



THE RESILIENCE PROJECT, LLC
Kendra Witherspoon, LPC, NCC, MPH

Atlanta, GA 404.482.0009 contactme@trpllc.net

Information, Authorization, and Consent to Treatment

Welcome to The Resilience Project, LLC: RESILIENCE COUNSELING AND WELLNESS. I am grateful that you have made this decision for your counseling needs and I look forward to assisting you. This document is designed to inform you about what you can expect from your counseling experience, the policies regarding confidentiality and emergencies, and other information regarding your counseling journey. This document is part of an ethical obligation to the profession AND it is part of my commitment to keep you informed of each part of your counseling experience. Please know that your relationship with your counselor is a collaborative one, and I welcome your questions, comments, or suggestions.

Background Information

I served in the US Military Reserves, Army 2002-2013 and Air Force 2013-2018. While serving, I studied and received my Bachelor's Degree in Humanities and Social Sciences from Auburn University and Master's Degrees in Professional Counseling and Public Health Promotion from Liberty University. I maintain a counseling license in Georgia, a National Board certificate in counseling, and a certificate in Reiki. I have worked in Child welfare as a Clinical Services Professional and wellbeing advocate in the state of Georgia from 2009-2015. I culminated my time in this field as the Program Director of children, adolescent and young adult residential facilities from 2015-2018 as I developed my counseling private practice. I am also a trained and experienced dance artist and a natural creative professional that works with supporting the gifts and talents in others.

Theoretical Views and Client Participation

The Resilience Project, LLC offers counseling to adolescents and adults. My mission is to provide you with the space, therapeutic relationship, tools/resources, and opportunity to grow through what you are going through and live in and create the life you love. The overall goal of counseling can vary from person to person. I help to guide you towards your goals for counseling and your life. I can assist in fostering self-discovery and confidence, facilitating innate growth and healing, and strengthening interpersonal relationships, decision making and overall coping and life skills. You are to expect some changes as you go through the counseling process. With change can come growth, yet change may not always pleasant, easy, or desired. As navigate through our lives, we may sometimes become lost, frustrated, or overwhelmed. Seeking guidance and support through counseling can be the first step that we take toward achieving balance, wellness, and personal fulfillment in our lives and relationships.



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Risks and Benefits of Counseling

Due to the nature of the counseling process, as much as I would like to guarantee specific results regarding your counseling goals, I am unable to do so. Yet, with your participation, I will work to achieve the best possible results with you. Please also be aware that changes made due to counseling may affect other people in your life. For example, an increase in your assertiveness may not always be welcomed by others. It is my intention to help you manage changes in your interpersonal relationships as they arise, but it is important for you to be aware of this possibility nonetheless and communicate them in sessions. Additionally, at times people find that they feel somewhat worse when they first start counseling before they begin to feel better. This may occur as you begin discussing certain sensitive areas of your life. However, a topic usually isn't sensitive unless it needs attention. Therefore, discovering the discomfort can actually be a success.

I will create a specific plan and tailor interventions to meet your identified goals and needs. At times, I may offer additional recommendations for services that will help you achieve your goals. Also, it is important to know that alternative treatment options may be available to you in conjunction with, or instead of counseling. I will discuss these options and services with you.

Individual sessions are scheduled to last 50 minutes depending on your counseling needs. It is my belief that as people become more aware and accepting of themselves, they are more capable of finding a sense of peace and contentment in their lives. However, self-awareness and self-acceptance are goals that may take a long time to achieve. Some clients need only a few sessions to achieve these goals, whereas others may require months or even years of counseling. As a client, you are in complete control, and you may end your relationship with your counselor at any point. In order for counseling to be most successful, it is important for you to take an active role. This means working on the things we talk about both during and between sessions. This also means avoiding any mind-altering substances like alcohol or non-prescription drugs for at least eight hours prior to your therapy sessions. Generally, the more of yourself you are willing to invest, the greater the return.

Furthermore, it is my policy to only see clients who I believe have the capacity to resolve their own problems with my assistance. It is my intention to empower you in your growth process to the degree that you are capable of facing life's challenges in the future without me. I also don't believe in creating dependency or prolonging counseling if the therapeutic intervention does not seem to be helping. If this is the case, I will direct you to other resources that may be of assistance to you. Your personal development is my number one priority. I encourage you to let me know if you feel that transferring to another counselor is necessary at any time. My goal is to facilitate healing and growth, and I am very committed to



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helping you in whatever way seems to produce maximum benefit. If at any point you are unable to keep your appointments or I don't hear from you for 30 days, I will need to close your chart. However, reopening your chart and resuming counseling is always an option.

Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

One of the essential cornerstones to the therapeutic relationship between the counselor and client is confidentiality. Your communications with me will become part of a clinical recording of treatment and is referred to as Protected Health Information (PHI). You will be given a copy of The Resilience Project, LLC's Notice of Privacy Practices for Protected Health Information (PHI). Under federal statute the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), your PHI must be kept in a filed stored in a locked cabinet in a secured office. Additionally, I will always keep everything you say to me completely confidential, with the following exceptions:

1. You direct me to tell someone else and you sign a "Release of Information" form;;
2. I determine that you are a danger to yourself or others-self harm, suicide or homicidal thoughts.
3. You report information about the abuse of a child, an elderly person, or a disabled individual who may require protection;
or
4. I am ordered by a judge to disclose information.

