

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 undergraduate and graduate students. Our services include professional therapy for individuals, couples, families and groups, and interpretation of personality and vocational inventories. We offer therapy services in a number of languages.

General information on the services we offer may be found on our website (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. Services are also open to the public through the Family Life Centre (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 seek 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 "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.

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 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 unhelpful 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.

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, Grace Kuipers, Katharine Kim, Bassma Younan and Sandra Rayner) are Registered Psychotherapists (CRPO) and are either Approved Supervisors with AAMFT (American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy) and CAMFT (Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapy) or working toward the professional designations (see our website for details). To facilitate adequate supervision, from time to time your therapist's supervisor may observe part or all of a therapy session. 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.

Online Psychotherapy

Due to the COVID -19 pandemic, online therapy (using Zoom) is currently our primary method of providing psychotherapy. We do also offer therapy by telephone. When it is deemed safe by the Tyndale administration, we will resume offering in-person therapy at our Tyndale offices. Therapy is available within the regular service hours: Mondays – Fridays 8am to 9pm, Fridays and Saturdays 8am – 7pm EST. No service is available on Sundays, public holidays and any other official closures of Tyndale University. Students outside of Ontario are to bear in mind any time zone and insurance coverage differences, if applicable.

Technical Requirements. To be able to do online video therapy, you will need to have:

Internet Connection: 1.5 Mbps (Uplink & Downlink)

Operating System: Windows XP SP3 or later, Mac OSX 10.7 or later

Processor: Dual Core 2GHz or higher

Memory: 4GB RAM

Peripheral Requirements: Headset (with attached microphone) + built-in or external (USB) webcam.

You also need to have email access on this computer and web browser to connect to Zoom.

Zoom Safeguards. The Zoom application is end to end encrypted with Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) 256 bit algorithm. Zoom is “committed to protecting the security and privacy of our customers’ data. This includes enabling our customers in Canada to be compliant with Canadian Data Protection regulations, including the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and, locally, the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA).”

https://zoom.us/docs/doc/PIPEDA_PHIPA%20Canadian%20Public%20Information%20Compliance%20Guide.pdf.

Zoom Process. Your therapist will email you a link to connect to the meeting. At the time of your session, click on the link in the email and it will open a web page for the Zoom Waiting Room. Your therapist will admit you to the session at the start time.

Expect your therapist to contact you prior to the appointment if there is a problem with the computer or internet connection. If you didn’t hear from your therapist and your therapist is not there at the time of the meeting, please wait for 5 to 7 minutes before you leave the meeting. Your therapist could be facing technical difficulties and trying to resolve them. If your therapist is not there after 10 minutes, you can expect a phone call from your therapist and you can decide together if you want to hold the session on the phone or rebook it for another time.

If therapy is disrupted by a power outage, loss of internet connection, or one person’s computer freezing, the therapist will try to re-connect to the meeting. After 10 minutes, if the attempt to re-connect failed, your therapist will contact you by phone. After 15 minutes of no contact either online or by phone, it will be deemed that the session ended early and other arrangements will be negotiated for fees / makeup time in the future.

Verification of Identity. You and your therapist will set up a process to verify your identity if you are using telephone therapy or if using video therapy and it does not work for some reason and you agree to use the phone instead. This process may include the use of code words, phrases, or inquiries. For example: “Is this a good time to proceed?” and the agreed answer would be something like “good to go”.

Verification of Location. Your therapist will ask you about your actual location (address) at the beginning of each session to decide whether it is appropriate to carry on the session. There are limitations to the locations where we can provide services. For example, we are not able to provide services if the student is currently outside Canada. Also, for your safety, the therapist needs to know your exact address in case of emergency.

Private Place and Time. It is very important to take responsibility for your privacy. You need to make sure that you and your phone or computer are in a private place. You need to be conscious of who is nearby or can show up in your private space. If you are not able to plan a way to ensure the privacy of your setting, online or phone therapy may not be appropriate.

- **Public Space:** It is very easy to use a phone or have internet access in a lot of public places. Please consider the emotional nature of therapy. As you may experience strong emotional reactions, we recommend that you don’t use a public space for your therapy session.

- Work space: Some employers keep track of what employees are doing online using the company's internet connection.
- Home space and time: Consider a good time when you will not be regularly interrupted by or overheard by family members or have to get up to answer the door or the phone.

Situations when Online and Phone Therapy is not Available.

- Living outside Canada: For now, we serve only clients who are currently living in Canada.
- Other situations may occur and based on your therapist's assessment, they may decide that online therapy may not be suitable and recommend instead face-to-face therapy. Your therapist will provide you with local resources near you if in-person sessions are not yet a possibility at *Tyndale Counselling Services*.
- If you believe that you are in danger right now, please call 911 immediately.

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, or 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. When we are again able to provide therapy on campus, 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 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: 375 University Avenue, Suite 803, Toronto, ON M5G 2J5, 1-844-712-1364 or 416-479-4330).

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, any paper documents 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 a session with your therapist or the Director and done at a time agreed upon and incurs the usual hourly fee for therapy. As of April 2020, clinical records are electronically stored on a secure database.

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 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.

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 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 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 \$15 each. After the 10 sessions, if needed, full-time students are encouraged to continue with therapy and will be charged \$15 per session. Students currently taking two courses or one course, receive therapy for \$25 or \$35 per session respectively. Current audit students receive therapy for \$65 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 \$30 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.

For online/phone sessions, payment must be made by PayPal (using credit card) 24 hours prior to the session date. Your therapist will send you an email with the website information and invoice number to be used for payment for the upcoming session. Completed payment indicates that you have agreed to the next session. The therapist will email you the receipt once the session is completed.

When psychotherapy is available on-site, fees may be 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 will be 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 \$15, 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. 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. Unfortunately, therapists are not able to communicate by text.

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 undergraduate 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.

Experiencing a Crisis or Suicidal Thoughts. If you are contemplating suicide or homicide, call your local crisis line. Phone numbers can be found online or at the front of your phone book. Alternatively, call 911 or go to the nearest hospital with an emergency department.

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

Referring others to our services. Please feel free to refer other current Tyndale students to *Tyndale Counselling Services* (www.tyndale.ca/counselling) or other people needing psychotherapy services to the *Family Life Centre* (www.tyndale.ca/family-life).

Thank you for using our services!