

Colleen Russell, LMFT (MFT29249), CGP (41715)
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Certified Group Psychotherapist
Educational Consultant
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PROFESSIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Philosophy, Approach, Private Practice:

My focus is always that everyone deserves the utmost respect for his/her process of healing, gaining professional help with challenging situations, and reaching personal goals in a genuinely safe, respectful environment. I'm an advocate for personal rights, healthy relationships and groups that support commonalities, differences, autonomy, connection and individual growth. I understand that our responses and behavior "make sense", given our history. As studies have shown and I have observed, the quality of the relationship between therapist and client, including a client's trust of and feeling understood by the therapist, are primary factors in healing and change. I endeavor to maintain a safe, trusting, collaborative, respectful power dynamic and accurately attuned, here and now relationship with each client.

Areas of Expertise:

Loss and Grief

Trauma and PTSD

Coercive Control and Influence in Cult or High Demand Groups and Relationships

Couple Counseling and Relationship Issues

Spousal/Partner Abuse

Parent Loss in Childhood, Adolescence, or Adulthood

Mother Loss (Motherless Daughters: women who have lost their mothers through death, illness, narcissism, separation, estrangement in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood)

Narcissistic Injury

Mother-Daughter Relationships

Family Estrangement

Family System Issues

Conflict Resolution

Difficult Transitions

Depression; Anxiety

Self-Esteem, Self-Identity

Meaning of Life Issues

Clinical Orientation:

Working collaboratively and interactively with each client based on individual need, I use an integrative cognitive, relational, psychodynamic, family systems orientation. I may also incorporate mindfulness practice and interpersonal neurobiology findings and practice.

Experience and Practice:

Since 1992 I have been a licensed psychotherapist, sustaining a general private practice in Marin County, CA and on secure Zoom. I maintain ethical standards and I'm committed to support each client's well-being. I work with individuals, couples, families, and groups. I facilitate groups, workshops, and trainings on secure Zoom prior to and now exclusively since the COVID-19 pandemic. Clients work with me longer-term, for brief therapy, individually, as couples, in groups and in educational consultations. I understand the deep influence of family, relationships and groups and how they can enhance or obstruct personal growth. I value the richness and mutual support healthy groups and relationships offer along with corrective relational experiences or better outcomes than in the past.

I **provide neither custody evaluation recommendation**, medication or prescription recommendation, legal advice, as these activities do not fall within my scope of practice.

Licensure, Education:

I am a **Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) MFT29249** since 1992 in good standing in the state of California. As a LMFT, I am trained to assess, diagnose, and treat individuals, couples, families and groups to achieve more adequate, satisfying and productive social, marriage, and family adjustment. As an LMFT, I have completed 3,000 hours of supervised experience and at least 36 hours of Continuing Education every two-year license renewal period.

I have a **M.A. Degree in Clinical Psychology**, graduating in 1987 from John F. Kennedy University in Orinda, California, accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. I received my **B.A. Degree in Psychology**, graduating with honors from San Francisco State University, San Francisco, California.

Expectations in Psychotherapy, Workshops, Support Groups and Educational Consultations

Participation in any of the above can result in several benefits to you, including improving interpersonal relationships and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek professional help. Collaboratively working toward these benefits, however, requires effort on your part as well as mine, including your very active involvement and honesty to make changes you seek.

I will ask for your feedback and views on your therapy, participation in a workshop, psychotherapy group, or educational consultation. Talking about unpleasant events, feelings, or thoughts can result in discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, anxiety, shame, or any deep feeling. You can also feel relief, excitement, hope, calm, and validation that your responses are “normal” and that changes you seek do occur.

I may suggest different ways of looking at, thinking about, or handling situations. Attempting to resolve issues that brought you to seek professional help in the first place may result in unexpected changes. In relationships, sometimes a decision or change that is positive for one family member is viewed negatively by another, at least initially. Change may sometimes be easy and sometimes slow and frustrating. There is no guarantee that any of my services will yield positive or intended results. The individual process of gaining insight, healing and change is step by step.

Confidentiality, Individual, Couple or Family Units:

All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your written permission except where disclosure is required by law. The circumstances where disclosure is required by law are the following: where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse or neglect; where a client presents a danger to self or to a specific other, or when a client's family members communicate to me that the client presents a danger to others. Disclosure may also be required pursuant to a legal proceeding by or against you. If you place your mental status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain the psychotherapy records and/or testimony by me. If any of the above occurs, I will consult with someone outside our relationship, and give prior notification of my need to do so to the client(s) first.