In the latter care, my license does provide for the ability to uphold what is legally termed "privileged communication." Privileged communication is your right as a client to have a confidential relationship with a counselor. The State of Georgia has a very good track record in respecting this legal right. If for some unusual reason a judge were to order disclosure of your private information, this order can be appealed. I cannot guarantee that the appeal will be sustained, but I will do everything in my power to keep what you say confidential.

Technology Statement

In our ever-changing technological society, there are several ways we could potentially communicate and/or follow each other electronically. It is of utmost importance to us that we maintain your confidentiality, respect your boundaries, and ascertain that your relationship with your therapist remains therapeutic and professional. Therefore, we've developed the following policies:



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Cell phones: It is important for you to know that cell phones may not be completely secure and confidential. However, we realize that most people have and utilize a cell phone. Your therapist may also use a cell phone to contact you. If this is a problem, please feel free to discuss this with your therapist.

Text Messaging and Email: Both text messaging and emailing are not secure means of communication and may compromise your confidentiality. However, we realize that many people prefer to text and/or email because it is a quick way to convey information. If you choose to utilize texting or email, please discuss this with your therapist. However, please know that it is our policy to utilize these means of communication strictly for brief topics such as appointment confirmations. Please do not bring up any therapeutic content via text or email to prevent compromising your confidentiality. I will not be available in times of crisis or communicate clinical with you through these means. You also need to know that we are required to keep a copy of all emails and texts as part of your clinical record.

Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, etc: It is our policy not to accept requests from any current or former client on social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, etc. because it may compromise your confidentiality. There are times that certain settings on your apps, phone, and location services may try to connect you with me personally, with the therapy practice, or with other clients that are in the building. This is beyond my control. Please take the time to adjust your location services on your phone or privacy within your apps to fit your personal confidentiality privacy.

Google, etc.: It is our policy not to search for our clients on Google or any other search engine. We respect your privacy and make it a policy to allow you to share information about yourself to your therapist as you feel appropriate. If there is content on the Internet to include social media that you would like to share with your therapist for therapeutic reasons, please print this material out and bring it to your session. You also may share it with me from your device with your direction.

In summary, technology is constantly changing, and there are implications to all of the above that we may not realize at this time. Please feel free to ask questions and know that we are open to any feelings or thoughts you have about these and other modalities of communication.

Professional Relationship

Psychotherapy is a professional service we will provide to you. Because of the nature of therapy, your relationship with your therapist has to be different from most relationships. It may differ in how long it lasts, the objectives, or the topics discussed. It must also be limited to only the relationship of therapist and client. If you and your therapist were to interact in any other ways, you would then have a "dual relationship," which could prove to be harmful to you in the long run and is, therefore, unethical in the mental health profession. Dual relationships can set up conflicts between the therapist's interests and the



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client's interests, and then the client's (your) interests might not be put first. In order to offer all of the clients the best care, your therapist's judgment needs to be unselfish and purely focused on your needs. This is why your relationship with your therapist must remain professional in nature.

Additionally, there are important differences between therapy and friendship. Friends may see your position only from their personal viewpoints and experiences. Friends may want to find quick and easy solutions to your problems so that they can feel helpful. These short-term solutions may not be in your long-term best interest. Friends do not usually follow up on their advice to see whether it was useful. They may need to have you do what they advise. A therapist offers you choices and helps you choose what is best for you. A therapist helps you learn how to solve problems better and make better decisions. A therapist's responses to your situation are based on tested theories and methods of change.

You should also know that therapists are required to keep the identity of their clients confidential. As much as your therapist would like to, for your confidentiality he or she will not address you in public unless you speak to him or her first. Your therapist also must decline any invitation to attend gatherings with your family or friends. Lastly, when your therapy is completed, your therapist will not be able to be a friend to you like your other friends. In sum, it is the duty of your therapist to always maintain a professional role. Please note that these guidelines are not meant to be discourteous in any way, they are strictly for your long-term protection.

Structure and Cost of Sessions

You agree to provide counseling for the below listed rates unless otherwise discussed.

The current rates for therapeutic services are as follows:

Diagnostic Assessments (60 Minutes) - \$99.00

Individual Counseling (50-55 Minutes) - \$99.00

The fee for each session will be due at the beginning of the session.

These fees are subject to change with a 30-day notice.

There may be the need to consult with other treatment professionals (i.e. medical doctors, psychiatrists, school personnel, hospitals) as a part of your treatment on your behalf. Doing counseling by telephone is not ideal and needing to talk to me between sessions may indicate that you need extra support. If this is the case, we will need to explore adding sessions or developing other resources you have available to help you. Telephone calls that exceed 5 minutes in duration or paperwork (e.g., letters, treatment summaries, documentation for school or work, etc.) completed outside of session time will be



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charged at the hourly rate of \$160 per hour charged in 15 minute increments. Fees for letters and documents are expected to be paid in advance.

