



Therapy Services Agreement

Welcome to Solace and Sanctuary

This document contains important information about our professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully. When you sign this document, it will constitute an agreement between us, the client and Solace and Sanctuary as the service provider.

Contract for Equine and Animal Assisted Mental Health Services, between:

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

and **Solace and Sanctuary** (Sarah Camille trading as Solace and Sanctuary ABN: 45 948 806 266).

Online, Office and Nature-Based Animal Assisted Mental Health Services.

SOLACE AND SANCTUARY

Counselling Contract and Terms and Conditions

Welcome to Solace and Sanctuary (ABN: 45 948 806 266).

This document contains important information about our professional services and business policies. Please read it carefully. When you book your appointment, or on signing this document, it acknowledges you have read, understood and agreed to this document, it will constitute an agreement (a Counselling Contract) between you - the client and Solace and Sanctuary (ABN 45 948 806 266) - the service provider.

Please call to discuss any questions you may have prior to booking your appointment.

At Solace and Sanctuary, we provide Equine (and animal assisted) Assisted Mental Health Services (EAMHS) in Online, Telehealth, In Office and In Nature-Based Settings; around the farm and in the arena and paddock.

These services are designed to address psychological, relationship and communication skills issues, self-confidence and self-esteem issues, attention and focus issues, family issues and to help promote the health and wellness of the whole person.

Benefits and Risks of Equine Assisted and Animal Assisted Therapies

Equine assisted and animal assisted mental health services include horses and may also include dogs or cats, as part of the therapeutic experience. Due to this inclusion, your treatment will look different to a more traditional therapeutic service.

You may be in close proximity to one or more horses, dogs and cats. Engagement could include observation, touching, grooming, leading, and interacting through the paddock/yard fence. Therefore, it is essential that you understand the inherent risk factors when it comes with the horse/dog/cat and human relationship.

Horses are large and potentially dangerous and may act or react suddenly without noticeable warning. The Solace and Sanctuary staff will provide you with important safety information prior to coming into close proximity with horses and will utilise any and all safety precautions needed to help keep you safe. When a horse is frightened, angry, under stress or feels threatened, it is the horse's instinct to jump forwards or sideways, to run away from perceived danger or even to kick, bite, rear up or even throw their head.

Working with dogs and cats in therapy carries inherent risks that require careful management.

Even well-trained dogs and cats may bite or scratch if threatened or startled. Clients may be allergic to fur, dander, or saliva, which can be problematic in confined spaces. Animals can carry bacteria or diseases that can transfer to humans, so our animals receive regular vet care and have good hygiene. As part of our policies and procedures, regular hand washing is a requirement. Animals who are not fit for session, will be rested and excluded on the day.

Stress or anxiety can lead to unpredictable behaviour in cats and dogs, such as growling, hissing, or biting. The therapist will monitor the animal in sessions, and provide animal space and rest periods to ensure their wellbeing and regulation. It is important that the animals are managed appropriately to avoid undue stress, physical injuries, or unexpected reactions.

Effective management involves proper training, regular health checks, and clear safety protocols for both animals and clients.

It is important that you understand the inherent risks and dangers associated with this form of treatment, and that you voluntarily agree to assume them. You will be asked to read & sign a waiver that further demonstrates your agreement to assume these risks.

In our practice, therapeutic work with horses appears to deeply impact some clients. You may experience intense emotional states when in the presence of horses. You may also experience sudden changes, personal realisations or make new decisions about old situations.

Horses generally require that we are honest and authentic about our situations and in our communication. Therefore, during treatment you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, blindness, and helplessness.

At the closure of a session, you may feel particularly raw and emotionally exposed. We recommend that you take some time to come back into your body, refocus, and prepare for departure back to your 'normal' life. We also recommend that you drink plenty of water and have a snack available in your car for your drive following the session.

Therapeutic services call for a very active effort on your part. Since the horses, dogs and cats ask us to be authentic, current, and honest with ourselves, you may find that our services are more confrontational than traditional psychotherapeutic and counselling services. It is important that you are aware of and agree to an embodied counselling service that may induce more rapid change due to the intensity, confrontation and focus of the service.

Your services will generally be conducted outside (or share spaces indoors and outdoors) and may be with or around horses, dogs and cat.

Benefits and Risks of Nature Therapy

Nature Therapy involves engaging in therapeutic sessions while walking/being outdoors in natural settings. The purpose is to combine the benefits of physical activity and being in nature with traditional talk therapy/somatic experiencing to support your mental health and overall well-being.

