

SERVICES AGREEMENT

The following document contains important information about the professional services I provide, my business policies, and your rights as a client. Please read it carefully. Your signature at the end of this form indicates your agreement with it and consent to proceed with services.

About Your Therapist

Maija Prakash has a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from University of Alberta and two Masters degrees, including a Masters of Arts focused on medical anthropology from University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Masters of Counselling from City University of Seattle-Edmonton. I am a Certified Canadian Counsellor in good standing (#6426) and I am a Registered Psychologist (#5278) with the College of Alberta Psychologists (www.cap.ab.ca) in the province of Alberta. I am also a member in good standing of the Psychologists' Association of Alberta (www.psychologistsassociation.ab.ca).

Therapeutic Approach

I believe that therapy is a collaborative venture and I use an integrative approach to therapy by drawing upon three therapy styles: 1) somatic therapy, which values the human nervous system's instinctive responses to overwhelming events and integrates mind and body; 2) a psychodynamic approach, which values our early experiences and relationships; and 3) an attachment-based approach, which emphasizes the importance of the therapeutic relationship. In our sessions, I may suggest specific techniques, such as visualizations, imagination, relaxation exercises, writing, etc. I maintain my training and knowledge in the treatment of trauma with training, supervision and case consultations.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the foundation of any client-therapist relationship, and I am ethically and legally obligated to safeguard your information and the manner in which I collect, use, and share it with others. It is important for you to know that there are some specific situations in which your confidential information may be disclosed to others without your informed, written consent. These include:

- 1) Where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that your safety or the safety of another person is at risk,
- 2) Where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a child or vulnerable adult is in need of protection, or
- 3) When information is subpoenaed by a court of law for the purposes of legal proceedings.

In the case that your information has been or must be shared without your consent, you will be notified of this disclosure at the earliest possible opportunity. Disclosure will be limited only to what is necessary to be shared, and only to those who reasonably need to know.

Adolescent Clients: Except for the situations mentioned above, I will not share with your parents/guardians specific things you share in our private therapy sessions. However, in using my professional judgment. If I determine that you are in immediate and serious danger of being harmed, I will inform your parents/guardians of this.

Additionally, there are some circumstances under which I may seek professional supervision or consultation in order to provide the most effective and appropriate service. Some of your personal, though non-identifying, information may be shared with other professional colleagues.

Your client records will be maintained for a minimum of 10 years, as per standards outlined by the College of Alberta Psychologists. Paper copies will be stored in a locked cabinet. Electronic records are encrypted and stored in a medical-grade cloud storage.

Risks and Benefits of Therapy

Therapy is different than talking to a friend or family member because our conversations have specific goals and are based on therapeutic strategies found to be beneficial. There are benefits and risks to engaging in any form of counselling or psychotherapy. The potential risks are considered to be relatively few, but may include the following:

- ◆ You may experience uncomfortable feelings, such as sadness, guilt, fear, anxiety, frustration, anger, or loneliness, because the process of therapy often explores some of the more difficult aspects of your life.
- ◆ You may find yourself recalling unpleasant memories either during or in between sessions, which is a normal part of the therapy process.

- ◆ Your relationships with the people closest to you may begin to change, as you begin to learn more about yourself and find new ways of coping and problem solving.
- ◆ You may find therapy is simply not a good fit for you.

Despite these risks, therapy has generally been shown to benefit those who choose to engage in it. Therapy has potential for gaining clarity, accessing strengths, reducing distress and enhancing relationships. Therapy will require active effort on your part, both within and outside of sessions, to maximize benefit.

Please feel free to bring up questions or concerns you may have at any time during the therapy process so that we can discuss them. In the case that you or I decide it would be best not to continue working together, I will be glad to explore other options with you, such as a referral to another mental health professional or program, who might be more suitable to address your individual needs. You are able to terminate therapy at any point.

Professional Fees

Fees are \$190 per session unless otherwise agreed upon and are due at the end of each session. The fee also includes my time on behalf of you in terms of record keeping and preparation.

I do not offer direct billing through insurance companies. I will issue receipts by email, which you can then submit for full or partial coverage through most extended health care benefits insurance programs. I accept cash, cheque, e-transfer, and credit card for payment.

Appointments

Appointments will ordinarily be 50-60 minutes in duration. If you need to cancel or reschedule a session, I ask that you provide me with 24-hours notice. If you miss a session without cancelling, or cancel with less than 24-hour notice, my policy is to collect the amount of your session fee. If it is possible, I will try to find another time to reschedule the appointment. In addition, you are responsible for coming to your session on time; if you are late, your appointment will still need to end at the original time.

I am part of an association that has rules about the types of interactions we are allowed to have with clients. As part of these guidelines, I will NOT accept "friend" or "follow" requests on any social media site (Facebook, etc.) with you.

Non-therapeutic Contact

You may contact me at any time via email (hello@maijaprakash.com) or by phone (780-993-0787). If you have specific questions or concerns of a non-therapeutic nature (e.g., appointments, administrative issues, fee payment, etc.). I will make every reasonable effort to respond to your message; however due to the nature of voicemail, texts, and email, I cannot guarantee that I received this communication and am able to give a timely reply. If there is a crisis or emergency, please contact your nearest emergency department (hospital, 911, police) or a Crisis Intervention Hotline (Distress Line 780-482-4357).

Consent to Services

Your signature below indicates that you have read this Services Agreement and agree to its terms.

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Client	Signature of Client	Date
_____	_____	_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian for Clients <18	Maija Prakash, MC Reg. Psych.#5278	Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian for Clients <18		