

PRIVACY NOTICE

Introduction

Your privacy is very important to me and you can be confident that your personal information will be kept safe and secure and will only be used for the purpose it was given to me. I adhere to current data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (EU/2016/679) (the GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003.

This privacy notice tells you what I will do with your personal information from initial point of contact through to after your therapy has ended, including:

- Why I am able to process your information and what purpose I am processing it for
- Whether you have to provide it to me
- How long I store it for
- Whether there are other recipients of your personal information
- Whether I intend to transfer it to another country,
- Whether I do automated decision-making or profiling, and
- Your data protection rights.

I am happy to chat through any questions you might have about my data protection policy, and you can contact me via telephone: 07951 996 380 or email: Danielle@dstherapyspace.co.uk.

'Data controller' is the term used to describe the person/ organisation that collects and stores and has responsibility for people's personal data. In this instance, the data controller is me.

I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office. My phone number is: 07951 996 380. My email address is: Danielle@dstherapyspace.co.uk.

My lawful basis for holding and using your personal information

The GDPR states that I must have a lawful basis for processing your personal data. There are different lawful bases depending on the stage at which I am processing your data. I have explained these below:

If you have had therapy with me and it has now ended, I will use legitimate interest as my lawful basis for holding and using your personal information.

If you are currently having therapy or if you are in contact with me to consider therapy, I will process your personal data where it is necessary for the performance of our contract.

The GDPR also makes sure that I look after any sensitive personal information that you may disclose to me appropriately. This type of information is called 'special category personal information'. The lawful basis for me processing any special categories of personal information is that it is for provision of health treatment (in this case counselling) and necessary for a contract with a health professional (in this case, a contract between me and you).

How I use your information

Initial contact

When you contact me with an enquiry about my counselling services I will collect information to help me satisfy your enquiry. This will include your name so that I can book the appointment into my diary and also a contact method, for example an email address or phone number. This information is requested so that you could be informed if I was unable to attend an appointment due to unforeseen circumstances. If you do not want to be contacted under any circumstances, you do not need to provide a contact method.

Alternatively, your GP or other health professional may send me your details when making a referral or a parent or trusted individual may give me your details when making an enquiry on your behalf. If you decide not to proceed, I will ensure all your personal data is deleted within 1 month. If you would like me to delete this information sooner, just let me know.

While you are accessing counselling

Your email address or phone number will be used to provide you with written confirmation of your appointment times and to set up Teams appointments if you have given consent for this. Your email address and telephone number will only be used to contact you regarding appointment times unless we have agreed that I will also use your email address to email you information that is relevant to your therapy sessions.

At the beginning of your first appointment I will ask you to complete a personal details form containing your name, address, date of birth, contact information and also contact information for your GP. The form is stored digitally in a password-encrypted file on my personal computer, accessible only by me. Please be aware that I will not routinely contact your GP to inform them of your attendance, as your attendance is confidential. Rest assured that everything you

discuss with me is kept in confidence. I will only break this confidentiality if I have concerns about your safety or the safety of others. I will always try to speak with you about this first, unless there are safeguarding reasons that prevent me from doing so.

After counselling has ended

There are reasons why counsellors are required to keep records after therapy has ended. Retaining your therapy notes ensures that I can continue to offer you an efficient service if you make contact after therapy has ended. Your therapy notes do not include any personal details that could be used to identify you and continue to be stored digitally in a password-encrypted file on my personal computer that only I have access to for five years after therapy has ended. This time frame adheres with current industry guidelines. Five years after therapy has ended your therapy notes will be confidentially destroyed.

Your personal details form is confidentially destroyed on ending your therapy sessions. Please note that I need to keep a record of your name, date of birth and your client reference number for five years after therapy ends. Your client reference number corresponds with a client reference number on your therapy notes and therefore enables me to identify your therapy notes if necessary.

Third-party recipients of personal data

There may be times when I need to share personal data with carefully selected third-party organisations. This happens only when I have contracted a supplier to carry out specific tasks that support the running of my practice. Examples include secure email providers, practice management systems, and online video-conferencing services used to facilitate remote sessions.

In all such situations, I take great care to ensure that any third-party I work with is trustworthy and complies with data protection legislation. I have a contract or data-processing agreement in place with each supplier, which clearly sets out:

- what personal data they may access,
- what they are permitted to do with it, and
- how they must protect it.

These third parties are **not allowed** to use your personal data for any purpose other than the specific task for which they have been contracted. They are strictly prohibited from sharing or using your information in any additional way.

I only work with partners who meet high standards of security, confidentiality, and data protection so that your information remains safeguarded at all times.

Your rights

I try to be as open as I can be in terms of giving people access to their personal information. You have a right to ask me to delete your personal information, to limit how I use your personal information, or to stop processing your personal information. You also have a right to ask for a copy of any information that I hold about you and to object to the use of your personal data in some circumstances. You can read more about your rights at ico.org.uk/your-data-matters. If I do hold information about you I will:

- give you a description of it and where it came from;
- tell you why I am holding it, tell you how long I will store your data and how I made this decision;
- tell you who it could be disclosed to;
- let you have a copy of the information in an intelligible form.

You can also ask me at any time to correct any mistakes there may be in the personal information I hold about you.

To make a request for any personal information I may hold about you, please put the request in writing addressing it to Danielle@dstherapyspace.co.uk.

If you have any complaint about how I handle your personal data please do not hesitate to get in touch with me by writing or emailing to the contact details given above. I would welcome any suggestions for improving my data protection procedures.

If you want to make a formal complaint about the way I have processed your personal information you can contact the ICO which is the statutory body that oversees data protection law in the UK. For more information go to ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint.

DATA SECURITY

I take the security of the data I hold about you very seriously and take every effort to ensure it is kept secure. All digital records—including therapy notes and any personal information you provide—are stored in password-encrypted files on my personal computer, which is itself protected by a strong password and up-to-date security software. My computer is never shared with others, and I ensure that security updates and antivirus protections are regularly maintained.

Any hard-copy documents, such as signed agreements or forms, are kept to a minimum. Where hard copies are used, they are stored securely in a locked filing

cabinet that only I can access. These documents are handled confidentially, and any hard-copy information that is no longer required is shredded or otherwise confidentially destroyed.