



832 2nd Ave NW
Hickory, NC 28601
Phone/Fax: 828-328-4673
Website: www.powertothrive.com

POLICIES/PROCEDURES:

CLIENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE BELOW POLICIES. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE AT ANY TIME.

I. Responsibility for Appointments:

A very important part of the clients' therapy process is accepting responsibility for making and keeping appointments. MFTS DOES NOT offer appointment reminders. Keeping track of scheduled appointments is the clients' responsibility, and MFTS cannot be held responsible for missed appointments due to clients' lack of planning or organization. Recurring appointments are available on a first come, first served basis, **but must have a calendar end-date. It is the client's responsibility to ensure that recurrences are renewed whenever necessary, on our scheduling system.** MFTS will print out your upcoming appointments upon your request, but we ask that you keep track of them in a personal calendar or journal.

MFTS makes every effort to provide you with your chosen appointment time and reserves that time for your consultation alone. We are reasonable to cancellations that are due to a true emergency, however, **we charge for non-emergency "no show" appointments**, that is, appointments cancelled with less than 48 business-hours notice. MFTS Business hours are as follows: Monday – Friday 9am-5pm. *Sat. and Sun. are NOT business days.* For example, if a scheduled appointment is for Monday at 3 p.m., a client must cancel by Thursday of the week prior, no later than 3 p.m., to avoid the missed session fee. MFTS keeps a "cancellation list" each week, and when we are given the appropriate notice, other clients who have been waiting to see a therapist can be worked in. A message left on the MFTS voice mail does not count as cancellation unless it is received by our staff within the 48-hour timeframe.

Insurance companies do not reimburse for missed appointments. Please be aware that clients who are charged for a missed session will incur the entire session fee (NOT THE COPAY NOR ANY REDUCED FEE) and will be responsible to pay this balance before another session can be scheduled.

II. Time of Appointments:

Your appointment is scheduled at a set time, and we request that clients arrive on time. In the event that a client is late, we ask that the client call and inform us of this. We will still hold the appointment open, as long as we have been informed that the client is planning to attend. If clients are more than 20 minutes late for an appointment and have not contacted us, we will consider it a missed session, and **clients will incur the usual charge.** Additionally, we cannot guarantee the appointment will be held open for the entire session if clients do not contact us within 20 minutes of being late, as other clients may be worked in, in their absence.

Therapists at MFTS do their best to adhere to the set schedule, but due to the sensitive nature of the psychotherapeutic process, occasionally, other sessions may run somewhat behind. For this reason, we request that clients allow for a small period of extra time after their scheduled appointments, in case we are running behind schedule. We are committed that you receive *the entire time* that was reserved for each client, so in the event that a therapist is running late, the next client's appointment will also run late. This ensures that clients receive the full time in session with their therapist. We ask that you approach this occasional situation with understanding, realizing that you may someday be the client who requires the "extra time."



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POLICIES/PROCEDURES CONTINUED

III. Check in/Payment:

Please check in at the receptionist desk upon arrival to the office. Payment is expected PRIOR to entering the therapy room, unless other arrangements have been made. If you do not have payment at the time of your appointment, you may reschedule your appointment, however you will incur the usual missed session fee. There is an ATM one block away from our location, for the client's convenience. MFT Services accepts cash and personal checks. **WE DO NOT ACCEPT CREDIT OR DEBIT CARDS!**

IV. Fees:

Individual/Family/Couples Therapy/Hypnotherapy - Initial Consultation (45-50 min.): \$150.00.

Play Therapy - Initial Consultation (45-50 min.): \$150.00.

Individual/Family/Couples/Play Therapy/ Hypnotherapy: \$110 per 45-50 min. session; \$145 for 75-80 min. session; \$210 for 90 min. session.

V. Billing:

MFTS requires payment at the time of services rendered. If any balance accrues on client accounts, clients will receive a bill once a month, on or after the 15th of the month. **ALL BALANCES OVER 60 DAYS PAST DUE WILL INCUR INTEREST AT 1.5% PER MONTH.** Invoices are due upon receipt. MFTS employs *all* legal means to collect unpaid debt, including but not limited to collections agencies and small claims court. If we must employ collections services or legal fees due to the collections process, they are added to client's balance. Please see consultation agreement for more information on confidentiality regarding collections.