A couple or family is considered a “client unit”. Based on my professional judgment and the needs, goals, and well-being of the couple or family, I may see a member of the unit individually or conjointly. I also have a “no secrets” policy for couples and family therapy, excluding adolescents who often will not disclose if the therapist will give the information to parents. The exception is if this information involves serious risk. I will use my best judgment in relating information I obtain individually to the family or couple unit if this information appears essential to the well-being of all concerned. If an individual does not want me to disclose information, we will discuss this concern together and if I feel I cannot work effectively without disclosure, then I will withdraw as therapist for the couple or family.

Termination Policy:

The client has the right to terminate therapy at any time and as therapist, I have the right to terminate therapy at my discretion. Upon either party's decision to terminate therapy, I will generally recommend that the client participate in at least one to three termination sessions. These sessions are intended to facilitate a positive termination experience and give both parties an opportunity to reflect on the work that has been done. I will also attempt to ensure a smooth transition to another therapist by offering referrals to the client. If I as therapist initiate termination the reasons include, but are not limited to, untimely payment of fees, failure to comply with treatment recommendations, conflicts of interest, failure to participate in therapy, the client's needs are outside of the therapist's scope of competence or practice, or the client is not making adequate progress in therapy with me. I do not work with clients who, in my opinion, I do not feel able to adequately help. If at any point during psychotherapy I assess that I am not effective in helping you reach your therapeutic goals I will discuss with you termination of treatment. I can also talk to the psychotherapist of your choice in order to help with the transition.

Telehealth and Telecommunication:

I offer telehealth and telecommunication that includes the practice of health care delivery, diagnosis, consultation, treatment, transfer of medical data and education using interactive audio, video, or data communications. I also offer telecommunication for workshops, trainings, and educational consultations. These alternatives to face-to-face office sessions: 1) save time and expense in traveling, 2) are helpful to those with a medical condition, 3) allow clients to consult with a therapist who has a specific specialty, or 4) for continuing care following a move or vacation, in some cases.

Fees:

Generally, for individual, couple, family sessions fee is \$195.00 for each 50- minute session and \$50.00 or \$70.00 per group or workshop session, unless otherwise agreed upon. For couple counseling or family sessions, initial session is usually 1½ hours, for a fee of \$292.00.

Payment is due in the morning prior to the time of our Zoom session, with my preference, **Zelle** (from your bank account to mine) or PayPal payable via my website: www.colleenrussellmft.com and the "Make a Payment" on the menu . For therapy groups, payments are due at the first session of every month for the group sessions that month. Unless otherwise agreed to, your monthly group or workshop payment is not refundable for absences as I save the place for you and consider how your participation will positively affect others in group. I offer some flexibility based on individual situations.

Educational Consultations and Workshops

You may seek professional support on an issue within my area of expertise that may not be available in your immediate area or elsewhere. In these cases, I offer psychoeducation and individualized support via telecommunication in individual, couple, family sessions, or one of the workshops I facilitate. My fee is generally the same as written above.

Private Pay:

To devote more time to client hours and to maintain client confidentiality from insurances, I am a **private pay practitioner** and an **out-of-network provider**. At your request, I can provide you with a statement at the end of the month that you can take to your insurance for any reimbursements they may give.

Cancellation:

For individual, couple, or family sessions, I request a cancellation 24 hours ahead of time or you will generally be billed for the time I save for you with some exceptions. Unless otherwise agreed upon, for group participants, refunds are not given for missed sessions (see above) Breaks are taken for vacations/holidays.

Email:

Email exchanges between therapist and client are confidential and I have taken steps to protect the privacy of the communication. I have password protection, firewalls, anti-virus software, and encrypted email but with all of these precautions in place, a possibility exists for email hacking. Take precaution with texting, as this is not encrypted but a popular way to communicate. With this in mind, please email or text information you feel comfortable to send. I primarily email clients with scheduling.

Emergency and Vacation Information:

If there is an emergency during therapy and I become concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, I will do whatever I can within the limits of the law, to prevent you from injuring yourself or others and to ensure that you receive the proper medical care. For this purpose, I may also contact the person whose name you have provided on the Client Information Form.