It offers potential benefits, such as reduced stress, increased openness, and enhanced problem-solving and inherent risks associated with outdoor activities, including but not limited to tripping, slipping, or encountering unpredictable weather conditions. You agree to take reasonable precautions during Nature Therapy sessions to minimise these risks. Participation is voluntary and you can decide to discontinue types of therapy at any time, by sharing your choice with your counsellor. Your therapy will be tailored and adjusted to your personal needs and preferences.

You will need to be prepared for varying weather conditions and dress accordingly. This means wearing closed in shoes, a hat, pants, and being prepared with layers appropriate for the weather conditions. Please wear sun protective clothing and bring a water bottle.

In many cases we will also use art nature-based activities, guided imagery, mindfulness exercises, breath and body movement.

CODE OF ETHICS

Therapists at Solace and Sanctuary are either members of a professional body and thus suitably qualified, or appropriately supervised trainees. All therapists will work to the Animal Therapies Limited code of ethics which can be found on the ATL website. All therapists will offer unconditional positive regard, empathy, genuineness and respect for you, your values and belief systems; we welcome all clients.

CONFIDENTIALITY & EXCEPTIONS

Respecting your confidentiality is of the utmost importance to us.

However, if it is assessed that you are at risk of seriously harming yourself or others, it may be necessary to alert others, such as your GP, of our concerns.

In all discussions between us you have the right to expect that anything we talk about will remain confidential. We will respect and guard your right to confidentiality very carefully, but you need to know that there are few cases where that may not apply.

These are the situations where information may be shared with someone else:

- 1) If you ask the therapist to speak with someone else for you or give them information you wish them to have**
- 2) If the therapist feels that you or someone else may be in danger or in need of protection**
- 3) If a court orders the release of information**
- 4) If required by law, as in cases of child abuse**
- 5) To consult with another professional person in confidence to try to find solutions or answers for you.**

These situations are very rare, but it is important for you to know about them.

Due consideration should be exercised before disclosing anything of a previously unreported criminal nature as Solace and Sanctuary may be obligated, in compliance with the law, to notify other agencies, particularly when the protection of children and vulnerable adults is a concern.

We will always endeavour to discuss disclosure to others with you beforehand and jointly agree a way forward. Everything that is discussed in the therapy session is kept in strictest confidence.

Each therapist might keep brief notes after a session which will be securely stored.

Any notes taken during or after each session help to track of our progress together, these notes will be stored in a private and secure location and may be viewed by you if you so wish. Your counselling records will be kept by the service for a period of seven (7) years from the date of your last contact with the service.

PRIVACY

Please read thoroughly, and ensure your understanding and agreement to the Solace and Sanctuary Privacy Policy, prior to making a booking. By making a booking you agree to the information that has been provided.

In the course of delivering its services and programs, Solace and Sanctuary collects personal information from its clients. Personal information means any information that could be used on its own, or with other information, to establish the identity of a client, the client service provider or the client substitute decision maker. Personal information also includes any other information about a client including information that is contained in a client record.

Solace and Sanctuary collects, uses and shares clients information personal information for the following purposes:

- providing quality programs and services to clients
- providing information to other people or organisation/s with client consent (for example, making a referral for service)
- contacting clients to evaluate Solace and Sanctuary's service and work
- conducting research to understand the kinds of issues our clients are facing
- reviewing client files to ensure high quality of service and documentation

SESSIONS, FEES & CANCELLATIONS

(* Subject to change, shown and sold at the rate shown and confirmed at time of booking.)

The duration of sessions is 60 minutes. Prices are per booking and are non-refundable after purchase. Session times may be changed as per our cancellation policy below.

We thank you for respecting our time, as we respect yours. By making a booking, you agree to the terms and conditions of these booking and cancellation fees. By cancelling or rebooking your appointment ahead of time, we can make the appointment times available to our waitlist.

Our cancellation policy states that your credit card will be charged 50% of the fee where the session is cancelled in 12 to 24 hours of the session, and 100% of the fee within 0 to 12 hours of the session.

Where a client is unable to make it to the appointment in person, these appointments can be changed (at least an hour prior to appointment time) to a telehealth appointment with no charge. The same timing of appointment is kept. To make this change, a client must text 0422 646 123, at least an hour before the appointment time.

Where a client is running late for an appointment, the time allocated will be kept available for the client, *as long as the client arrives for the booking within the first half hour of the session*. The client will be entitled only to the remaining minutes of the originally booked time.

In addition to our standard cancellation policy, clients who fail to attend a scheduled appointment without prior notice will be considered a 'no-show' and forfeit any refund of payment.