VI. Insurance:

As a convenience to clients, MFT Services offers insurance filing *only* for Blue Cross Blue Shield and Primary Physician Care (certain providers may not be in network for Primary Physician Care). Notwithstanding this service, **MFTS is in NO WAY accountable for clients' health insurance coverage.** While MFT Services will file claims for clients with either of the above insurance carriers, this does not guarantee that reimbursement will occur. **Clients are *always* responsible for the total balance for all services they receive.** MFTS only files insurance within a reasonable timeframe, and in the case of continued denial of third-party reimbursement, MFTS requires clients to pay balances in full. Any payment above and beyond clients' indebtedness will be credited to their account, or refunded. MFTS will employ all means of debt collection including filing suit in small claims court. Clients will be held responsible for all collections fees including court costs upon receiving a small claims court judgment in our favor.

Any fees or outstanding balance not reimbursed by a client's insurance coverage after 60 days are the client's responsibility.

We are dedicated to protecting clients' confidentiality and privacy, and therefore will never answer any questions from insurance claims representatives without written permission.



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CONSULTATION AGREEMENT/INFORMED CONSENT:

I agree to enter treatment for counseling with Marriage and Family Therapy Services (MFTS). I realize that this treatment may involve discussing and dealing with intense emotional issues which may at times be distressing. However, it is my understanding that this process is intended to help me both personally, and with relationships. I have been made aware of alternative treatment facilities available to me.

By signing the MFTS consent form, I give permission for any therapy, testing, or diagnostic evaluation deemed necessary by MFTS to treat me, my marriage, family, or other relationship. I have had all of my questions about treatment answered to my satisfaction, and understand I can raise further questions at any time during my course of treatment. I further acknowledge that I can refuse any/all specific treatments, although this may not be in compliance with best practices and/or my treatment plan.

I realize that there is no guarantee of particular results or outcomes from consultations. I further realize that I may leave counseling at any time, although I have been informed that this is best accomplished when in communication with the counselor. It has also been explained to me that, under certain circumstances, counseling may need to be terminated by the counselor. I acknowledge that if termination should be necessary, MFTS will make an appropriate referral for me.

I realize that all counselors at MFTS are independently practicing professionals, however, they frequently review cases as professional colleagues. I understand that MFTS colleagues and staff will keep all records and information pertaining to my treatment in strict confidence. Therapists, colleagues, and staff may not disclose any information/records regarding my treatment to others, including the fact that I, my family members, or companions are receiving treatment, except when specifically required by law, or with my written consent. I understand that the law and professional ethics require MFTS to break confidentiality in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect, with or without my consent. I also understand that the law and professional ethics require MFTS to report threats by me, companions, or family members to physically harm others or ourselves. Further, I realize that MFTS is legally responsible to break confidentiality when ordered to testify in a court of law.

I understand that MFT Services may utilize all legal means to collect any debts owed on past due accounts, including collections procedures which might disclose my name and other personal information, limited only to the purposes of the collections process. I realize no treatment information other than dates of service will be disclosed for collections purposes.

I understand that MFT Services is committed to providing the highest quality care possible, and practices in compliance with all federal HIPAA Standards.



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HYPNOTHERAPY INFORMATION

Some therapists at MFTS have received training and certification in clinical hypnotherapy. This type of hypnosis is known as hypno-behavioral therapy, which combines traditional hypnosis techniques with Ericsonian techniques, Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and Jungian psychology.

This approach offers an effective and productive adjunct to other types of therapy. It has been demonstrated to work well for both adults and children. The following information provides answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about hypnosis.

- 1. *Isn't hypnosis only effective for treating issues such as weight loss and quitting smoking?***
Although clinical hypnosis has been demonstrated to be very helpful in treating addictions such as compulsive eating, smoking, etc., this therapeutic tool has a much wider reaching application. Hypnotherapy has been shown to be effective in the management of chronic and acute pain, increasing self-esteem, treating post-traumatic stress disorder, eating disorders, anxiety/phobias, depression, anger management, grief issues, and sexual difficulties.
- 2. *Will I be "unconscious" when I go under hypnosis?***
No, you do not lose consciousness while in the hypnotic state. The hypnotic trance-state has been shown to be similar to the brain-state during meditation or prayer. It provides a feeling of extreme relaxation, similar to that relaxed state you experience *just before* falling asleep. Under hypnosis, you continue to hear sounds inside and outside of the room, and you are able to respond verbally to suggestions. *You are never out of control, but rather, hypnosis helps you to gain more control over your thoughts and behaviors so that you gain more control over your life. At any time during hypnosis, you can choose to end the session.*
- 3. *Are you going to make me "cluck like a chicken?"***
This seems like a ridiculous question, but almost everyone asks this, and the answer is, absolutely not. Hypnotherapy is very different from the hypnosis stage shows, which are intended to entertain through embarrassment. A therapist's ethical obligation to clients is to offer the opportunity for therapeutic healing to take place. Additionally, as emphasized above, you never lose control of your behaviors when under hypnosis, and would never do anything in-trance that you wouldn't do in your waking state. Any time you do not like a suggestion during hypnosis, you have the control to reject it. Hypnosis simply offers you a tool to access parts of yourself that have been inaccessible in your fully awake state (such as repressed emotions).

