



**Karen Z. Hyland, Ph.D.**  
CA Licensed Psychologist PSY 17839  
Hillcrest Psychological Associates  
106 Thorn Street, San Diego, CA 92103  
619-354-7400 ext. 2  
[www.HillcrestPsych.com](http://www.HillcrestPsych.com)

Dear Prospective Client,

Attached to this letter are several additional important documents and forms that I request you read and complete before our first appointment. First, there is a consent for treatment for you to print, sign and bring to your initial consultation with me. Thank you in advance for taking the time to read this. I am happy to answer any questions about this during our meeting. After the consent form are a series of quick assessments and additional demographic information that I would also like for you to print out and complete at home. Please bring them to our first session. If we have discussed telehealth, please print and sign the telehealth consent form as well. Finally, there is a description of our social media policy for you to read.

If you are unable to print any of these forms before the first session, I will have copies available at my office for you to sign. Thank you and I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Karen Z. Hyland, Ph.D.



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## **CONSENT FOR TREATMENT & NOTICE OF BUSINESS POLICIES AND PRIVACY PRACTICES**

Welcome to Hillcrest Psychological Associates. This document contains important information related to my professional services and business policies--please read it carefully. Questions related to this agreement can be discussed at any time. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us. The information provided regarding my policies for protecting the privacy of your confidential medical information is required by law. I work with a group of independent mental health professionals, under the name Hillcrest Psychological Associates. This group is an association of independently practicing professionals which share certain expenses and administrative functions. While the members share a name and office space, I want you to know that I am completely independent in providing you with clinical services and I alone am fully responsible for those services.

### **Psychological Services**

The psychotherapy I provide varies depending on your characteristics and the particular concerns you bring forward. Psychotherapy is not like other forms of treatment in that it calls for an active effort on your part. In order for psychotherapy to be as successful as possible, you will need to consider the things we talk about both during and between our sessions, and consider making changes in some of your habits and in the way you think about certain things.

Psychotherapy has benefits and risks. Since psychotherapy 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, extensive research indicates that psychotherapy often offers benefits, including improved mood, better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress. In short, while psychotherapy is often helpful, there are no guarantees of what you will experience in psychotherapy.

Psychotherapy involves an initial evaluation, which typically takes one or two sessions to complete. By the end of the evaluation period, I will offer you some initial impressions of how our work together might be helpful should you decide to continue with treatment. You should evaluate this information along with your own impressions of whether you feel comfortable working with me. Psychotherapy involves a significant investment of time, money, and energy, so you should think carefully about making this commitment. If you have questions or concerns about our work together, we can discuss them when they arise. It is important that we discuss your concerns and attempt to address them directly. If you decide at any time that our work together is not meeting your needs, I would be happy to help you determine the best course of action, such as beginning treatment with another mental health professional or disengaging in treatment altogether.

### **Sessions**

During the initial evaluation, we can both decide if I am well positioned to provide the services that you need. If we decide to work together in psychotherapy, I will typically schedule one 53 to 55-minute session per week at a



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time we agree upon. **Once an appointment hour is scheduled, you will be expected to pay for it unless you provide 24 hours advance notice of cancellation [unless we both agree that you were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond your control]. It is important to note that insurance companies do not provide reimbursement for cancelled sessions.** If it is possible, I will try to find another time to reschedule the appointment.

### **Professional Fees**

My initial session fee is \$175. Subsequent sessions are billed at \$160. In addition to regular appointments, I charge this amount for other professional services you may need, but I will break down the hourly cost if I work for periods of less than one hour. Other services may include report writing, extended telephone conversations, attendance at meetings with other professionals you have authorized, preparation of records or treatment summaries, and the time spent performing any other service you may request of me. If you become involved in legal proceedings that require my participation, you will be expected to pay for all of my professional time, including preparation and transportation costs, even if I am called to testify by another party. Because of the difficulty of legal involvement, I charge \$300 per hour for preparation and attendance at any legal proceeding.

### **Billing and Payments**

You will be expected to pay for each session at the time it is held, unless we agree otherwise or unless you have insurance coverage that requires another arrangement. Payment schedules for other professional services will be agreed to when they are requested. In circumstances of unusual financial hardship, I may be willing to negotiate a fee adjustment or payment plan. **I accept check or cash, though I do not take credit cards.**

If your account has not been paid for more than 60 days and arrangements for payment have not been agreed upon, I have the option of using legal means to secure the payment. This may involve hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court which will require me to disclose otherwise confidential information. In most collection situations, the only information I release regarding a client's treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due. If such legal action is necessary, its costs will be included in the claim.