On occasion, cases become involved in the court system. Fees for court-related services are billed at \$350 per hour. This includes any additional consultation with your attorney, preparation for deposition, and actual deposition or court testimony (including travel time and waiting time). All fees for court-related services will be expected to be paid in advance.

Cash, credit/debit and HAS are acceptable forms of payment. Please note that there is a **\$35.00 fee for any returned payments**. I will be glad to provide you with a statement for your insurance company and to assist you with any questions you may have in this area.

Lastly, please know that failure to tender payment for services rendered may result in termination.

Billing Insurance

I do not accept insurance for billing currently. If this changes, I will notify you directly within 30 days of the change.

I acknowledge that the use of insurance can make counseling more accessible for many individuals but it often creates more barriers than access. Here are some reasons why I limit my interactions with insurance companies:

- Insurance companies require a diagnosis and medical necessity, meaning that in their eyes there must be something wrong with you that needs to be fixed. We do not view you in this way. You are a person with varied life experiences who is asking for support.
- Insurance companies dictate how we can engage in the counseling process. There is no allowance for other specialty areas of counseling that I believe may be necessary tools for your unique needs. My goal is to be the best Clinician I can be for you without the interference from insurance companies on how YOU should receive counseling.
- Reimbursement rates from insurance companies are less than 60% of out of pocket fees. By accepting this rate for all clients, I would have to see double the number of clients per week and risk my own mental health and wellbeing, leaving me unable to provide quality services to my clients

Cancellation Policy

In the event that you are unable to keep an appointment that you have scheduled, please notify me at least 24 hours in advance. Phone call and leave voicemail is first preferred, then email, or text message. If such notice is not received, you will be financially responsible for the full rate/fee related to the missed session.

If you would like to reschedule for later that week due to a missed appointment, a courtesy reschedule appointment fee will be charged for any rescheduled appointments made due to a missed appointment /late cancellation at the rate of 50% of your current rate



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I.e. 6/1/1999 (Monday) @5pm appt.-no show/-- charged regular rate of \$99; you call to reschedule for later that week
6/4/1999 (Thursday) @5pm- appt fee is \$49.50.

In Case of Emergency

The Resilience Project, LLC is considered to be an outpatient facility, and I am set up to accommodate individuals who are reasonably safe and resourceful. I do not carry a beeper nor am available at all times. If at any time this does not feel like sufficient support, please inform me, and I can discuss additional resources. Generally, I will return phone calls within 24-48 hours. If you have a mental health emergency, I encourage you not to wait for a call back, but to do one or more of the following:

- Call Summit Ridge Hospital at 678.442.5858, or Peachford Hospital at 770.454.5589
- Call the Georgia Crisis and Access Line (GCAL) at 800.715.4225
- Call 911
- Go to your nearest emergency room

Minors

If you are a minor, your parents may be legally entitled to some information about your therapy. I will discuss with you and your parents what information is appropriate for them to receive and which issues are more appropriately kept confidential.

If any custody orders in place, I must have a copy on file and both parents must agree to services based on the custody order and plan.

Termination

Counseling is not meant to be indefinite. I do not believe in creating dependency or prolonging counseling. The ultimate goal is to increase resiliency, promote autonomy, and empower you to successfully manage stressors and navigate difficult circumstances. As such, termination is an important part of counseling. Counseling may be terminated for the following reasons:

- Once counseling goals have been achieved.
- If you decide to seek services with another provider.
- If a higher level of care is needed.
- If payment is not secured for services rendered.



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-Administratively close case if no sessions within last 30 days.

It is your right to discontinue treatment with The Resilience Project, LLC. If you wish to terminate treatment, please advise me of your decision. I will direct you to the resources that will be of assistance to you.

Financial Agreement

*** I will be paying directly for services. I will not be utilizing insurance benefits. I agree to pay the agreed upon fee out-of-pocket and I understand that my insurance will not be billed and my fee will not go towards my deductible.

Our Agreement to Enter into a Therapeutic Relationship

I sincerely look forward to guiding you on your journey towards healing and growth. If you have any questions about any part of this document, please ask me.

Please initial, print, date, and sign your name below indicating that you have read and understand the contents of this form, you agree to the policies of your relationship with your therapist/counselor and you are authorizing your therapist/counselor to begin counseling treatment with you.

***** Consent for Treatment: I have read and do understand the contents of this form and agree to the policies of my relationship with my therapist.

***** Notice of Privacy Practices: I have received, read, and understand the Notice of Privacy Practices containing a description of the uses and disclosures of my PHI. I understand that this organization has the right to change its Notice of Privacy Practices from time to time and that I may contact this organization at any time to obtain a current copy of the Notice of Privacy Practices.

CLIENT PRINTED
NAME _____

CLIENT
SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

THERAPIST NAME AND SIGNATURE,

DATE _____