



### Secrets Policy for Couple/Family Counseling

When I agree to work with a couple or a family, the couple or family, hereafter referred to as the “system” is the client. As a result, if there is a request for the treatment records of the system, I must have the authorization of each individual member, hereafter referred to as the “client”, before I release confidential information to third parties. If any client subpoenas my records, I will assert the clinician-client privilege on behalf of the system.

During the course of my work with a couple or a family, I may see a smaller part of the system (e.g. an individual or two siblings) or members of the system in different arrangement for one or more sessions. These sessions should be seen by you as a part of the work that I am doing with the system, unless we arrange otherwise (e.g. psychotherapy for a concern not directly relevant to the treatment unit).

If you are involved in one or more of such session with me, please understand that generally these session are confidential in the sense that I will not release any confidential information to a third party (e.g. one client’s individual clinician) unless I have written authorization from all clients in the system. Since these sessions can and should be considered a part of the family or couple therapy, I would also seek the authorization of the other individuals in the treatment unit before releasing confidential information to a third party.

I may need to share information learned in an individual session (or a session with only a portion of the system being present) with the entire system, if I am to effectively function as the system’s clinician. I will use my best judgment as to whether, when, and to what extent I will make disclosures to the system. I will also first give the individual or the smaller part of the treatment unit being seen the opportunity to make the disclosure.

Thus, if you feel it necessary to talk about matters that you absolutely want to be shared with no one, you may want to consult with an individual clinician who can treat you individually.

This secrets policy is intended to allow me to continue to treat the system (the couple or family unit) by preventing, to the extent possible, a conflict of interest to arise where a client’s interests may not be consistent with the interests of the system. For instance, information learned in the course of an individual session may be relevant or even essential to the proper treatment of the couple or family. If I am not free to exercise my clinical judgement regarding the need to bring this information to the couple or family during their therapy, I might be placed in a situation where I will have to terminate treatment of the couple or family. This policy is intended to prevent the need for such a termination.

By signing the Consent to Treatment Form, you acknowledge that you have read and understood this policy.