### **Insurance Reimbursement**

If you have health insurance, it will usually provide some coverage for mental health treatment. I will fill out forms and provide you with whatever assistance I can in helping you receive the benefits to which you are entitled. You should carefully review the details of your insurance coverage for mental health services. If you have questions about the coverage, call your plan administrator. Of course I will provide you with whatever information I can based on my experience and will be happy to help you in understanding the information you receive from your insurance company. Once we have all of the information about your insurance coverage, we will discuss what we can expect to accomplish with the benefits that are available and what will happen if they run out before you feel ready to end treatment. Note that you always have the right to pay for my services yourself if you don't want to use your insurance or if your insurance is limited.



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You should also be aware that most insurance companies require you to authorize me to provide them with a clinical diagnosis. Sometimes I have to provide additional clinical information such as treatment plans or summaries. This information will become part of the insurance company files and will probably be stored in a computer. I will provide your insurance company with only the information required in order to meet their administrative needs. By signing this consent form, you authorize me to provide information to your insurance company as needed for payment for services.

### **Professional Records and Confidentiality**

The laws of California and the standards of my profession require that I keep treatment records. The information in your medical record is utilized in a number of ways. I use it to plan your treatment and keep a record of the significant issues that we address in treatment. I also use the information to coordinate your treatment with other professionals or to provide information to significant others or family members; information is only provided to those that you have given me permission in writing to communicate with regarding your treatment.

I will maintain treatment records for ten years following termination of treatment. After ten years treatment records will be destroyed in a manner that preserves confidentiality.

### **Exceptions to Confidentiality**

There are some exceptions to confidentiality and I will provide information from your record when required to do so by local, state or federal law. In most legal proceedings, you have the right to prevent me from providing any information about your treatment. In some proceedings involving child custody and those in which your emotional condition is an important issue, however, a judge may order my testimony if she or he determines that the issues demand it.

There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to take action to protect others from harm, even if I have to reveal some information about a client's treatment. For example, if I believe that a child, a person over age 65, or a disabled person is being abused or mistreated, I am required to file a report with the appropriate state agency that can investigate that matter.

If I believe that a client poses a serious risk to someone else, I am required to take protective actions. These actions may include notifying the potential victim, contacting the police, or seeking hospitalization for the client. If the client threatens to harm her or himself, and I am not able to resolve the situation in treatment, I may seek hospitalization for the client or contact family members or others who can help provide protection.

I am also obligated under the law to report to the appropriate authorities any instance where a client discloses that s/he has accessed, streamed, or downloaded material where a child is engaged in an obscene sexual act. I must also report electronic images of children that depict obscene sexual conduct.

Professional consultation is an important component of psychological practice, and I may occasionally find it



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helpful to consult other professionals regarding clinical, ethical, and/or legal issues. During a consultation, I make every effort to avoid revealing the identity of my client and/or my client's family members or caregivers.

If a situation occurs that requires that I share information without your written permission, I will make every effort to fully discuss it with you before taking any action. In most situations, in order to release any information to another party, I will ask that you sign an *Authorization to Release Information*. You may revoke your authorization at any time.

In the event of my incapacitation, disability or death, I have authorized my colleague, Dr. Erinn Tozer, Ph.D. to have access to my client files and my appointment book. As a psychologist, she is bound by confidentiality as well.

### **MINORS & PARENTS**

Because privacy in psychotherapy is often crucial to successful progress, particularly with teenagers, and parental involvement is also essential, it is usually my policy to request an agreement with minors [over age 12] and their parents about access to client information. This agreement provides that during treatment, I will provide parents with only general information about the progress of the treatment, feedback as to actions that may be helpful to the client's treatment, and the client's attendance at scheduled sessions. I will also provide parents with a summary of their child's treatment when it is complete. Any other communication will require the child's Authorization, unless I feel that the child is in danger or is a danger to someone else, in which case, I will notify the parents of my concern. Before giving parents any specific information, I will discuss the matter with the child, if possible, and do my best to handle any objections he/she may have.

