MEd

Counselling for Middle and Older Generations

Living lighter, one story at a time...

Intake & Informed Consent – Form for Families (each family member fills in one)

Before completing this form, please note:

- (1) In family counselling, the *family is the client*, not the individuals. Ros Best prefers a *no-secrets policy*. I can help family members plan how to share difficult information *that is relevant to the current and future relationships*, but our work is made difficult by secrets shared by the therapist and one family member to the exclusion of other family member(s). Equally, if a family member felt that my work was biased in favour of another, it is essential that they raise this with me. If the concern were ongoing, I have other family counselling therapists I could refer you to.
- (2) *Confidentiality*: any information the family provides, here or in session, will be held in strictest confidence, though you may request I share it with your doctor or other practitioner using a separate form. Files are retained seven years after the end of our work together, and then destroyed. The *limitations to confidentiality* are (1) if you indicate that you pose a substantial risk of harm to others (2) or to yourself, or (3) name a vulnerable person (including children under the age of 19, the elderly and people with disabilities) who is being abused or is at imminent risk of being abused, or (4) if I were required by subpoena to provide specific information to a court of law. *Your family's file contains this Intake document* and, for each session, a report of what we discussed, with no clinical opinions or guesses.

Name: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Other family members' names & ages:

Contact Information

- My Home Address:
 - Street & Apartment no. _____
 - City _____
 - Postal Code _____
- The best number to reach me at is _____ (cell/ other?)
 - Confidential messages ok at this number? Yes No
- When is the best time to reach you, if needed? _____
- Texts and email can be problematic regarding confidentiality. Knowing this,
 - Are texts okay? Yes No

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- *What email address, if any, would you have me use?*

- *Please name an emergency contact I could use:*
 - Name: _____ Relationship to you: _____ Contact: _____
- Upon completion of therapy, may I email you information of upcoming retreats, articles I write, or similar news? (frequency about 3 per year) Yes No

Today's Session

- What brings you in today?

- When did this concern start? _____

- Primary Goals for Therapy:

Background Information

- I currently do do not live at the family home.
- Issues the family has recently faced divorce remarriage blended family parents thinking of separating death; grief and loss a family member coming out conflict between the generations anger anxiety disabilities depression relocation financial stress Other

- Tell me about a few of your strengths?

- Tell me about a few family strengths?

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- What do I need to know about personal patterns in this family?

- Tell me about your style (type of work, learning style, processing style and speed, preferences?):

- Has your family received counselling services before?

- The issue/goal at that time

- What did you appreciate most about your session(s)?

- What did you appreciate least about your session(s)?

- Did you feel that the issue was resolved/goal achieved through that counselling?

- What (if any) health concerns (diagnoses?) do you personally have?

- Do you personally worry about your alcohol/substance use? If yes, please explain.

- Do you worry about your family member's alcohol/substance use? If yes, please explain.

- Have you ever attempted suicide? ___ Yes ___ No

- How much/ how well do you sleep? (Reasons?) _____

- Is your appetite normal these days? _____

- Date of your last physical exam: _____

- Your prescribed medications (name and purpose, dosage, frequency):

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- Alternative Treatments, medications?

- Anything else you feel I should know, for us to do our best work together?

Referral Information:

- How did you learn about Ros Best Counselling (check all that apply)?

- ___ The Gottman Referral Network
- ___ The *ICEEFT* Emotionally Focussed Therapy referral network
- ___ Theravive
- ___ CounsellingBC
- ___ The British Columbia Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC)
- ___ Ros Best Counselling's website
- ___ Google
- ___ Direct recommendation from my doctor
- ___ Direct referral from a family member or friend
- ___ APABC (the Adlerian Professional Association of BC)
- ___ Other

If you were referred to me by a health care provider, medical centre or referral service/website, please identify the source of the referral so I can thank them. Your name and identity will remain confidential.

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Clinic Orientation

Welcome to Ros Best Counselling. My E. Kent Avenue home office is located on the third floor of the building, accessed by elevator. You will need to either “buzz” Clark/Best, or text my cell, and I will let you up. The therapy room is private, just inside the front door; the bathroom is next to the therapy room. For clients with wheelchairs and larger families, we will work from the living room. Only the bathroom is problematic for wheelchairs. Free underground visitor and street parking available.

Fee Payment and Cancellation Policy

\$240 for 1 ½ hours for families, or \$160 per 60 minute hour. Fees should be paid at the beginning of each session, by e-transfer (rosbestcounselling@shaw.ca), cash or cheque (payable to Rosalyn Best). If your cheque were returned for insufficient funds, you are responsible for the original amount of the returned cheque and a \$25.00 service charge. Your counselling costs may be covered by your Extended Health Benefit plan. You are welcome to join the FACTBC counsellors’ campaign for there to be a College of Counselling Therapists, so doctors could refer you to counselling and so that more extended health benefit plans cover counselling costs.

An appointment is a commitment to therapy. If you are late, we will probably not be able to meet for the full time. There will be a cancellation fee of \$60 for any session missed without 24 hours notice.

I am deeply committed to making this world happier, one family at a time. I offer a sliding scale for People With Disabilities, and some others with limited income.

WHAT IS CLINICAL COUNSELLING?

Clinical family counselling helps families (re)build a dynamic where bonding conversations are possible and frequent, and helps families make peace with major transitions of all kinds. There is no ‘bad guy’ in family counselling, only a dynamic where the family wasn’t prepared for this circumstance (whatever circumstance that is). The building of a trusting and comfortable relationship between all family members and the counsellor is *essential*; be picky in choosing a therapist with whom the whole family feels a good fit. *It is important to me that our work be evidence-informed*, to the degree that outcome research exists to support family therapy. Questions or comments on the counselling process are invited at any time.

