

NATSUMI SAWADA, REGISTERED PSYCHOLOGIST

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INFORMED CONSENT FOR THERAPY

My goal is to provide compassionate, evidence-based therapy to help you feel better, achieve your goals, and increase your quality of life. My areas of expertise are Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and mindfulness-based therapies. Depending on your needs, therapy might involve one or a combination of these.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE FIRST FEW APPOINTMENTS

During your first two to three sessions I will ask many questions so that we can assess and develop an understanding of the issues you're seeking help with. Typically, I'll then provide some feedback and recommendations. If information from the first few sessions suggests that your needs would be better served by another provider I will provide referrals to another psychologist. Though rare, I may refer you to another provider later in therapy if I later determine that your needs fall outside of my area expertise.

YOUR PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

I am a registered psychologist in Alberta, BC, and Quebec and adhere to all guidelines regarding confidential information set by the College of Alberta Psychologists (CAP) and the College of Psychologists of British Columbia (CPBC) and the Canadian Psychological Association Ethics Code and federal and provincial law pertaining to the privacy of personal information (e.g., PIPA in Alberta and BC, PIPEDA) and psychological treatment. **I disclose confidential information to a third party only if you have given written consent. However, there are limits to confidentiality as follows.**

A psychologist may or in some cases must release information if:

- **A client presents an imminent danger to themselves or others**
- **A child or vulnerable adult is in need of protection**
- **A court orders the release of information**
- **The psychologist believes on reasonable and probable grounds that a client is operating a vehicle in an unsafe manner as per the Motor Vehicle Act in BC and the Traffic Safety Act in Alberta**
- **A client is a health professional under the Health Professions Act in BC and the psychologist believes on reasonable and probable grounds that the continued practice of this health professional might be injurious or dangerous to the public**
- **The psychologist has reason to believe that a person under their care has a communicable disease or sexually transmitted infection as per the Communicable Diseases Regulation in Alberta (reporting requirements vary depending on the disease: See the Communicable Diseases Regulation 238/1985)**

In any of these cases, a psychologist releases the minimal amount of information that is

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required to protect the safety of the client or others or as required by law.

The CAP and the CPBC also require that psychologists regularly consult with other registrants about their work to maintain professional competency. **I may therefore consult with other psychologists about your therapy without disclosing your identifying information.**

I take several steps to ensure the confidentiality of your information and all of your information is kept in your file. **Your file is stored on secure encrypted servers in Canada using [Jane](#) and outside of Canada using [G Suite](#) (see [this page](#) for data center locations) or in a locked filing cabinet that is also used by other professionals at my practice. Data stored outside of Canada using G Suite could be subject to foreign privacy laws. Please indicate if you do not consent to your data being stored outside of Canada at the bottom of this form.**

Consistent with requirements for psychologists in Alberta and BC your file is kept for 10 (Alberta residents) or seven years (BC residents) after your file is closed. For minors, the file is kept for 10 (Alberta) or seven years (BC) after the minor reaches the age of majority.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN APPOINTMENTS

Please contact me at 780.604.8003 and natsumi@mindbright.ca. Do not contact me at any other number or email because I may not receive your communication. Please do not send text messages.

I am often not immediately available by phone or email. If you leave a message or send an email I will do my best to return messages within 24 business hours.

In emergencies call your family doctor, the Distress Line (Edmonton) at 780.482. HELP (4357), the Crisis Centre (Vancouver) at 604.872.3311, 911, or go to an emergency room. As a private practice psychologist, I cannot provide any kind of emergency crisis intervention.

THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF THERAPY

Psychological treatments such as CBT, ACT, DBT, and mindfulness-based therapies have been found to be effective for a variety of concerns. Common benefits include:

- Learning new ways to understand yourself and your challenges
- Learning new, effective coping skills to manage emotions
- Learning new, helpful ways to think about yourself, your life, other people, or the world
- Improvements in mood, energy level, and activity level
- Improvements in stress management
- Reducing impulsive behaviour, substance use, disordered eating, or other behaviours that cause problems in your life
- Solving everyday problems

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- Improving relationships
 - Moving towards goals that are important to you

Depending on your situation, you may experience these or other benefits. **The benefits of therapy depend greatly on how much work you put into it.** Just like learning how to play a musical instrument, learning new ways to cope, think, and act take practice. If you are ever concerned about whether you are benefiting from therapy let me know. I will be happy to discuss this with you.

THE POSSIBLE RISKS OF THERAPY

The therapies I provide are based on scientific evidence and work well for many. Nevertheless, sometimes therapy involves short-term emotional discomfort or changes in relationships. Therapy often involves making changes in your life that may be uncomfortable. It also involves hard work and a significant time commitment. I will do my best to help you cope with these changes. My clients often find that the initial discomfort in therapy decreases over time.

I strive to provide the best treatment possible, however the therapies I provide might not work for you. We'll work together to monitor your progress and determine whether therapy seems to be helping. If therapy has not helped after an expected period of time, this could be because you need a different therapy or treatment provider. Please speak with me if you have concerns about your progress. Other therapies may exist and some people may not benefit from therapy and I will happily provide recommendations.

There are additional risks to online therapy/telepsychology. If you are receiving online therapy please read and sign the Informed Consent for Telepsychology form.

ALTERNATIVES TO PSYCHOTHERAPY AND CONSEQUENCES OF NON-ACTION

Psychological treatments have been shown to be effective for a variety of psychological concerns and they are considered the first line of treatment for some. The Canadian Psychological Association has created [this document](#) to provide information on the effectiveness and efficacy of psychological treatments if you would like to learn more.