Clients under 18 years of age who are not emancipated can consent to psychological services subject to the involvement of their parents or guardian unless the psychologist determines that their involvement would be inappropriate. A client over age 12 may consent to psychological services if he or she is mature enough to participate intelligently in such services, and the minor client either would present a danger of serious physical or mental harm to him or herself or others, or is the alleged victim of incest or child abuse. In addition, clients over age 12 may consent to alcohol and drug treatment in some circumstances. However, unemancipated clients under 18 years of age and their parents should be aware that the law may allow parents to examine their child's treatment records unless I determine that access would have a detrimental effect on my professional relationship with the client, or to his/her physical safety or psychological well-being.

### **Complaints**

The California Department of Consumer Affairs' Board of Psychology receives and responds to questions and complaints regarding the practice of psychology. You may contact them by calling 1-866-503-3221, at [www.psychboard.ca.gov](http://www.psychboard.ca.gov), or by writing to the Board of Psychology, 1422 Howe Avenue, Suite 22, Sacramento, CA 95825.



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### **Information In Your Medical Record Including the Right to Inspect and Copy**

You are entitled to receive a **copy of your medical record** unless I believe that receiving that information would be emotionally damaging. Because these are professional records, they can be misinterpreted or upsetting to untrained readers. If you wish to see your records or receive a copy of your records, I require written notice to that effect, and I would expect to discuss your request with you in person. I typically provide a treatment summary when there is a request for records. If I deny you access to your records, you can request to speak with an independent mental health professional about the situation. Your request for independent review of your original request for records should also be made in writing. If you are provided with a copy of your medical record information, I may charge a fee for any costs associated with that request.

If you believe that the information I have about you is incorrect or incomplete, **you may ask me to amend that information.** It is my practice to accept this sort of request in writing, and that any information you may wish to add to your record also be provided to me in written form.

You have the right to **request an Accounting of Disclosures.** This is a list of the disclosures I have made of medical record information. That information is listed on the *Authorization To Release Information*, and will be provided to you at your written request.

You have the right to **request a restriction or limitation on the health information** I disclose about you for treatment, payment, or health care operations. As noted above, I will not release your confidential information without your written permission. Any restrictions to your *Authorization To Release Information* should be specified on the *Authorization*.

You have the right to **request that I communicate with you only in certain ways.** For example, you can ask that I not leave a telephone message for you, or that I only contact you at work or by mail.

### **Complaints Regarding Privacy Rights**

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a written complaint with me, or with an independent mental health professional, or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 50 United Nations Plaza, Room 322, San Francisco, CA, 94102. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.

You have the right to a paper copy of this document, and you will be offered one when you sign the original for your treatment record. I reserve the right to change my policies as outlined in this document--if they change you will be informed of that change and will be provided with a copy of the updated form.

### **Termination of Treatment**

I reserve the right to terminate treatment at my discretion. Reasons for termination include, but are not limited to, cessation of my practice, untimely payment of fees, conflicts of interest, failure to participate in treatment or to make adequate progress in treatment, or treatment needs that are outside the scope of my practice or expertise.



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You also have the right to terminate treatment at your discretion. Should either of us decide to end treatment, I will generally recommend that you participate in a final session so that we can reflect on the work that was completed and discuss any ongoing treatment needs. When indicated, I will also offer referrals and attempt to ensure a smooth transition for any recommended ongoing treatment.

### **Contacting Me**

Due to the nature of my work, I am often not immediately available by telephone. My telephone is answered by voice mail that I monitor frequently. I will make every effort to return your call on the same day you make it, with the exception of weekends and holidays. If you are difficult to reach, please inform me of some times when you will be available. In emergencies, you can leave me a message on my cell phone: 619-992-8614. I will get back to you as soon as I am able. If you are unable to reach me and feel that you can't wait for me to return your call, contact your family physician, the San Diego Crisis Line at 1-888-724-7240, call 911 or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call. If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary. If you simply want someone to talk to for support, the County of San Diego operates the WARM Line, available everyday during afternoons and evenings, at 1-800-930-9276.

### **Acknowledgement**

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship. By signing below, you acknowledge that you have reviewed and fully understand the terms and conditions of this agreement and consent. Moreover, you agree to hold me free and harmless for any claims, demands, or suits for damages from any injury or complications whatsoever, save negligence, that may result from treatment. You also understand that you are financially responsible for all charges for services provided, including unpaid charges by your insurance company or other 3rd party payor. You allow Hillcrest Psychological Associates to file on your behalf for payment of services with your insurance company and receive payment for these services directly. You agree that Hillcrest Psychological Associates may release any and all records to my insurance company or payor as requested for the process of my claim for services.

