



Serene Hour Contracting and Consent Form

Counselling Approach

I believe that my clients have the desire and the capacity to grow towards fulfilling their true potential, and that they are the experts on their own lives. Therefore, I will not give you advice or offer solutions, but will work with you to help you understand yourself more fully and to find your own inner resources. With greater self-awareness and trust in yourself, I hope that you will be able to make constructive changes, leading to a more satisfying and meaningful life.

Confidentiality

The content of the sessions will be treated as highly confidential. I will need to discuss my work with my supervisor and I will only use your first name but not any other identifying details of you. However, there are a few circumstances in which I may be required to break confidentiality:

- If I consider you to be at risk of seriously harming yourself or someone else
- If your counselling records have been requested by a court of law
- If another party or agency has requested your information, and you have agreed and provided your written consent.

Session Structure

Counselling begins with an initial contract of six (6) sessions.

At the end of the sixth session, the counselling process will be reviewed together, and further sessions may be agreed upon if appropriate.

Sessions are held once per week at a mutually agreed regular time.

Each counselling session is for 60 minutes.



Time Zone

Serene Hour operates from Sydney, Australia.

All sessions are scheduled at Sydney time (AEST/AEDT).

Clients are responsible for confirming the correct time in their local time zone before scheduling the session.

Virtual Session Requirements

To ensure the effectiveness and confidentiality of counselling:

Clients must attend sessions from a private, quiet, and uninterrupted space.

Mobile phones and other electronic devices must be set to silent mode during the session.

During the counselling session clients cannot take phone calls, send emails or text messages, and engage in other activities. Failure to comply will result in immediate termination of session. No refunds given.

Scheduling and Payment

A counselling session is confirmed only after all of the following steps are completed:

Session fee payment has been made.

Payment confirmation (receipt or screenshot) has been shared.

The client has read and signed the Contracting and Consent Form.

The client has read the Session FAQs.

Sessions will not be scheduled until all of the above requirements are fulfilled.

Late Arrival and No-Shows

Clients are expected to join the session at the scheduled time.

If a client arrives more than 5 minutes late, the session is considered a no-show and will be treated as cancelled.

Missed sessions or no-shows are non-refundable.



Cancellation and Rescheduling Policy

Counselling sessions are non-refundable once scheduled, as the appointment time is reserved exclusively for the client.

Clients may request to reschedule a session with 48 hours' notice. Rescheduling requests are accommodated once per session and is subject to the counsellor's availability.

Requests to cancel or reschedule with less than 48 hours' notice will be treated as a missed session, and the session fee is forfeited.

If a client does not attend the scheduled session or arrives more than 5 minutes late, the session is considered a no-show, and the session fee is forfeited.

Counsellor Initiated Cancellations

In rare cases where a session is cancelled by the therapist, the client will be offered either:

A full refund, or an option to reschedule at no additional cost.

Record keeping

I will take notes during or after each session to help me keep track of our progress together. These notes will be stored in a private and secure location and may be viewed by you if you so wish. Your counselling records will be kept by the service for a period of seven (7) years from the date of your last contact with the service.

Email/telephone contact

Serene Hour provides scheduled counselling services and is not equipped to provide 24/7 availability, emergency intervention, or real-time crisis response.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, feel at risk of harming yourself or others, or require immediate assistance, please contact local emergency or crisis support services.

Communication outside scheduled sessions (including WhatsApp messages, emails, or call-back requests) is for administrative or scheduling purposes only and cannot not be used for psychological support.

Messages are typically responded to within 24 business hours, Monday to Friday between 10:00AM – 5:00PM (AEST/AEDT). Messages sent outside these hours will be addressed on the next working day.



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Ending counselling

Normally, the end of counselling would be by mutual prior agreement. However, you have the right to end your counselling at any time. I would appreciate you letting me know if you decide not to return to counselling, giving at least 48 hours' notice. If at any time I feel that our counselling is no longer appropriate for you, I will discuss this with you and may suggest discontinuation or a referral to a more appropriate service.

I have hereby read and understood the above.

Client signature: _____ Date: _____

Counsellor signature: _____ Date: _____



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Couples Counselling

Question: My partner is hesitant to take couples counselling?

Answer: Couples counselling session cannot take place without the mutual consent, agreement and availability of both partners.

Question: What if one partner wants to continue counselling but the other does not?

Answer: Couples counselling requires the willing participation of both partners. If one partner decides they no longer wish to attend, couples counselling cannot continue in its current form.

In this situation, the counsellor may discuss options with you, which may include:

- concluding the couples counselling process
- attending individual counselling to explore your own thoughts, feelings, and next steps
- scheduling a final closing session (if both partners are willing) to reflect on the work completed.

Individual counselling can provide a space to clarify your needs, boundaries, and decisions moving forward.

Question: How is confidentiality handled in couples counselling?

Answer: In couples counselling, the relationship itself is considered the client, rather than either individual partner. Information shared during sessions is treated as confidential within the counselling process, except in circumstances where disclosure is required by law or where there is a risk of serious harm to a person.

Because two people are involved in the counselling process:

information shared in joint sessions is part of the shared counselling work

confidentiality cannot be guaranteed between partners within the relationship



The counsellor may encourage openness and transparency when discussing important matters affecting the relationship.

Specific confidentiality practices will be explained during the informed consent and contracting process at the beginning of counselling.

Question: How many sessions does couples counselling usually involve?

Answer: The number of sessions varies depending on the concerns you bring and the goals you would like to work toward. Couples counselling is a collaborative process, and the pace of progress differs for every couple.

Many couples begin with 6 sessions, which allows time to understand the relationship dynamics, develop practical skills, and work toward agreed goals. Some couples may benefit from fewer sessions, while others may choose to continue for longer if deeper issues emerge.

Progress and next steps are usually reviewed periodically so that counselling remains focused and helpful.

Question: How many sessions are typical for premarital counselling?

Answer: Premarital counselling is usually **short-term and structured**.

Sessions focus on topics such as:

- communication styles
- expectations about roles and responsibilities
- attachment patterns and conflict resolution
- finances and life planning
- family and cultural influences.

The aim is to help couples build a strong foundation before marriage.

Question: How many sessions are typical for new parents or blended families?

Answer: Families adjusting to new parenting roles or blended family structures often benefit from 6–10 sessions.

Sessions typically focus on:

Adjusting to changing roles and responsibilities

Navigating parenting expectations

Communication and conflict management



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Strengthening partnership during life transitions.

The number of sessions may vary depending on the complexity of family dynamics.

Question: How many sessions are typical for parenting and migration concerns?

Answer: Counselling for families navigating migration and cultural adjustment often ranges between 6–10 sessions.

Sessions address:

cultural adjustment and identity shifts

parenting in a new cultural context

intergenerational expectations

loss of support systems and rebuilding community.

Some families choose additional sessions as new challenges arise during the transition.