I check my emails and phone messages frequently and try to return calls within 24 hours Monday-Friday. Weekend calls are usually returned on Monday. If you don't receive a response within the above time period, email, text, or call me again – I may have missed your communication. **If I can't be reached and you have an emergency, please call 911 or the 24-hour Marin Crisis Unit at 415-499-6666; the SF 24-hour Crisis Line at 415-781-0500; the Alameda County 24-hour Crisis Line 1-800-309-2131. The 24-hour National Suicide Prevention and Help Line at (800) 273-8255.** If I am on vacation, I will provide you with the name of an experienced therapist if you need to make an appointment in my absence.

Treatment Plans:

Within a reasonable period of time after the initiation of treatment, I will discuss with you my working understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives, and my view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have any unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your therapy or educational consultations, please ask and you will be answered fully. You also have the right to ask about other treatments for your condition and their risks and benefits

Certifications:

Certified Group Psychotherapist (CGP) with the American Group Psychotherapy Association since 2003. CGPs have met nationally accepted criteria of education, training and experience in group psychotherapy. A CGP is considered an expert in group psychotherapy and an ethical practitioner who is committed to group psychotherapy as an autonomous treatment modality.

Certified Grief Therapist, Intensive Loss and Grief Training at Our House Grief Support Center in Los Angeles, CA (2013)

Certified Domestic Violence Advocate, Group/Individual Therapist , Team Developer for the Surviving Parent and Child Group Program In This Together (ITT) (2014-2015) and **Group/Individual Therapist** (2014-2019) with the Center for Domestic Peace, San Rafael, CA

Mediation and Conflict Resolution, Steven Rosenberg, Attorney, Mill Valley, CA (1998)

Shared Parenting Support Program, Frank Leek, PhD, Sacramento, CA (1996).

Post-Graduate Education

I am fortunate to have on-going training and consultations with many highly respected mental health professionals in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. In June, 2008, I completed a nine-month Post-Graduate Psychotherapy Training Program with the **San Francisco Psychotherapy Research Group (SFPRG)**, a program on the theory and practice of psychotherapy. I continue to deepen my knowledge of and competence in clinical treatment for individuals, couples, and groups. I attend trainings for loss, grief, trauma and its treatment, studying and attending online training and conferences presented by leaders in the field, including Bessel van der Kolk, MD (Mill Valley, 2003; SF, 2008); John Briere, PhD (SF, 2009) Janina Fisher, (2019, 2021, 2024); presentations by the American Group Psychotherapy Association; the Northern California Group Psychotherapy Society, and the SF Psychotherapy Research (SF, 1997 to 2024).

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Presentations and Journal Articles

I have attended and presented at the Northern California Group Psychotherapy Society Annual Conference/Training Institute; the International Cultic Studies Association (U.S. and England, 2019, 2022), the Marin California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, and other venues.

I have authored published journal articles and facilitate workshops related to those affected by authoritarian, high-demand groups and abusive or coercive relationships, including online workshops (since 2010) and a group for former members, including those born and raised (2000-2021). My published journal article in *Cultic Studies Review* “*Touched: Disconfirming Pathogenic Beliefs of Thought Reform Through the Process of Acting*” is included in the Volume 9, Number 1, 2010 edition. I describe the high-demand group I was indoctrinated into as a young adult, how I left and reparative experiences that gave me the freedom to pursue healthy goals. In the book, “*Celebrating the Wounded Healer Psychotherapist*,” (2017) edited by Sharon Farber, I’ve authored a chapter “*Open the Curtains and Let In The Light*” about my own journey with trauma and becoming a psychotherapist. I have published articles on motherless daughters in local newspapers and I appeared on a panel with Cheryl Strayed and others at the first Motherless Daughters Conference with Hope Edelman in Los Angeles.

Agency Experience

I have worked at the following SF Bay Area Agencies as Primary Therapist:

- Center for Domestic Peace**, Survivor and Child Program, Individual and Group Therapist, Marin County
- Marin Community Mental Health**, Family and Child Division;
- San Francisco Children’s Hospital Child Crisis Services**, SF
- Center for Attitudinal Healing**, Sausalito;
- Clement Street Counseling Services**, SF
- Assisted Independent Living Programs**, SF & Marin, for those with severe mental illness;
- Centerpoint Adolescent Drug and Alcohol Treatment**;
- Marin County Juvenile Drug Court Team**

Professional Memberships:

California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists; San Francisco Psychotherapy Research Group; Northern California Group Psychotherapy Society; Marin California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists.

Signature:

I have carefully read all five pages of this Professional Disclosure Statement and I understand it. Any questions have been explained to me.

Client Name(s) Printed **Date**

Date

Client Signature(s) **Date**

Date