

PASTORAL THERAPY ASSOCIATES

The Rev. Dr. Jerry F. Smith, S.T.D.

Pastoral Psychotherapy and Spiritual Direction

Other Associates

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Dear Client,

Welcome to Pastoral Therapy Associates (PTA). Thank you for choosing our services. In order for you to inform yourself about our policies, your rights as a client, and my background, I offer the following information. Please read all this material carefully and ask for any clarification you need before signing the accompanying form.

PTA operates as a church-sanctioned pastoral counseling center whose mission consists of providing professional pastoral psychotherapy, spiritual guidance, and training in the pastoral care tradition. We join together as a community of Christian professionals who view our work as a clinical ministry, that integrates spiritual principles and traditions with contemporary psychotherapy and the social sciences.

POLICIES:

Fees: We base our fees on a sliding-scale gauged to your family income. While we may have quoted you a fee estimate over the phone, you and I will discuss and determine your actual fee in this session. Your minimum fee, while adjustable, is usually \$70 and your maximum fee will not exceed \$105 per 50 minute hour. I ask that you pay at each meeting. Make your check out to Pastoral Therapy Associates (or "PTA"). We do not take Medical Coupons. We strongly discourage the use of insurance coverage. Using your insurance may put potentially damaging, confidential information about you into the public record. If you do use insurance, you pay PTA for each session and have your insurance company reimburse you, if they will. We charge five dollars (\$5) for each NSF (not sufficient funds) check. In order to avoiding having cash on hand, we do not make change.

Appointments: All counseling hours last fifty (50) minutes. Consistency in keeping appointments is important to the counseling process. If you cannot keep an appointment, please notify me at least 48 hours in advance or I will charge you at your regular fee for that session. Try not to change your appointments if at all possible. My schedule is generally full and it might take some time to re-schedule another time with you. During major snow, or other transportation crippling weather, I will be available to contact the therapy hour by telephone.

When you enter the suite, if my office door is open please come in. If not, I will come to the waiting room on the next floor up and greet you for our appointment.

(Over)

Old Tacoma City Hall Building 625 Commerce, Suite #400 Tacoma, WA 98402 (253) 627-1691

Contacting Your Counselor: We make phone coverage available on a 24 hour basis. When you leave a message for me, please also leave your name, your phone number, and my full name. If on a rare occasion you should need an emergency contact instructions are available on my answering service voice mail. If you call in an emergency, please tell the message taker that you are in crisis. I, or the person on call, will return your call as soon as possible.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A CLIENT:

Choice of Therapist: You have the right to choose a therapy that suits your needs. If you have concerns about my suitability to serve you, first discuss it with me. If we cannot resolve your concern I will arrange an appropriate referral. If you want to end therapy, I strongly recommend that you and I talk about that transition before you quit.

Confidentiality: I hold what you discuss, during our sessions, in strictest confidence. We, at PTA, *firmly* believe that our work is of a confessional nature. Therefore, I will never disclose either the fact that I do, or do not, see you as a client, or the content of your therapy, with any other person including employees of; an insurance company, a court, or any kind of legal agent. The only exceptions to this agreement may include:

- 1) If you are at risk of harming yourself (suicide);
- 2) If you are at risk of harming another person (homicide);
- 3) Where there is evidence of abuse/neglect of a child, a disabled, and/or an elderly person.
- 4) If there are issues relating to my professional conduct.
- 5) Where I judge it serves your best interest to share our work with appropriate consultative and/or supervisory persons/networks within the PTA system. I do this to honor my pledge, as a pastoral psychotherapist, to practice in community, and to insure that you receive the highest quality of care.

In these five instances I will use such information in a way that protects you and/or others in as responsible a manner as possible.

If your need for therapeutic service includes sharing information in litigation, for insurance claims, or for any other similar purpose, please inform me and I will gladly refer you to someone with an appropriate forensic or diagnostic specialty.