

Aquiline Counseling LLC

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Information and Office Policies

Welcome

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to Aquiline Counseling LLC. I consider it a privilege to partner with you as you seek to make positive changes in your life. The most effective therapy starts with a relationship. In order for us to begin that process, I would like to tell you a few things about myself, my approach to therapy, my office policies, and your rights. Please read the information that follows and feel free to ask me any clarifying questions.

Education and Experience

I am a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (Credential # LH60450981) in the State of Washington. I have a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology and a Bachelor's degree in Ministry Leadership from Northwest University in Kirkland, Washington. I actively continue to expand my knowledge and stay on top of current developments in psychology by participating in additional training. I am a member of the American Counselor's Association (ACA), the American Mental Health Counselor's Association (AMHCA) and Eye-Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing International Association (EMDRIA).

I work with individual adults, adolescents, and children experiencing a variety of mental health issues including *but not limited to* post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, grief, and stress caused by life transitions. I also work with families experiencing relationship difficulties. I have worked with survivors of sexual abuse and domestic violence. I have an extensive background in law enforcement, which gives me firsthand knowledge and experience in what it's like to be a first responder or public safety employee. I am certified in EMDR (eye-movement desensitization and reprocessing), a highly effective treatment for PTSD. I am an affiliate of the Amen Clinics in Bellevue, WA. Additionally, I am a certified instructor for Mental Health First Aid, an 8-hour course that teaches community members about mental health disorders and practical ways to help a person who is experiencing symptoms or a mental health crisis.

Approach to Therapy

I believe that therapy is an effective way to work through life's struggles, losses, traumatic experiences, and disorders that are both psychological and physiological, such as depression and anxiety. Everyone's personal goals for therapy are different, but in general people who apply themselves and work hard in therapy can expect an improved quality of life, personal growth, a greater sense of wellbeing, and progress in healing from traumatic or significant emotional wounds. I teach clients coping skills, relaxation methods and other tools to manage and regulate emotional discomfort. It is important to acknowledge that for psychotherapy to improve your life and make the changes you desire you will have to work earnestly; and hard work does not always guarantee a successful outcome. As you work through issues that cause you distress, you may feel worse before you feel better. This is a normal response for many people and it should not cause you alarm. Wrestling with difficult topics can result in strained relationships within family,

job, and friendships. This information is given to you so that you can prepare yourself and those close to you. Please keep me informed if unmanageable distress occurs and we can modify your course of therapy if needed. I encourage you to endure the challenge of healing and life change with patience and perseverance. Our partnership in this endeavor has the expectation of a positive outcome that results in the quality of your life being improved.

Depending on the issue, the therapeutic process can take different paths and take different lengths of time. Just like one shoe size does not fit every person, one model of therapy does not fit every individual. Therefore, I use a variety of therapy types based on who you are as an individual. I integrate eye-movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy (EMDR), cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness, supportive, solution-focused, existential, neuro-science, and play therapies (for children and adolescents) into the sessions as is applicable. My desire is to take the mystery out of therapy, therefore I will be educating you about psychology to the extent you are interested as we work together.

Another thought about therapy - I believe you will find that I will become one of your biggest advocates and supporters during the therapeutic relationship that develops between us. *However*, please keep in mind that a good therapist doesn't always agree with you. Sometimes having someone to challenge your patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving is what is needed to make the changes you want to make.

EMDR

EMDR is a highly effective, evidence-based therapy (which means it has been tested and found to work effectively) for PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and other traumas. EMDR has been designated as an effective treatment by the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and The World Health Organization (WHO).

EMDR therapy is also used with a variety of other mental health issues including by not limited to depression, anxiety, addictions, grief, and performance enhancement. Clinicians have seen positive results in these areas. Clinical trials are underway with these other mental health issues.

My Responsibilities to You

I value you as a client and I hope through clear communication, commitment, and professionalism, to serve you effectively. There are several topics I would like for you to be informed of as you begin therapy. They are as follows:

I am frequently unable to immediately take phone calls because my work hours vary, but I check my voicemails regularly and return calls as soon as possible. If you are in crisis, immediately call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. You can also call the King County Crisis Clinic 24 hours a day at 206-461-3222 (or 1-866-4CRISIS) or chat with them online at www.crisisclinic.org/Chat. Another immediate crisis line is 1-800-273-TALK.

Occasionally, there are reasons to refer clients to other therapists. This may occur because of a mental health issue that is outside of my scope of practice. This also could occur if, in my professional opinion, I am not the best therapist to help you. If this is the case, I will provide referrals for you and continue to meet with you for a reasonable length of time until you find a suitable therapist.

Confidentiality

In order for trust to exist between us, you must be confident that I value your privacy and will keep it confidential. The information you disclose in therapy sessions is private and confidential and will not be shared by me to anyone without explicit written consent from you, with some exceptions. There are times when I may request your permission to share information with other healthcare professionals, such as medical doctors or school counselors (in the case of minors), so that we can work together for your benefit. Additionally, I may discuss the circumstances of your case, leaving out any identifying personal specifics, with a few mental healthcare professionals I am associated with. These consultations are done to provide you with the highest quality of care.

I am required by law to disclose the following information to the appropriate authorities without your permission: 1) suspicion of abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults; 2) when a person is an immediate danger to themselves or others; 3) when records are subpoenaed by a court of law. I will make every reasonable effort to inform you of information that I am required to report prior to the report being made.

