

Anna Leythorne Dean, MBACP (Accred)
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GDPR Policy

GDPR Policy for counselling sessions

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) relates to any of your personal information that I may collect, store or share. This page outlines my GDPR/privacy policy.

I am registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) (security number ZB151413) and adhere to the GDPR guidelines.

Personal information that I collect

When you contact me as part of my intake sheet and the initial assessment, I will ask you for the following information:

(If you are coming for couples counselling, you will each have your own intake sheet).

1. Name, telephone number, email address, address
2. Date of birth
3. Key relationships, occupation
4. **Relevant** external services that you may be receiving.
5. (If counselling is for your child), **relevant** external services that your child may be receiving and child's school/college.
6. GP name and address, plus any medical conditions relevant to counselling or that may present in the counselling room, including any prescribed medication
7. Disability, health, mental health and counselling history and current reasons for seeking counselling

This information will be password protected and saved electronically under your unique client code and will be kept separate to your brief session notes.

How I will store your information

Mobile phone

I will store your contact information (name, mobile number, email address and address – item 1 above) on a business mobile phone that is reserved for counselling purposes. This allows me to contact you when necessary, but does not allow the information to be shared elsewhere. Your contact information will be stored along with a client code.

Session notes

I make brief notes after each session and sometimes during supervision (see section on supervision below). Session notes will be saved electronically in a separate password protected folder, they will be anonymised and names of people will not be

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used. Apart from your client code and first name, there will be no contact details on this document, such that the information is anonymous.

I usually make brief notes after each session and sometimes during supervision (see section on supervision below). I will store your anonymised session and supervision notes in a file (identified only by your client code), along with the paper documents outlined above.

- **Email/text messaging/WhatsApp**

Any emails you send me will be stored in my email account until they are deleted. Any text messages or WhatsApp messages will be stored in my phone until they are deleted. Electronic correspondence will also be held by whatever method you use to contact me (e.g. by WhatsApp, by your email provider or on your phone).

- **Remote counselling**

Should we use any virtual/remote methods of counselling, such as telephone or video conferencing, there will be a record of when the calls were made, but no information about what is discussed will be recorded or saved by me.

You agree to not record any sessions that are via video conferencing.

I use a password-protected account on my computer for my counselling work, separate to my personal account. My email is dedicated to counselling work this ensures no overlap between personal and professional use of my electronic devices.

- **Website**

None of your personal information is stored on my website.

How I may share your personal information

- **Supervision**

All counsellors and therapists are required to attend monthly supervision with another therapist who is qualified in supervision (a supervisor), and who adheres to the same ethics and confidentiality requirements as all counsellors.

The supervision process is to ensure the highest standards in my practice. It is about how I work with you. In order to protect your privacy, my supervisor will not know you personally or professionally. I will refer to you only by your first name, and I may refer to your information verbally when it's helpful to my professional practice and to how I can best support you. None of the content of these conversations are recorded, though I may make paper notes for my own use.

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▪ **Emergencies**

With your consent wherever possible, if you or your health are at risk, I may share your contact information with an emergency healthcare service (e.g. Mental Health Crisis Team).

If you share with me your intention to cause harm to another person or organisation (e.g. terrorism, domestic abuse, child abuse), I may be legally required to inform an authority without seeking your permission. In such a situation, I may also be required to share your personal information without your knowledge.

How long do I hold your information?

When we have finished working together, I will delete electronic copies of your information and correspondence within one month. I will hold onto your written information for up to seven years past the end of our working together. This is so that I have a reference of our work in situations such as you returning to counselling in the future. After this time has passed, I will shred the written information.

Your rights

You have the following rights:

- To know what information I hold about you (outlined on this page).
- To see the information, I hold about you (free of charge for the initial request).
- To amend any inaccurate or incomplete personal information I hold about you.
- To withdraw consent to me using your personal information.
- To request that I delete any personal information I hold about you (*though I can decline if the information is needed for me to practice lawfully and competently*).

You can complain to the ICO if you are unhappy with how I have used your data.

Please note

A copy of this statement will be emailed to you before we first meet for our initial consultation, along with a confidentiality statement. I would be very happy at this point to explain anything that is not clear. If we agree to work together, I will ask you to confirm via email, before our first counselling session, that you agree to the terms of this GDPR statement and to the terms of the contract outlined in the service agreement. The service agreement will be emailed to you after the initial consultation.

Disclaimer

This document outlines what I have done to ensure the confidentiality of your data and personal information, according to legal requirements. However, it is important to be aware that I do not have control over external software, apps or service providers, including those that you use. As such, it is important that you are happy with the services you use at your end. In addition, there are sometimes rare and unforeseen data breaches over which I have no control, such as hacking incidents.