Most hypnotherapy sessions last between 90 and 120 minutes. The first half-hour is usually spent talking and identifying relevant information. The next 45 minutes to an hour is spent in hypnotherapy and the last 15 to 30 minutes in completion and weekly instructions. During your session, the therapist will make an audio "reinforcement" CD which you may use to extend the benefits of your session. Generally speaking, most cases are scheduled once per week, using both hypnotherapy and talk therapy, and then decreasing frequency to every other week.

If you have any questions regarding hypnotherapy, please discuss them with your therapist. Please ask for a suggested reading list if you would like to learn more about clinical hypnosis. ***If you choose hypnotherapy as a form of treatment***, please sign the agreement on your intake paperwork.



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TELEPHONE CONSULTATIONS

Occasionally clients may find they want to talk with their therapist in-between office visits. We are available for a limited number of telephone consultations throughout the week. Clients must make appointments for these sessions in advance, just as they do for regular office visits. Generally, phone consultations occur in the evenings, after 8 p.m. The procedure for this service is as follows: Client calls at a specified time on a predetermined phone line (provided at the time appointment is made).

These consultations are not covered by insurance, as they are not considered medically necessary office visits. Clients are charged the entire fee, out of pocket. Usually, phone consultations last 30-60 minutes, however, longer sessions are available. The out-of-pocket fee for this service is the same as office consultations: \$60 for 30 minutes; \$110 for 60 minutes; \$145 for 90 minutes; \$210 for two hours. Clients have the option of either paying cash or check in advance for this service, or paying via Paypal over the internet (with a bank account, NOT a credit card). Our staff would be happy to assist clients in the simple task of setting up a Paypal account.

If clients need to speak briefly with their therapist over the telephone in between sessions, they may call the office phone. Please remember our therapists are with clients most of the time. You may leave a voice mail if we are unavailable and we will return your call as soon as possible. Calls under 15 minutes are not considered telephone consultations, and there is no charge for them. You may choose to use our voice mail or email as a way of providing your therapist information about something going on in your life, rather than speaking on the phone. This is perfectly acceptable, and will allow you to update your therapist without incurring the expense of a telephone consultation.

Please discuss this service with your therapist if you are interested!



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Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Information

Some therapists at MFTS have received training and certification in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). EMDR is a psychotherapeutic treatment modality developed to treat the distress associated with traumatic memories. EMDR can allow clients to experience resolution to traumatic experiences through a series of exercises done with the therapist. Clients who undergo EMDR are completely awake and aware during the session. They may choose to stop the EMDR process at anytime. The following provides answers to some of the most commonly asked questions about EMDR.

1. What can I expect if I am treated using EMDR? After a comprehensive assessment, the therapist will ask the client to describe problematic memories. Then the therapist will use various techniques that stimulate the left and right sides of the brain through side to side eye movement, tapping hands either through touch or small vibrating paddles, or alternating sounds left and right with headphones.

2. Is EMDR an appropriate treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder?

Yes. Numerous studies have demonstrated EMDR to be one of the most successful forms of therapeutic intervention for recovery from trauma.

3. What are the side effects? As with any form of psychotherapy, there may be a temporary increase in distress.

1. Distressing and unresolved memories may emerge
2. Some clients may experience reactions during a treatment session that neither they nor the administering clinician may have anticipated, including a high level of emotion or physical sensations
3. After the treatment session, the processing of incidents/material may continue, and other dreams, memories feelings, etc., may emerge.

5. How many sessions will it take? The number of sessions depends upon the specific problem and client history. However, repeated controlled studies have shown that a single trauma can be processed within 3 sessions in 80-90% of the participants. While every disturbing event need not be processed, the amount of therapy will depend upon the complexity of the history.

For information on research and articles published about EMDR, visit the website <http://www.emdr.com>.

If you choose EMDR as a form of treatment, please sign the agreement on your intake paperwork.