Fees

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| Short session, 38 – 52 minutes | \$120.00 |
| Standard session, 53 - 55 minutes | \$135.00 (most common) |
| 30 minute extension to standard session - | \$70.00 (insurance does not pay for the extension) |
| Diagnostic intake session, 75 minutes - | \$200.00 |
| Family session | \$160.00 |
| Crisis session, 55 minutes - minutes) | \$175.00 (prorated fees if longer than 55 minutes) |
| *No Show Fee | \$125.00 |
| *Late cancellation fee | \$100.00 (less than 8 hours prior to appointment) |
| *Late cancellation fee | \$75.00 (between 9 – 24 hours prior) |

*If you wish to cancel your appointment, please do so at least 24 hours in advance otherwise you may be charged a fee (fees listed above). This is due to the fact that I'm unable to offer your time to another person in the case of a no show or short notice cancellation. I understand that "life happens," so I reserve the right to waive these fees at my discretion. Please see the No Show and Late Cancellation Policy for details. If you arrive late for your appointment, you will be seen for the remaining time, and will be charged the full fee. If I begin a session late, I will do one of the following, depending on both our availability: either see you for the full session time or charge you a prorated fee. Phone calls over 15 minutes in length will be charged at a prorated fee.

I accept cash, checks, and credit/debit cards. Cash must be in the exact amount of the fee. Payment is due at the time of service. Should any payment by check be returned for non-payment, you will be assessed a \$25.00 returned check fee. Additional services such as letter or report writing, court appearances, etc., will be charged at my standard 55 minute session fee to compensate for my time.

Insurance

As a courtesy, I provide insurance billing for my clients.

I am a *preferred provider* for: Premera Blue Cross, Lifewise, Regence Blue Shield, Health Management Administrators (HMA), Bridgespan, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Group Health PPO plans, and First Choice Health Network.

I also accept insurance from other insurance companies (including but not limited to Aetna, Value Options [Boeing], Cigna) but these companies and your specific policy must allow payments to “out of network” providers. In most cases, I am willing to bill these insurance companies. You must be willing to pay the co-insurance amount at the time services are rendered. I will gladly check insurance coverage for you, however, what I am told on the phone or via the insurance carrier’s website is not a guarantee that services are covered, therefore:

You are responsible for any outstanding amounts not covered by insurance. It is your responsibility to know understand your insurance coverage.

Many insurance policies have annual deductibles that must be paid before insurance coverage is applied. If you have questions about this please contact your insurance company.

I provide the insurance billing for you for your primary insurance carrier. I do not bill secondary insurance, but will gladly provide a receipt for services for you to bill the secondary insurance yourself.

Social Media

In order to comply with ethical standards of the ACA and to protect your privacy, I cannot have *personal* connections with clients on social media, including but not limited to Face Book and Linked-In. This does not preclude clients from following Aquiline Counseling LLC page on Facebook.

Electronic Communications Via Email, Text and Other Non-Secure Means

It may become useful during the course of treatment to communicate by email, text message (e.g. “SMS”) or other electronic methods of communication. Be informed that these methods, in their typical form, are not confidential means of communication. If you use these methods to communicate with me there is a reasonable chance that a third party may be able to intercept and eavesdrop on those messages. The kinds of parties that may intercept these messages include, but are not limited to:

- People in your home or other environments who can access your phone, computer, or other devices that you use to read and write messages.
- Your employer, if you use your work email to communicate with me.
- Third parties on the Internet such as server administrators and others who monitor Internet traffic.

If there are people in your life that you don’t want accessing these communications, please talk me about ways to keep your communications safe and confidential.

I offer the following, more secure means of communication through Hushmail. I contract with Hushmail to provide an encrypted email service for my clients. While it cannot be guaranteed to

prevent 100% of confidentiality breaches, it is designed with the intention of supporting the confidentiality of clinical communications:

- Contact me at sandytudor@aquilinecounseling.hush.com
 - **The first email sent using this system is *not* encrypted.** If using this system, send an introductory email stating you have something private to communicate. Once I answer you, you will be within the encrypted network and your communications will be reasonably confidential. Please talk to me about this system if you have any questions.

Your Rights

Although we will endeavor to work as a collaborative team, ultimately, this is your therapy. With that in mind, you have the right to have input into this process as well as to refuse treatment. You are not obligated to remain in therapy with me and may terminate at any time. You also have the right to change therapists. Feel free to bring any concerns, complaints, or suggestions about your treatment to me directly and we can work on a solution. If you believe I have acted unprofessionally or unethically, please bring the matter to my attention so clarification and resolution can be made. You have the right to file a complaint about any mental health professional by contacting the Washington State Department of Health at 360-236-4700, Complaint Intake, PO Box 47857, Olympia, WA, 98504-7857 or www.doh.wa.gov/hsqa/Complaint. My goal is to serve you humbly, respectfully, and professionally and to provide the highest quality of care possible.

I am required to keep records regarding your therapy. These records are held in strict confidence, excluding the exceptions listed above. You are entitled to a copy of your records upon request. If I determine that certain portions of your record would cause you undue harm, I will withhold these portions. If needed I am willing to review the file with you and offer explanations of unfamiliar terms.

Agreement and Consent

The information in this document is in accordance with ethical requirements of Washington State for Licensed Mental Health Counselors. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us and your consent to therapy.

I consider it an honor to be part of your journey toward feeling fulfilled, whole, and joyful.

Blessings,

Sandy Tudor

Please sign to indicate that you have read and understood this document and agree to its terms. Please keep a copy for your reference. *Your signature indicates that you have read and understood the information contain herein.*

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Therapist: Sandy Tudor, MA, LMHC Signature: _____ Date: _____