

## DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

### **Introduction to Tyndale Counselling Services**

The *Tyndale Counselling Services* staff is committed to facilitating growth and healing in the lives of our Tyndale University College and Seminary students. Our services include professional therapy for individuals, couples, families and groups, as well as seminars, and interpretation of personality and vocational inventories. We offer therapy services in a number of languages.

General information on the services we offer to may be found on our website ([www.tyndale.ca/counselling](http://www.tyndale.ca/counselling)). The following specific information is provided to help you to make an informed decision about therapy. If you have any questions, please ask your therapist or Sharolyn McLeod (ext. 2123), Coordinator. Services are also open to the public through the Family Life Centre ([www.tyndale.ca/family-life](http://www.tyndale.ca/family-life)) at a fee which is closer to industry standards.

### **About Therapy**

**Your Therapist.** Your therapist wants to assist you in growth and healing in the areas that lead you to come to counselling and will help you work toward your therapy goals. Feel free to ask your therapist about their professional background, education and training, and perspectives on therapy, as you have a right to this information. You may be seen by an intern therapist and may have co-therapy (two therapists). All our therapists are trained professionals who work with and respect people of all or no religious backgrounds.

**Christian Commitment.** All staff members are committed to the Christian faith and agree with the Tyndale University College and Seminary "Statement of Faith." Each one is also committed to the Tyndale "Mission Statement": "Tyndale is dedicated to the pursuit of truth, to excellence in teaching, learning and research, for the enriching of mind, heart and character, to serve the church and the world for the glory of God."

**Therapeutic Approach.** We have a holistic approach to therapy: growth and healing of the whole person including emotional, spiritual, academic, relational, vocational, behavioural, and cognitive well-being. Your therapist is not a medical doctor and therefore cannot prescribe medication or give medical advice but can make a referral, if needed. While therapy style varies, all therapists will need some information to gain an understanding of your concern(s) and will develop therapeutic goals with you. You may end therapy at any time. If possible, discuss your decision with your therapist, as closure is part of the therapy process.

**Outcome Rating Scales & Session Rating Scales.** At the beginning and end of each therapy session your therapist will usually ask you to fill out a short survey regarding the past week (Outcome Rating Scale) and the current session (Session Rating Scale). Together you will use this information to monitor how you are doing and how your therapist is doing in helping you meet your therapy goals. Please be as honest as possible in your scoring.

**Accessibility Services.** *Tyndale Counselling Services* is compliant with the accessibility legislation (AODA). We have a commitment to address barriers in our services and processes, therefore we will provide accommodation for people with disabilities. If you require accommodation, please advise Sharolyn McLeod, Coordinator, at [smcleod@tyndale.ca](mailto:smcleod@tyndale.ca) or by calling 416-226-6620 ext. 2123.

**Risks of Therapy.** The process of change has an impact on our lives and our relationships. Your therapist will help you think through the implications and consequences of the life changes that you are considering. Changing old habits and ways of thinking, feeling and behaving often requires hard work and you may experience some feelings of discomfort along the way. While positive gains are the goal in counselling, outcomes cannot be guaranteed. Additionally, a person may change in ways that others may or may not approve.

**Online Psychotherapy.** We are pleased to introduce online therapy (using Zoom) as a secondary means of providing psychotherapy to a limited number of students (those who are registered for online courses only, or in other extenuating circumstances). The preferred and predominant means of providing therapy is face to face at our Tyndale offices. If, however, you are not able to use the face to face format, please speak with your therapist about online therapy. There are some criteria that must be met to utilize this format and your therapist might request your first meeting as face to face.

**Supervision of Therapy.** All our therapists receive supervision to provide competent and responsible care for students, maintain high standards, and facilitate the therapist's ongoing professional development. All supervisors (Sheila Stevens, Wilma Nevers, Winnie Lai, Purple Yip, Grace Kuipers, Katharine Kim and Bassma Younan) are Registered Psychotherapists (CRPO) and are either Approved Supervisors with AAMFT (American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy) or working toward that professional designation (see our website for details). Therapists usually video record sessions to facilitate adequate supervision. You have a right to a scheduled consultation with our Director and/or your therapist's supervisor if you have any questions about the therapeutic process or supervision.

### ***Your Rights as a Client***

**Confidentiality.** Under normal circumstances only you have the right to tell your own story and what is shared in therapy is treated as confidential and will not be shared with any office or individual outside our *Tyndale Counselling Services* team without your signed and informed consent. All staff members do their utmost to protect confidentiality within the team when it is suspected that a student may be known by a member of the team. Students in couple, family or group therapy are responsible for confidentiality of information they share in the group.

Under some circumstances, all professionals are legally and ethically bound to disclose certain specific and relevant information to appropriate individuals or agencies. These circumstances include: if there is reason to believe that a client in therapy is a danger to themselves or may do harm to another person, if there is reason to believe that a minor has been, is, or may be in danger of neglect or abuse, in response to a court order, or if a client reports reasonable suspicion or knowledge that a resident in a Long Term Care facility or Retirement Home in Ontario is suffering or has suffered harm as a result of abuse or negligence by staff in the home, if the therapist has reasonable grounds to believe another regulated health professional has sexually abused a client or patient.

