

# Gill Jones Counselling - Agreement

## COUNSELLOR SECTION

I can offer you online counselling either live, using a private Messenger chatroom or by email either plain or encrypted (ask me for details). Whichever method you choose the following points form the basis for our working agreement.

**Emails** can be exchanged in different ways in my online counselling service and I ask you to indicate your preference in the Client section of this Agreement.

- ✚ You may want to write to me as often as you like, knowing I will respond to all your emails on a set day each week (e.g. a Thursday.)
- ✚ You may want me to respond to each email as I receive it. I normally reply to emails within 72 hours and will let you know when this is not possible.
- ✚ You may want to make a weekly payment to exchange as many emails as you choose during that week.

My main email response to you I call a Therapeutic Email and that is the one I charge for. (I number the emails in a pre-paid package in the subject line as TE1/3 or TE2/5 etc.) You may have a query after you have read a TE and I reply briefly to such queries at no additional charge. Any administrative emails (e.g. to query something I have written or to book a live session) are also not charged for.

The prices for single emails or pre-paid packages of emails (3 or 5) are on my website [www.gjcounselling.co.uk/onlinecounsellor.htm](http://www.gjcounselling.co.uk/onlinecounsellor.htm). Payment methods are described below.

**Live Sessions** need to be booked with me in advance by email or telephone 07939 244765. It normally takes 24 hours to arrange but can sometimes be done more quickly.

**Confidentiality is a Two-Way Arrangement.** In working together we are setting up a relationship which is confidential. From my point of view our counselling sessions are kept on my password protected computer for as long as we are working together. I will remove them from my computer after a period of 6 months has elapsed with no contact from you and store them for a further two years (in case you wish to return to counselling during that time) on an encrypted external hard drive which is kept in a locked filing cabinet in my office. I work to the Guidelines for Good Practice of two professional bodies, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) where I am a Senior Accredited Counsellor and the Association for Counselling and Therapy Online (ACTO). You can check my details in their online directories at [www.counselling.co.uk](http://www.counselling.co.uk) and [www.acto-uk.org](http://www.acto-uk.org). I am registered as a controller of sensitive data under the Data Protection Act (Reg. No. Z6065539) and comply with their recommendations for storing sensitive data. Sensitive data includes our counselling emails or chat transcripts and any further notes I may make about our work.

I expect you to treat our counselling sessions with the same level of confidentiality and I trust you not to reveal any of the work we do together on any website or blog to which members of the public have access.

Your identity and personal details will be protected by me and the only exceptions I will make are when I judge that there is serious risk to yourself or others or when I am compelled to by Law. In the rare event that I break confidentiality, this is done with your prior knowledge (where possible) and only to people who absolutely need to know (e.g. doctors). I have regular supervision of my online work but I do not disclose your identity to my supervisor.

**Keeping our work private** In order for you to get the most out of online counselling you need to feel confident that no-one else can read what you write, so I have put here some suggestions about keeping the counselling private and confidential.

- If we are to work by email, I suggest you open a free encrypted email account at [www.safe-mail.net](http://www.safe-mail.net) just for our counselling emails. Having a separate account for our work together means our emails don't come into your main email Inbox (just an alert from Safe-mail to tell you when there's an email waiting) and you can leave the work behind you at the end. If you want to do this, please send me an email at my safemail address ([gillj@safe-mail.net](mailto:gillj@safe-mail.net)).
- If you prefer to work using your normal email Inbox, I suggest we send the counselling content as an encrypted file attachment with a covering email, to prevent it being read by anyone else.
- If we are to work by live session with text, I am happy to work with you in a private chatroom

## Gill Jones Counselling - Agreement

on Skype ([www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)) which has a high level of encryption and makes a direct connect between our two computers - the content does not pass through a third party web server. Transcripts of live text sessions are held on the Skype server (when you open either program you can access your personal conversation history to read them) but if you have a shared version of skype, I suggest you clear your conversation history to prevent others seeing it (you can copy and paste text transcript into a word document and store it in an encrypted format with a password – ask me if you want to do this and don't know how to).

