

## Kristen L. Venit, LCSW

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Charlotte, NC, 28210  
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704-594-3027  
www.kvcounseling

### Office Policies, Client Information and Consent to Treatment

Welcome to my practice. This form answers many frequently asked questions by new clients. Please review the form and feel free to ask me any questions at our first appointment. I will also ask you to sign a copy of the form indicating that you have received it and agree to the terms of the practice.

#### Therapy:

I conduct individual psychotherapy with adults and adolescents as well as with couples. The nature of psychotherapy varies depending on the personalities of the therapist and client(s), and the particular problems that you bring forward. There are many different methods I may use to deal with the problems that you hope to address. Psychotherapy is not like a medical doctor visit. Instead, it calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both during our sessions and at home.

My areas of specialty include issues around adoption and women's issues including the psychological treatment of depression, anxiety, self-image concerns, stress, parenting concerns, relationship issues, and adjustment to life transitions such as separation and divorce, death/loss, childbirth, and entry into college/graduate school.

Most clients see me weekly for psychotherapy. If at any time you have any questions about your treatment, please discuss this with me. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of your treatment, please discuss this with me directly so that we can best resolve any difficulty. Effective therapy will depend on open and direct communication so that we can develop a strong therapeutic alliance. Therapy is an active and collaborative process. We will formulate treatment goals together to facilitate enhanced feelings of satisfaction and emotional well being.

#### Benefits and Risks:

Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Attempting to resolve psychological issues may result in changes that were not initially intended, such as decisions to change behaviors, employment, schooling, housing, relationships, or substance use. Though a decision or change may be positive to you, such change may be viewed negatively by others in your life. Since therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. But there are no guarantees of what you will experience. The psychotherapy process may be easy and brief, but it can also be slow and at times, frustrating.

**Confidentiality:**

All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your written permission, except where disclosure is required by law.

**When Disclosure is Required by Law:** Some of the circumstances where disclosure is required by law are: where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent/ elder, abuse or neglect; and where a client presents a danger to self, to others, or to property.

**Confidentiality of E-mail, Cell Phone and Faxes Communication:**

It is very important to be aware that e-mail and cell phone communication can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and hence, the privacy and confidentiality of such communication can be easily compromised. E-mails, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers have unlimited and direct access to all e-mails that go through them. Faxes can be sent erroneously to the wrong address. Please notify me if you decided to avoid or limit in any way the use of any or all of the above mentioned communication devices. Please do not use e-mail or faxes in emergency situations.

**Email Policy:**

Due to confidentiality concerns, I communicate with clients via email for administrative purposes only. I do not use email to communicate any clinical information. To discuss any clinical matters, please contact Kristen Venit by phone at (704) 661-9893.

**Litigation Limitation:**

Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.) neither you (the client) nor your attorney, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on your therapist to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested.

**Client Rights:**

You have the right to ask questions about my philosophy of therapy. You have the right to end therapy at any time without moral, legal or financial obligation beyond payment due for completed sessions. If you decide to withdraw from therapy between sessions, I ask that you attend one more session to discuss your reasons with me. I encourage open communication before a decision is made. If you would like to end therapy with me but wish to continue with someone else, I will provide you with names of qualified therapists.

Emergencies or extra appointments can be made during business hours. Office hours will be extended to accommodate this need. I use voice mail for messages and calls will be returned as soon as possible.

**General Information:****Fees:**

I currently accept Blue Cross and Blue Shield. I also collect fees directly from you. However, many plans allow you to apply for reimbursement using my billing statements. Fees are due at the time of service (cash, checks, credit card, HSA cards, Zelle and Venmo are all accepted).

**Cancellation and Late Arrival Policy:**

Your appointment time is reserved especially for you. Appointments must be canceled at least 24 business hours in advance. Unfortunately, it is necessary to charge the full session fee for cancellations with shorter notice as this time was not available to anyone else. We will need to begin and end our sessions on time. If you arrive late, sessions can generally not be extended out of consideration for the next client. You will be charged the full session fee for any late arrivals.

**How to Reach Kristen Venit:**

My phone number is (704) 594-3027. However, I am often not immediately available by telephone. Naturally, I cannot answer the phone while I am in session with another client. When I am unavailable, my phone is answered by voice mail that I monitor frequently throughout the day on weekdays, and I will attempt to return your call as quickly as possible. I am the only person with access to these messages so you may leave a detailed and confidential message. In the event of an emergency, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. For non-urgent matters that arise between sessions, it is best to wait and discuss these issues at our next session. It may be helpful to write down your thoughts and concerns and bring them with you to your next session so that we may discuss the issue together.

**Referrals:**

I welcome referrals to my practice, which signifies your satisfaction and trust in my services.

**I have read the above agreement/office policies and general information carefully; I understand them and agree to comply with them. If signing for a minor, you agree that you are their legal guardian, give full permission for the minor to seek treatment by Kristen Venit, LCSW, and are financially responsible for the minor’s treatment.**

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Client name (print)	Date	Signature
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Client name (print)	Date	Signature
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Parent/Legal Guardian (print)	Date	Signature
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Parent/Legal Guardian (print)	Date	Signature
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