In other cases, your therapist may share specific and relevant information with appropriate organizations without your consent. These circumstances include: if your therapist has reason to believe that another therapist has caused or is likely to cause you harm, in a medical emergency or if the court subpoenas your records. Note that it is our policy not to get involved in court action around divorce and/or custody except in rare, exceptional circumstances.

**Privacy.** You have a right to expect as much visual and auditory privacy as may be reasonably provided given our current facilities. Our offices are in the A500 and B500 wings. White noise is used to enhance privacy. There is a Waiting Room (B505) beside the Reception Office. If you are doing online therapy, your therapist will be working with you from our secure Tyndale offices. You will be responsible for the security and confidentiality of your therapy session space and electronic equipment. Your therapist will provide you with requirements and guidelines for helping you to ensure your privacy.

If you have concerns about privacy, please speak to your therapist. For details of our Privacy Policy, visit our website: <http://www.tyndale.ca/counselling> and <https://www.tyndale.ca/privacy>.

**Ethical Standards.** Our staff adhere to the Code of Ethics of their respective professional colleges and associations (e.g. the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO), the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), or the College of Physicians and Surgeons). Should you feel that an ethical violation has occurred through which you have experienced some measure of harm, you have a right to register a complaint. Please speak the Director regarding procedure. You may also contact the Privacy Commissioner or the professional college to which the staff member belongs (e.g. CRPO: 163 Queen Street East, Fourth Floor, Toronto, ON, M5A 1S1, 1-888-661-4801 or 416-862-4801).

**Client Records.** All therapy-related material is the property of *Tyndale Counselling Services* and is securely and confidentially maintained for a minimum of ten years following the completion of the last therapy session, after which time, under normal circumstances, it will be destroyed in a complete, responsible and professional manner. You have a right to review or have a copy of any information that is contained in your client file except if this would result in a health or safety risk to you or another person. To access your file, provide a written request to your therapist or if you are not a current client, to the Director. Access will be provided in the presence of your therapist or the Director and done at a time agreed upon and incurs the usual hourly fee for therapy. Video recordings are not available for review, as your therapist will continually/periodically delete them.

**Informed Consent.** You have a right to be meaningfully informed about the therapy process. Together you and your therapist will discuss therapy goals and a plan to achieve them. Ask your therapist for clarification as needed. Your therapist will typically request feedback using the Outcome Rating Scale and Session Rating Scale mentioned above as well as permission for taping. Your written permission is required for personal information to be sent to or received from another person or institution to assist in therapy or other matters. In an emergency a therapist might not receive your informed consent before accessing additional professional care for you, if a delay could reasonably result in suffering or serious bodily harm to you.

**Research.** As part of an academic institution, *Tyndale Counselling Services* is committed to providing ongoing quality care for its clients and improved professional development of its therapists. One method we use to meet this commitment is involvement in research. *Tyndale Counselling Services* is part of an exciting international research study that focuses on the integration of faith and therapy. This research involves both therapists and students. The data collection stage began in the fall of 2018 and will end on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Recruitment of new participants ended in August 2019. In September, if you are a returning student to *Tyndale Counselling Services* from last year, you will be asked for permission to give your contact information to the Research Assistant who will contact you directly with further information about the study and to inquire about your interest in continuing to participate. Participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate, choose to withdraw from the study at any time, and decline to answer any questions or to participate in any procedures during the study. This will not affect any treatment needs that you might have now or in the future at *Tyndale Counselling Services*. This research meets the legal and ethical guidelines of the CRPO, AAMFT, the governing body that sponsors the study, and the Research Ethics Board of Tyndale and the University of Toronto.

**Referral.** A client may need to be referred to another professional at the request of the client or the therapist. Reasons for referral or consultation include: signs that the client may need medical treatment or medication, a second opinion or areas outside the therapist's scope of practice. If therapy is not proceeding in a satisfactory manner, the client is encouraged to speak with their therapist, the therapist's supervisor or the Director. You have a right to a referral to another appropriate professional(s) within or outside *Tyndale Counselling Services*.

**Psychiatrists.** *Tyndale Counselling Services* has psychiatrists on our team. Psychiatrists will provide consultations to students with mental health concerns, upon the recommendation of their Tyndale therapist and with a physician's referral. All consultations are booked well in advance. The therapist is also normally present.

**Therapist Absence.** You have a right to expect that your regularly scheduled appointments will be respected and protected from unnecessary interruptions. Your therapist will inform you in advance of any absences including vacations and will provide the names of other therapists or personnel that may be accessed during periods of absence. Occasionally a therapist may not be able to make a session due to sudden illness or an unforeseen circumstance. They will try to contact you if possible. Also, the therapist will contact you to set up another appointment.