A client is deemed a no-show if they do not arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled appointment time, unless otherwise agreed upon by the practice. In such cases, the booking fee charged and receipted at the time of booking

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Mental Health, Equine and Animal Assisted Counselling
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will be charged in full to cover the costs incurred by the practice. This fee will have been/ will be processed in accordance with our standard billing procedures and is /may be / is not subject to GST depending on the type of appointment made.

Private payments will have been processed by the practice using the nominated payment method and payment would have been prior to the next appointment.

In the case of no shows or failure to rebook/cancel in accordance with the cancellation fee, NDIS and EAP clients will have their booking fees invoiced in full. Made payable in 7 days.

The practice reserves the right to waive this fee, on occasions and at its discretion, particularly in cases where the client's failure to attend is due to unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.

By making a booking, you agree to the terms and conditions of these cancellation fees. With those fees in mind, please cancel or rebook your session prior to 24 hours of your session time. This allows us time to contact people on the waitlist, so they can access therapy in a timely manner.

Cancellations 24 hours prior to the appointment, by email, or by leaving a voicemail on 0422 646 123.

Therapist will not be able to work with you if you are under the influence of alcohol or other mind-altering substances. If this is found to be the case, the therapist will end the session, and you will be charged at the normal rate.

ENDING THERAPY

Your participation in therapy is voluntary and you have the right to end therapy whenever you want. However, if you do decide to exercise this option, please talk with your therapist about the reason for your decision in a counselling session together. Please allow for one final session for you and your counsellor to have an ending together, to review what you've done in the previous therapy sessions and to offer feedback to each other. To end counselling, simply advise your decision, and cancel existing appointments prior to 24 hours.

Likewise, at the therapist's discretion, they reserve the right to end therapy work together and provide you with some appropriate referrals, for reasons including, but not limited to, failure to participate in therapy, conflicts of interest, untimely payment of fees, or the therapist's belief that they may not be the best person for your needs.

BOUNDARIES

No contact is permitted with your therapist outside the therapeutic relationship of the therapist room, office, paddock, or solace and sanctuary premises, including the individual therapist's private social media accounts.

Please note that access to the Solace and Sanctuary premises is by appointment only, with no exceptions. Email/telephone contact Email or telephone contact is possible when pre-booked. I will not enter into telephone or email counselling except by prior arrangement.

The Facebook and Instagram page for Solace and Sanctuary may post helpful information for you to look at.

Physical contact is inappropriate at any time, however when working with the horses, dogs or cat the therapist may be required to physically move or touch you to keep you safe.

To respect your privacy, the therapist will discuss with you in the first session how you might interact if there is a chance meeting in a social setting.

Therapists are not qualified to help or advise clients in respect of certain practical aspects of the presenting issues,

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such as housing, entitlement to statutory benefits, or legal advice. It is not the policy of our organisation to provide reports in support of litigation.

COMPLAINTS

If you have a concern regarding any aspect of the service, please raise it with your therapist. Alternatively, or if you are unhappy with their response, you may write directly to the Australian Counselling Association (ACA).

GETTING HELP BETWEEN SESSIONS

Solace and Sanctuary is not an emergency service. If you require urgent or crisis support between sessions, please contact one of the following services. There is help available.

Beyondblue	1300 224 636	www.beyondblue.org.au
Kids Help Line -	1800 551 800.	
Parentline -		parentline.org.au
Lifeline Australia	13 11 14.	www.lifeline.org.au
Mensline Australia	1300 789 978	www.mensline.org.au
Veteran and Families Counselling -	1800 011 046	www.openarms.gov.au
Suicide Callback Service -	1300 659 467	

If you or someone else's life is in danger, call 000 immediately. If you are faced with an emergency in between sessions, please contact Lifeline 13 11 14.

FREELY GIVEN CONSENT to this contract

By booking an appointment, you acknowledge having read, understood and agree to the terms of the Solace and Sanctuary Therapy Services Agreement and will collaborate, to the best of your ability, with your therapist.

As the entire therapeutic relationship is built on trust and openness between the client and the therapist, a binding contract will not be effective until you have had the opportunity to read, consider and query any aspects of these terms and conditions. Only then will you be invited to sign a copy of our records.

CLIENT AGREEMENT:

I agree to the terms set out above and will collaborate, to the best of my ability, with my therapist.

Client's Signature: _____

PRINT name: _____

THERAPIST AGREEMENT:

On behalf of Solace and Sanctuary, I agree to work with the above-mentioned client to the best of my ability, adhering to the highest ethical guidelines of the equine and animal assisted therapy.

Therapist's Signature: _____
[Sarah Camille, Counsellor, Solace and Sanctuary.]

Date: _____

I look forward to supporting you on your journey.