Alternative treatments do exist. Please speak to your family doctor if you would like to learn more about these. In general, it is best to seek treatments that are supported by research.

While psychological concerns will sometimes improve on their own, some individuals who do not seek any treatment for psychological concerns may find that their symptoms get worse or remain unchanged.

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MY PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

I have a PhD in Clinical Psychology from McGill University and I am a Registered Psychologist and member of the CAP, the CPBC, and the OPQ in good standing.

PROCEDURES FOR CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Please discuss concerns regarding therapy with me. I am very open to feedback about our sessions whether positive or negative and I always find that people's concerns can be constructively resolved through discussion. I actually actively welcome feedback because it helps me do a better job at helping you and others. In some cases, if concerns persist or there is a poor fit between us, I will happily help you find another treatment provider.

The CAP is the regulatory body for the profession of psychology in Alberta. The CPBC is the regulatory body for the profession of psychology in BC. The role of these Colleges is to protect the public by monitoring and regulating the practice of psychology practitioners in Alberta and BC. If you believe that you were treated in a manner that contravenes the Standards of Practice or Code of Conduct, you can make a formal complaint to the College in your province. Information can be obtained at <https://www.cap.ab.ca/> and <http://www.collegeofpsychologists.bc.ca>.

INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES, FEES, SCHEDULING, AND CANCELLATIONS

Sessions are by appointment and are typically 50 minutes but may be scheduled for longer.

The fee for a 50-minute session is 200 dollars payable by cash, credit card, or email money transfer to natsumi@mindbright.ca. If you pay by cash or credit card, payment is due at the end of each session. If you pay e-transfer, payment is due within one hour of each session.

If you provide a credit card number for payment, this will be kept securely in your file and charged after each session. Unless you make a cash or e-transfer payment during your session your credit card will be automatically billed by after each session you attend or after any scheduled session that was missed or cancelled without 24 hours notice.

I will provide receipts which you should retain for income tax and insurance claim purposes. Your extended health benefit plan may reimburse your fees. Fees may also be eligible for inclusion as a medical expense when you file your taxes. Duplicate receipts can be provided upon request however I charge my hourly rate for the time required to process such requests.

If I am late for a session, I will make up the missed time or prorate your bill. If you are late, you may use the remainder of the session time but you will be charged the full session fee.

Please avoid canceling sessions. If you must cancel please provide as much notice as possible.

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This increases the probability that another person will be able to use your session time.

The full session fee is charged for missed appointments and appointments that are cancelled with less than exactly 24 hours notice for any reason, including unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances (e.g., illness, accidents, and emergencies). Most insurance policies will not pay for sessions that were not attended so you may need to pay out of pocket.

Cancellations must be made by calling 780.604.8003 or emailing natsumi@mindbright.ca. Cancellations communicated via any other email address or phone number will not be received in time to provide the required 24 hours notice.

A 50 dollar fee is charged for returned cheques. A prorated fee of 240 dollars per hour is charged for all documentation (e.g., forms, letters, reports, duplicate receipts etc). In the unlikely event that you require my services in court or for any other proceeding my fee is 3000 dollars per day or for any portion thereof.

SIGNATURE

By signing below I attest that I have read and understood all of the information above and have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the conditions of consent to therapy. I attest that I fully agree and consent to all of the terms and conditions outlined above unless otherwise indicated in writing below. I understand that this consent is valid starting today and for the duration of therapy but that I may withdraw my consent at any time by making a request in writing.

Client Name

Client Signature

Date

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY AND CONSENT

There are risks to the privacy and confidentiality of information shared via electronic methods such as email, text message, video conferencing, and social media. Privacy and confidentiality is not guaranteed as electronic communication can be intercepted, misdelivered, or read and distributed by third parties.

You are welcome to communicate with me by email for the purposes of scheduling sessions and sharing materials, but please be aware of the risks to your privacy and confidentiality and do not send me information regarding your treatment, mental health, or history via email.

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With your informed consent of the risks of electronic communication, I may offer to send you materials related to treatment via email (e.g., receipts, material worked on in session, blank treatment forms, resources). **If you do not accept the risks to confidentiality associated with email communication please do not consent to receiving electronic communications. I will happily communicate with you via phone, fax, and mail instead.**

I use [G Suite](#) for email often (not always) in combination with an encryption software called Virtru. G Suite has stringent privacy and security standards however, data transmission and storage occurs outside of Canada (see [this page](#) for data center locations). This means your data could be subject to foreign privacy laws. If you do not consent to your data being transmitted/stored outside of Canada do not consent to communicating with me by email.

I am on social media for business-related purposes, however I request that you do not communicate with me directly or indirectly using friend requests, tweets, follows, messages, comments, or reviews as these forms of online communication compromise your privacy. To protect your confidentiality and to maintain professional boundaries I do not respond to any of the abovementioned social media communications.

All emails, texts, or other electronic communications received are considered part of your file and are stored accordingly.

Please indicate whether or not you consent to receiving email and text communications.

- I understand the risks to confidentiality associated with electronic communications such as email and I consent to receiving electronic communications from Natsumi Sawada, RPsych containing information related to payment, scheduling, and therapy (e.g., materials created in session). I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time by making a request in writing.**

Client Signature

Date

- I do not consent to receiving electronic communications from Natsumi Sawada, RPsych

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