### ***Your Responsibilities as a Client***

**Active Participation.** Therapy is a collaborative venture between the therapist and client. Openness, honesty and a commitment to change are important contributions from the client as the therapist cannot solve the clients' issues for them. In couple and family therapy, secrets held between individuals are usually counterproductive and will not be colluded with. The therapist will ask the client to consider the benefits of disclosing the secret. The exceptions to this rule would be information shared in individual therapy received before couple/family/group therapy was initiated or after it concluded or in situations where protection from harm is an issue.

**Scheduling of Sessions.** Normally, initial intake sessions are booked through the Coordinator of *Tyndale Counselling Services*. In the intake session, the first appointment is set with a therapist. All subsequent sessions are booked between client and therapist. Therapists usually meet with students once a week, on the same day and time, for a 50-minute session. As therapy progresses, sessions may be less frequent. Couple and family issues sometimes require longer sessions and will be scheduled accordingly in consultation with the couple or family. It is expected that sessions will begin and end on time.

**Fees Charged.** Current full-time students are offered 10 therapy sessions free of charge per academic year (Sept. 1-Aug. 31). Missed sessions are counted in the 10 sessions and incur a charge of \$10 each. After the 10 sessions, if needed, full-time students are encouraged to continue with therapy and will be charged \$10 per session. Students currently taking two courses or one course, receive therapy for \$20 or \$30 per session respectively. Current audit students receive therapy for \$60 per session. Programs that mandate self-awareness sessions as part of their programs will inform students of the cost, duration and details. In most cases, students in mandated programs pay \$25 per session for the number of sessions required. After the mandated sessions are completed, the student may make use of 10 therapy sessions free of charge, if applicable. During the spring/summer semester, students may receive therapy if they are not presently taking courses but were registered for classes in the winter semester and are registered to return in the fall semester. Students should talk to their therapist or the Director or Coordinator about fees. Fees are renegotiated every semester and are normally based on course load. In situations of significant financial hardship, the fee may be reduced but the therapist must consult with their supervisor or the Director.

Fees are paid at the end of each session by exact cash, debit or by cheque payable to "Tyndale". Tyndale's Business Office processes cheques, so students may prefer to pay by cash or debit to remain anonymous. A receipt is issued when payment is made. The student will assume bank charges for NSF cheques. Additional fees are charged for extended phone calls, consultations, reports and letters, photocopying, etc. There is a charge for most personality, vocational and other inventories.

**Missed or Cancelled Sessions.** To cancel your appointment, please leave a message for your therapist on their voicemail or email at least 24 hours in advance. For missed or cancelled sessions with less than 24-hour notice, the client will be charged the cost of the session or \$10, whichever is higher. It is understood that occasionally an emergency may arise such as a sudden and severe illness or death in the family that may necessitate cancellation with less than 24 hours' notice but this is very rare. In most cases, students can still give notice and leave a courtesy message that they can't attend. **Time pressures due to upcoming assignment deadlines are not considered an emergency.** To end therapy sessions, please discuss with your therapist, as this is part of the therapeutic process.

**Collection of Outstanding Fees.** Students are required to pay all outstanding fees for sessions attended, missed or cancelled with less than 24-hours' notice on a timely basis and latest, on the last day of the semester. We will attempt to recover all fees that remain outstanding at the end of the semester in which they were incurred. This may include: letters/emails/telephone calls to the student, and outstanding fees may be added to the student's account in Student Financial Services along with a \$10 administration fee.

**Contacting Your Therapist.** To contact your therapist, please leave a message on their *Tyndale Counselling Services* voicemail or email. Their contact information may be found online at [www.tyndale.ca/counselling](http://www.tyndale.ca/counselling). The phone message system will take your call at any time. Your therapist checks their messages regularly and will return your message as soon as possible. They will be discreet in contacting you as per your instructions.

Note regarding email: Because email is generally not a secure or confidential medium, for your privacy, do not include any sensitive or personal information in email communications. If you are concerned in any way about your email being read by someone other than the person you are contacting, please consider other methods of reaching us. A copy of emails received or sent is normally kept in the student's file.

**Boundary Issues.** Since therapists and students are part of the larger Tyndale community and therefore may encounter each other in other settings, you are asked to refrain from bringing up with your therapist issues discussed in therapy at times other than during your regularly scheduled session. To avoid overlapping of roles and dual relationships, Tyndale Counselling interns will normally meet only with University College students and not Seminary students. For ethical reasons, a therapist would not be able to connect with a current or recent client on Facebook or any other form of social media.

**Emergencies.** In case of an emergency, please call 911, an appropriate crisis number found online, or go to the emergency department of a local hospital. Please also leave a message with one of our staff within *Tyndale Counselling Services* or the Live-In Residence Director if you are in Residence so they can follow up with you later.

**Feedback.** We welcome your feedback about any aspect of our services. Please contact our Director.