

Client Disclosure Statement

Meredith R. Spatola, MACC, LCMHCS #8087

I am pleased that you have selected me as your counselor. This document is designed to provide you with information about my background and approach to counseling and to ensure that you understand our professional relationship.

I have a Master's Degree in Christian Counseling from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, which was completed in December, 2008. I am a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor Supervisor in the state of North Carolina. I have 12 years of counseling experience, and I have counseled at The Barnabas Center since the summer of 2008 and have completed extensive training with the Barnabas Center. I have also had experience in counseling at Carmel Counseling Center, where I counseled individuals and couples, and at Palmetto Pregnancy Center in Rock Hill, South Carolina, where I co-led group therapy for women.

In 2007, I joined the counseling department staff at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, where I provided supervision to students pursuing Masters Degrees in Christian Counseling. I served as the Internship Director for Gordon-Conwell's counseling program until March, 2010, when I began practicing counseling full-time. I have also been involved in lay vocational counseling for adults in an urban ministry program in Charlotte known as Jobs Partnership. I enjoy working with both individuals and couples, and I provide counseling for those who may be experiencing issues such as traumatic grief, co-addiction and family struggle surrounding addiction, depression, anxiety, relational and intimacy issues, experiences of betrayal, loss, spiritual confusion, and sexual identity issues. I also provide group counseling through The Barnabas Center. I look forward to our work together.

Counseling Services Offered/ Theoretical Approaches

I provide both counseling and supervision for counseling professionals through The Barnabas Center. It is important for you to understand from the outset of our counseling relationship that the intent of our work together is to bring a depth of healing to and greater love in your relationships with God and other people.

My approach to counseling integrates psychological truths with a Biblical framework and is influenced by counselors in the field such as Dan Allender, Larry Crabb, and Sue Johnson. This spiritual perspective is integrated with the perspectives of family systems, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral understandings of how people work. I believe that God heals and that He can bring meaning to your struggle and redemption to painful situations. My role is to relate to you as a person of profound dignity, made in God's image and to encourage you as you engage in a process of acknowledging places of loss and sorrow in your life as well as looking at ways you have dealt with your pain.

The decision to seek counsel is a difficult and important one, and the counseling relationship provides an

opportunity for growth and restoration. I will make every effort to bring my skills and resources to each session to address both specific concerns you have as well as patterns across your life of how you cope with pain, relate, think, feel and act. Ultimately, I believe that your willingness to look at the pain or struggle in your experiences with other people will provide an opportunity to understand your foundational struggle with God. My goal during our time together will be to help you find ways to move toward richer, fuller, more loving relationships with others and God- through greater dependency upon Christ.

Counseling is a process, and change is often difficult. You can expect to work inside and outside the counseling room. On occasion, I may ask you to read or interact with an assignment. Some of the things we will talk about may evoke uncomfortable levels of sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, loneliness or other negative feelings. You may experience major changes in your perspective, and conflicts in important relationships may be brought into focus. Some of our work together may lead to worsening circumstances along the path toward long-term healing. Despite the risks and continued effort that our work together may involve, we will pursue the healing and hope that is given to us in Christ.

Confidentiality

Information that you share with me during counseling sessions, including the fact that you are in counseling with me, will be treated with utmost respect and considered confidential. Your records will not be sent to or shown to others without a signed release from you. A few exceptions exist regarding your individual privilege of confidential communication, and these will be identified and addressed as they arise in counseling. Exceptions exist in the following situations:

- a. If I believe that you are in danger to yourself or another person, I am mandated under the law to protect you and others from physical harm.
- b. If I learn that you are involved in the abuse, neglect or exploitation of a child, elderly or disabled person or a patient in a mental health facility, or that you are being abused or neglected yourself, I am mandated under North Carolina law to report this to the Department of Social Services.
- c. In rare circumstances, I may be court ordered to release information for legal proceedings.
- d. John Pierce, MA, CSAT, LCMHC, supervises me to help ensure that you are well-served. I may discuss your case with my supervisor and other counselors on staff as necessary. My supervision requires that I audiotape counseling sessions whereby my practice of therapy may be reviewed. Audiotape of our sessions will always be at your written consent and will be discussed prior to the occurrence. Your confidentiality will be strictly maintained and these tapes will be destroyed after they have been used for their stated purpose.

Explanation of Dual Relationships

Ethics require that I explain to my clients that the counseling relationship is strictly a professional relationship, despite the fact that the information shared during counseling sessions may be of a personal nature. Ethics also require that all interactions between client and counselor are conducted in a professional manner.

Length of Sessions

I typically schedule 50-55 minutes per session. Occasionally, it is necessary for a client to schedule a longer session (usually an hour and a half or two hours) if we seem to have trouble working within the hour time frame or if there is a problem with the frequency of visits. It is typical for a client to begin counseling by scheduling an appointment on a once-a-week basis. We may however need to adjust these arrangements to meet our goals and schedules.

Cancellations

If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment, please call to cancel or reschedule at least 24 business hours in advance. Otherwise, full payment for the session is required. This is because making an appointment reserves that time session only for you, the client, to the exclusion of others. Cancellations may be made by leaving a recorded message on my voice mail with the date and time.

Fees and Method of Payment

I will take payment by check, cash, or credit/debit card at the beginning of each session and receipts are available at your request. The client assumes full responsibility for all expenses for counseling. If applicable a \$25 returned check fee will be charged.

The fee for each 50-minute session is \$165. The Barnabas Center staff raises funds to finance scholarships for clients who need them. Scholarships are available upon request and will be granted as available based on the sliding scale [annual gross household income]:

Under \$25,001	\$75
\$25,001-\$40,000	\$85
\$40,001-\$55,000	\$100
\$55,001-\$70,000	\$110
\$70,001-\$85,000	\$120
\$85,001-\$100,000	\$130
\$100,001-\$125,000	\$140
\$125,001-\$150,000	\$155
Above \$150,000	\$165

Applications for scholarship may be requested in person or by telephone through the office administrator.

Your fee will be \$165 per session. Your scholarship fee will be _____ per session (to be determined upon application review).

Insurance Payments

Because I am not working with a full-time Psychologist or Psychiatrist and because my degree is at the Masters level, most insurance companies do not cover counseling sessions. However, should you think that your insurance company may be an exception to this, you are welcome to contact the company and file a claim for coverage. I am unable to make claims for you, but I will provide the information your insurance company may need. Please be aware that any personal information or diagnosis provided to an insurance company can no longer be held to the same standard of confidentiality, and may well become part of your permanent insurance record. Though you may receive insurance benefits, you will be expected to pay for each session as it occurs.

Grievance Process

If you are dissatisfied with any portion of your work with me, please bring this to my attention so that we can make adjustments. You may stop counseling at any time for any reason. My goal is to provide service consistent with ethical standards; however, if you think that you have been treated unfairly or unethically, please let me know or contact my supervisor John Pierce at 704-365-4545 or by mail at 7615 Colony Rd., Suite 200, Charlotte, North Carolina, 28226. Also, any questions, concerns or complaints regarding the practice of psychotherapy or any other mental health profession may be directed to: North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors, PO Box 77819, Greensboro, NC, 27417 or call (844) 622-3572 or email Complaints@ncblcmhc.org.

Consent to Treatment

Please sign and date two copies of this form. You will be given a copy for your records, and I will retain a copy for my records. By signing below, you are agreeing that you have read and understood the above information.

Client #1 Signature Date

Client #2 Signature Date

Counselor's Signature Date
Meredith Spatola, MACC, LCMHCS