

# Grace Whitman Therapy

## Policies for Individual and Couples' Psychotherapy



Individual and Couples' sessions are scheduled on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. Sessions typically are scheduled for 50, 75, 90, 120 or 180 minutes. I have found that people's growth does not always occur within a fixed time period. I am willing to run over session time in the event that we are engaged in topics that may merit more time for individuals to absorb. If I have no appointment following yours, you and I can decide on how much more time we will use. I make every effort not to run too far into other scheduled appointments. I do ask clients to be ready to begin sessions at their scheduled time, and if I begin a little thereafter, I will make up time due them on the end. If you must end on time, I do ask that you share responsibility to ensure that this happens. I prorate my fee for the time

that we run over.

Once a session has been booked, clients will be responsible for payment with the following exceptions: If you cancel 48 hours outside a scheduled appointment, there will be no charge. If you have to cancel between 48 and 24 hours, you will be charged half of the scheduled fee. If you have to cancel for any reason within 24 hours of the scheduled appointment, you will be responsible for the whole fee. When given adequate notice, I will make every effort to reschedule sessions within the same week.

**Exceptions to cancellation policy:** Severe weather, which necessitates Federal Government closing; Jury duty.

Fees for psychotherapy may be subject to a slight increase on a yearly basis, beginning January 1 of a given calendar year. Clients will be given thirty days' notice prior to any increase.

## Policies for group psychotherapy

Individuals wishing to join a group must first be interviewed and may be asked to do some individual sessions before joining an ongoing group.

Group sessions are scheduled on a weekly basis and run an hour and forty-five minutes.

Group members who are not in individual or couples therapy are asked to schedule individual appointments with me once every two to three months as part of their agreement for group participation.

All clients in group therapy must make a commitment to attend the group for a minimum of four months. This allows for the stability of the group and gives new members time to work through their initial reactions and responses. Group work is designed to provide members with an opportunity to increase anxiety tolerance, to identify their limitations in interpersonal interactions, to learn how others experience their behavior and to experiment with alternative ways of approaching others and handling themselves in the presence of others. This can be useful for individuals experiencing anxiety, resentment or dissatisfaction in personal and professional relationships.

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Group members are required to give four weeks' notice prior to ending group psychotherapy. The notice is an effort to encourage members to leave well, having an experience of completion. It also is designed to allow time for the remaining group members to adequately address their own reactions to the departure of fellow members.

Payment is due at the time of sessions. At the first of each month, a statement for the previous month will be issued for tax and insurance purposes. There is no direct billing with any insurance plan.

Each group member is allowed four excused absences each year. All other scheduled group sessions are the client's financial responsibility.

Group members agree to follow the group rules for confidentiality.

## **Fees and Payment**

### Individual and Couples Psychotherapy

60 minutes @ \$275 per session; longer or shorter sessions are prorated.

### Group Psychotherapy

\$100 per session; sessions run 105 minutes.

Payment is due at the time services are rendered, unless other arrangements have been agreed upon with me in advance.

## **Confidentiality**

All conversations that take place between us are confidential with the following exceptions:

- In cases of serious suicidal or homicidal threats or where there is a risk of child abuse, I am mandated by law to report.
- In couples' therapy, information shared with me in an individual session is considered part of the couple's therapy. I cannot do my job fully with two people when asked to keep material secret by one from the other.
- In situations requiring consultation with another mental health professional or with a medical professional, your written permission is both legally and ethically required before I speak to another professional.
- If subpoenaed, I want you to know that I am not fully protected under the law as a priest or lawyer would be. While the Supreme Court decision *Jaffee v. Redmond* upheld a social worker's entitlement to protection, the ruling does not apply in some situations. For instance, clients volunteering that they have been in therapy, during a deposition, would be waiving their own right to confidentiality.

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- Finally, it is my policy to work therapeutically with people, not legally. If you need some type of assessment or expert testimony during the course of our work together, I would not be available for that. I will be glad to refer you to another professional for those services.