HOW DOES CLINICAL FAMILY COUNSELLING WORK?

We will have an initial session with as many willing family members attending together as possible. For the following session, I meet with each willing family member individually while the others go for a walk or read in the living room, for 30-60 minutes, as needed. At this time I will clarify with family members anything they may have written on the Intake and Informed Consent form. This is your time to give me relevant family and personal history, and for us to make sure there is a good counsellor/client relationship for each of you. Typically there is only one individual session for each family member. At the next family session, we will confirm our goals for therapy. We have a variety of counselling modalities available to us – adapting Gottman’s Sound Relationship House, using Sue Johnson’s Emotionally Focussed Family Therapy, borrowing from Satir’s role play strategies, and using Mindfulness Based Art Therapy techniques, to name a few. There is much more to communication than just words! We will choose a path, and go from there to achieve your family counselling goals. Not all family members must attend all sessions, but it is preferable that they do attend all sessions.

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BENEFITS OF FAMILY THERAPY:

We cannot fix the past, but we can choose a “Family 2.0”, where family becomes your safe haven in which you can share dreams, meanings, receive support, know and be known; a place where you are free to be you, where you are respected and hold respect for all other family members. This said, sometimes the benefit of family therapy is that family members realize that the family is – or has already – been reconstituted (parental separation, divorce, remarriage, blended family, death of a family member, etc.), in which case we figure out how to do that well, with healing and appropriate boundaries for family members. Ideally, people learn more about themselves *because* there is space to understand themselves in the context of their family of origin.

RISKS OF FAMILY THERAPY:

While there are potential benefits to family therapy, success is not guaranteed and there are potential risks. For example, some families find it difficult to find a therapist who is a good fit for all family members, making it really frustrating for at least one to engage in therapy; others may find it is the wrong time, right now it feels too hard to “go there”. Therapy likely will stimulate memories and evoke strong feelings; sometimes the relationship may *feel* worse before it feels better. Family therapy often feels more emotionally risky than individual therapy. Family counselling requires active involvement and efforts to be open. *It is the therapist's job to keep the family emotionally safe – at least in session - throughout the process*, to notice and discuss if there doesn't seem to be progress, and, absolutely, family members are encouraged to discuss any frustrations they might be feeling about therapy. Therapy is a process.

If the family does feel that you are not progressing through our work together despite our efforts, we may discuss referral to an alternate qualified counselling practitioner, and I would, if you wish, provide them with the information needed for therapy to continue.

Sometimes, family members realize that some of the work needed is personal (i.e. Individual therapy would be helpful – I can refer them to an appropriate therapist); other work requires family members, i.e. Family counselling. At times, parents may find couples counselling more efficient, which they can continue with Ros Best. This can be very expensive. I can recommend specific readings to assist you, and low-cost/ free counselling, though the waitlists are long.

Contacting your Counsellor

To reach me: my cell phone number is 778-834-1867 (voicemail or text), and email is rosbestcounselling@shaw.ca, but please restrict content to matters you do not consider sensitive, unless speaking directly with me. If you are calling about an emergency and need immediate assistance, leave me a message, then dial 911 for emergency assistance. I do not use social media with clients, as recommended by my professional association.

Record Keeping

I take the confidential nature of our discussions seriously. All communications and records related to your counselling will be kept confidential. I maintain written files so I can help you in a planned and organized manner. My records do not include impressions, only a factual record of our work together. These records are kept locked at my home office premises. Please be advised that client files are kept for 7 years, in accordance with BCACC

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guidelines and BC privacy legislation (PIPA). It is your right to see your file, though I have not had any client ask for this yet.

Therapist Consultation and Information Sharing

In order to provide the best possible service, I may record our sessions together (see consent options at the end of this document). I use these recordings to reflect upon our work together, and occasionally may submit short excerpts for consultation with qualified colleagues. Your identity would not be revealed, and all identifying features not be mentioned. I re-format the recordings (erase them) once I feel that I don't need them; they are not part of a client's formal file.

Occasionally, it may be helpful for me to consult with your physician or other practitioner. In that instance, I would ask for your written consent (on separate form) and which specifics you want me to share. This consent will be time-limited and you may withdraw it at any time.

Release of Information without Consent

There are two situations in which I might release information or files about you even if I do not have your signed consent (all counsellors must respect these limitations to consent):

- If I am required by court order or statutes to release parts of your file, or to testify under a subpoena.
- We are required to report to the proper authorities if we know of child or elder abuse or if there is the possibility of imminent physical harm to family members or others.

Your Concerns and Rights

You may choose to discontinue counselling with me at any time. You have the right to review your written file. I invite you to discuss any concerns that you may have regarding your counselling directly with me. If this is unsatisfactory, you can contact the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors at 250-595-4448.

Fee Agreement: We agree that the session fee will be \$_____ / _____.

I agree that I have had the above information explained to me and I understand its meaning. I have had the opportunity to discuss any concerns about this information with my family and with Ros Best.

Client Signature _____ Date _____

I do / I do not consent (circle one) to Ros Best recording our sessions for personal professional purposes or for confidential consultation where my identity is not revealed. I am aware that Ros Best will destroy recordings when they are no longer needed, before or when my file is shredded after 7 years.

Counsellor Signature _____ Date _____

Client Signature _____ Date _____