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Client Name (printed)

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Signature

Date



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**Adolescent Intake To Be Completed by Parent**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Identification**

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Legal Custody of child is held by Both parents \_\_\_\_\_ One parent(Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address (es):

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell phones: \_\_\_\_\_  
Calls will be discreet, but please indicate any restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact:  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. Referral:** Who gave you my name?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
May I have your permission to thank this person for the referral? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Chief Concern**

Please briefly describe the main difficulty that is bringing your adolescent to see me:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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Adolescent Intake Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Whom do you live with? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What activities do you like most? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who are some of your friends? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What do you like most about school? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What do you like least about school? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What kind of grades do you usually get: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Tell me a few of the reasons you are coming to see me:

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Have you ever been in counseling before? yes no

If so, tell me one thing that you liked about it: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was one thing you didn't like about it? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for filling out this form. I look forward to talking with you.



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## **Social Media Policy**

This document outlines my office policies related to the use of Social Media. Please read it to understand how I conduct myself on the Internet as a mental health professional, and how you can expect me to respond to various interactions that may occur between us on the Internet. If you have any questions about anything written within this document, I encourage you to bring them up when we meet. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when I need to update this policy. If I do so, I will notify you in writing of any policy changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

### **Friending:**

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.) I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have any questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk about it more.

### **Following:**

I do not follow current or former clients on blogs or Twitter. My reasoning is that I believe casual viewing of clients' online content outside of the therapy hour can create confusion regarding whether it's being done as a part of your treatment or to satisfy my personal curiosity. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without our explicitly arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on our working relationship. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

### **Texting or Messaging:**

Please do not use SMS (mobile phone text message) to contact me for anything other than a schedule change. Text messages are sometimes unreliable, so I may not receive the text you sent. I may not read the text in a timely fashion so the best way to contact me in an urgent situation is by phone. You should also be aware that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

### **Use of Search Engines:**

It is not a regular part of my practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook or other search engines. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If I have a reason to suspect that you are in danger and you have not been in touch with me via our usual means (coming



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to appointments, phone), there may be an instance in which using a search engine (to find you, to find someone close to you, or to check on your recent status updates) becomes necessary as part of ensuring your welfare. These are unusual situations and if I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it and discuss it with you when we next meet.

### **Business Review Sites:**

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which list businesses. Some of these sites include forums in which users rate their providers and add reviews. Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business has added itself to the site. If you should find my listing on any of these sites, please know that my listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as my client.

The American Psychological Association's Ethics Code states under Principle 5.05 that it is unethical for psychologists to solicit testimonials: "Psychologists do not solicit testimonials from current therapy clients/patients or other persons who, because of their particular circumstances are vulnerable to undue influence."

Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality, I cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. I urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as I take my commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with me about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that I may never see it.

If we are working together, I hope that you will bring your feelings and reactions to our work directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide we are not a good fit. None of this is meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with me wherever and with whomever you like. Confidentiality means that I cannot tell people that you are my client and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. But you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that I am your therapist or how you feel about the treatment I provided to you, in any forum of your choosing.

If you do choose to write something on a business review site, I hope you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum. I urge you to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own protection and privacy. If you feel I have done something harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with me, you can always contact the Board of Psychology, which oversees licensing, and they will review the services that I have provided.



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Board of Psychology  
1422 Howe Avenue, Suite 22  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
866-503-3221  
[bopmail@dca.ca.gov](mailto:bopmail@dca.ca.gov)

**Location-Based Services:**

If you use location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. I do not place my practice as a check-in location on various geosocial networking sites such as Foursquare. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins at my office on a weekly basis. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally “checking in,” from my office or if you have a passive LBS (location-based services) app enabled on your phone.

**Email:**

I prefer using email only to send a form or a book reference/link or questionnaire for you to complete and either bring to your next appointment, or mail to me using surface mail. I may also email you with scheduling issues. I will email you using my encrypted email server through [Therapyappointment.com](http://Therapyappointment.com). This is the only secure way for us to email. Please do not email me content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not completely secure or confidential. Also, email can get lost in cyberspace. I prefer to have a conversation with you in session or over the phone. If you choose to send me an email outside of the encrypted email server at [Therapyappointment.com](http://Therapyappointment.com), be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and my Internet Service Providers. While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the Internet Service Provider. You should also know that any emails I receive from you and any responses that I send to you become a part of your legal record.

**Conclusion:**

Thank you for taking the time to review my Social Media Policy. If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures or regarding our potential interactions on the Internet, please bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them.

I have read and consent to the social media policy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date