- If you prefer to hold live sessions using webcam or just audio, I suggest we do this via Skype for the same reasons given above. It is also possible to record Skype conversations if you wish to review them, please ask me for details. I will not record any Skype conversations unless you ask me to do so.

**Referral** It is not always possible to know if working online is the most appropriate way for you to get help. If I felt that another online counsellor was better placed to help you than I am (because they had specialised skill or experience) I would suggest a change and support you whilst you made it. If I believed face to face counselling would be a better way to help you I would suggest that either we hold face to face sessions or, if this were not possible, I would help you to find a counsellor near to you and support you whilst you made the change to face to face counselling.

**Emergency Contact** In the event of complete technology failure (e.g. computer or internet breakdown), I suggest we send a text message to the other's mobile phone – this is essential if we have a live session booked and helpful if you know you can't answer an email when you expect to. My mobile phone number is 07939244765.

**Payment** The charges for my counselling services are set out on my website <http://gjcounselling.co.uk/onlinecounsellor.htm#3>. I will respond to your emails and hold live sessions after I receive notification of payment. Payment can be made using one of the following methods:

**Google Checkout** (secure payment online for debit and credit cards). Please use the button on my website and select the counselling package you are buying from the drop down menu. I receive email notification from Google immediately after you make a payment and will respond as soon as I receive that notification.

**Due to the lack of security on the internet, the following details will be sent to you on request in an encrypted document.**

**Internet bank transfer** Please ask me for details of my bank account if you want to make a direct payment into it. I start work when I see the payment in my account.

**Cheque** through postal system. Please ask me to email you my postal address. I am ready to work once the cheque has been cleared.

\*\*\*\*\*

### CLIENT SECTION

**Please ask any questions before completing the blank spaces below then return the form to me with your next email.**

I confirm that I am over 18 years of age and that the information given by me here is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

#### **Details about me**

Name ...

Telephone number (for emergency text message in case of computer or internet failure)...

Email address for counselling ...

Main Email address (if different from above) .....

# Gill Jones Counselling - Agreement

## **Communication**

I would like us to communicate in the following way (put X against the option you prefer – you can change it later on if another method seems more suitable)

- Receive email responses on a set day each week (you may send several emails and I will send one response to all emails on the agreed day)  
Tuesday ... Wednesday .... Thursday ... Friday .... Saturday ....
- Receive an email response to every email I send ... (I will respond within 48 hours)
- Exchange an unlimited number of emails during a single week .....  
cost £75 per week. (I respond within 24 hours Mon-Fri)
- Book a 'live' session  
(indicate the days and times which suit you best)

Mondays	1000 – 1300 hrs ....
Tuesdays	1400 – 1700 hrs ....
Thursdays	1800 – 2000 hrs ....

## **Method of Payment**

I will pay for my counselling in advance using  
(put X against method)

Google Checkout .... Bank Transfer .... Cheque....

## **The following information is optional.**

1. Name of GP ...  
(only contacted with your prior knowledge)
2. Tel. No. of Surgery ...  
(please include full dialling code)

**IMPORTANT NOTICE for clients who are resident in the US or Canada.** My professional indemnity insurance covers me to work with any client no matter where in the world they reside. However, if a resident of the US or Canada makes a claim against me, this insurance cover will only apply if the case is "heard in a British court under American or Canadian law" (whichever is appropriate). So far, I have never had any claim made against me either for online or face to face work.

Please add your name and the date below to show you have read, understood and agree to the terms of this Agreement, then save the completed document and return it to me as an email attachment.

I have read, understood and agree to the terms of this Agreement.

Name ..... Date .....

When you complete and return this document to me I will encrypt it using our agreed password and hold it on my computer until