



DIAMOND CULTURAL HEALING  
& CONSULTING CENTER

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## Dr. Pamela Reeve, LMFT, PhD

### Policies and Procedures

#### **Welcome to psychotherapy!**

Here is some information that will be helpful for you as we begin our work together.

#### **Telephone Accessibility**

When you call me at (714) 794-5172 you will probably reach my confidential voice mail and need to leave a message. You may also text me at the same number. I will return your call or text as soon as possible. As I am not always available, if an urgent situation develops and you need help immediately, indicate that in your message, then call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

#### **Email and Social Media**

Email is not considered to be a confidential form of communication. Please make your own decisions about what to communicate via email with the confidentiality limitations in mind.

I do not interact with clients via social media such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. My goal in keeping this distance is to maintain your privacy and confidentiality and to keep clear boundaries around the therapy relationship.

#### **Cancellations**

The times set aside for you are not easily filled when cancelled with short notice (less than 24 hours). Late cancellations and missed appointments will be charged at your agreed upon session fee. Please note that insurance will not pay for missed appointments. At my discretion, late cancellation and missed appointment fees may be waived on a case-by-case basis for circumstances beyond your control.

#### **Fees**

Fees are due at each session. You may pay me by cash, check or credit card. My usual fee is \$150 per therapy session for individual or relationship counseling. I also take various insurances and this will be discussed prior to first therapy session.

I am well aware that many people cannot afford to pay this fee. I reserve some of my therapy hours for people with lower household incomes (sliding scale). If your financial circumstances make my usual fee impossible for you to pay I will be glad to talk with you about a reduced fee agreement.

There is no charge for telephone contact between sessions when needed. If such contact gets to be frequent and lengthy, I may need to negotiate a plan with you to pay for subsequent phone contact, but I have not usually found this to be necessary.

### **Confidentiality Policy and Exceptions**

Professional ethics and legal standards require that our conversations and my records (even the fact that you are a client) be kept strictly confidential, unless you sign a release of information form. However, there are times when I am legally and ethically obligated to breach confidentiality, including:

- If you present a serious, imminent danger to yourself or others;
- In cases of apparent abuse or neglect of a child, elderly person, or disabled person;
- When a judge orders the release of information;
- If legal action is brought against me by a client and/or family;
- When necessary to collect fees owed.

In the rare event that confidentiality must be breached, I will attempt to discuss it with you before taking any action, unless doing so would increase danger to you or someone else. In all cases, I will reveal only the minimum amount of information necessary.

For people who are doing relationship therapy with me, any individual communication between me and one partner that happens outside of a relationship therapy session usually will be disclosed to the other partner(s), at my discretion. Please refer to the *Notice of Privacy Practices* for more information about confidentiality.

### **Records**

As required by law and professional ethics, I maintain confidential records of our sessions and any other contacts. These records are available to others only at your written request. You have the right to withdraw your permission in writing to

prevent future disclosures. You are entitled to receive a copy of these records, unless there is reason to believe that releasing them might be harmful to you. In that case, I will provide them to an appropriate licensed mental health professional of your choice.

## **Consultation**

In order to serve you best, I may occasionally consult with other professionals when appropriate. Your name and identifying details will not be disclosed.

## **The Treatment Process**

The goals of therapy are arrived at by mutual agreement. Depending on the nature of these goals, the length of therapy can range from a few sessions to several years. Participation in therapy can result in a number of benefits, including reduction of the intensity of the distress or unease that brought you to therapy, improved interpersonal relationships, and insight. However, there are no guarantees that therapy will result in positive or intended results.

There are risks in undertaking therapy. Psychotherapy may sometimes involve recalling or reliving distressing aspects of your history (when it feels safe to do so). As a result, you may at times experience difficult emotions like sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, loneliness, frustration, or helplessness. I may challenge some of your long-held perceptions and propose different ways of looking at or handling situations, and these challenges may feel uncomfortable.

If at any time you have questions about the process of your therapy, I depend on you to bring them up for discussion. This may be difficult to do, but stretching yourself to try new ways of relating to me may be a helpful experience for you. I respond positively to clients' questioning my work, criticizing me, and identifying my mistakes and feel that such conversations are helpful for the therapy. It is also helpful for me to hear from you what you think is going well in therapy.

I am a trained Gestalt therapist and think of Gestalt therapy as my main therapeutic orientation. I also draw from other psychological theories as well, including feminist therapy and positive psychology. Please feel free to ask me at any point if you are curious about the theory behind what I am doing in therapy sessions.

## **Ending Therapy**

In the first couple of meetings we will assess if we are likely to work well together. If we are not a good match, I will offer referrals to other clinicians or resources. If at any point during psychotherapy it becomes evident to you or to me that our work together is not effective or is no longer necessary, we can discuss this together, and if appropriate, terminate treatment and explore possible alternatives.

As an ethical practitioner, I will not practice beyond the level of my competence, as established by my education, training, and experience. In the event that you would

be better served by seeing a therapist who is more competent to work with you, I may need to make a referral so you can get the help you need. I will do my best to support the concluding of our work together, whatever the reason.

When you decide you are ready to leave, I would like to help you leave well. Please give at least one week's notice so that we can review our work together and plan for the future. Saying "goodbye" is important.