



Turning American Families Around Individual, Marital and Family Counseling

HIPA Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information

We are a professional mental health counseling practice where your therapist maintains his private practice. Within this model your therapist is your primary point of contact for scheduling and account management (payment, statement/receipt request). We do have an office manager administrative support. For billing and insurance questions, you may contact Cyndie by phone or text to her confidential phone number 913-706-3609 for billing and insurance questions. You may also e-mail Cyndie at glassgirl7777@yahoo.com. Your therapist E. Michael Priddy, MA, LCPC can be contacted by phone or text to his confidential phone number 913-449-3696 or his email address tafacare@yahoo.com. Please allow 24 hours for a response.

WHAT IS THERAPY AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

Therapy is the process of solving emotional problems by talking with a professional therapist trained to help you achieve a more fulfilling individual life, marital life, or family relationships. The change process will, in many ways, be unique to your particular situation. Who you are as a person will help to determine the ways in which you go about changing your life.

The process of change begins by first clearly defining the problem, and then discussing your thoughts and feelings, and understanding what needs to change for the purpose of developing new skills and healthy attitude about yourself and others. In some instances, talking about your difficulties may feel worse before it gets better, however over time you should see some improvement. In addition, not all individuals benefit from therapy or work with a particular therapist.

Generally speaking, the relationship between the therapist and the client is the most accurate predictor of success in the therapy. As the client, you have the right to ask your therapist questions about his or her qualifications, professional background, and therapeutic orientation. If at any time during the therapy you have questions about whether or not the treatment is effective, feelings about something your therapist has said or suggested or need clarification of our goals, do not hesitate to bring this up in your session.

You can end therapy at any point you wish. Usually therapy pursues specific goals and you and your therapist will discuss together an appropriate termination process. A final session is strongly recommended for closure.

INTAKE APPOINTMENT

Since your therapist is your primary contact, please take a seat in our waiting area and your therapist will greet you for your appointment. Please bring the following REQUIRED items to your intake appointment:

- Completed and Signed Counseling Policies forms
- Completed Personal History form
- Insurance card(s)
- Payment for copay or other financial responsibility (cash, check, credit/debit card)

If you are unable to complete, or forget to bring your forms, please arrive a minimum of 15-20 minutes early to complete a new Personal History. The time allotted for the appointment cannot be extended due to incomplete forms.



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All forms will be reviewed during your intake session and the remaining time will be spent talking about what brought you in for counseling. Your therapist will focus on hearing your story and asking questions to better understand your particular struggle and/or situation. This is also a time to measure how comfortable this feels and if this is a good “fit” between you and your therapist. By the end of your first session, you can expect some feedback from the therapist and both of you will agree on a “game plan” for therapy. If you have any questions, feel free to ask your therapist during your appointment.

UNATTENDED CHILDREN

We are unable to provide supervision for children in the waiting room and cannot accept responsibility for their safety if left unattended. For the safety and welfare of the children and out of consideration for others, please make arrangements for childcare during therapy sessions, or provide adult supervision for children while waiting in the waiting room. Parents will be held responsible for any property damage caused by their child

HIPA CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The staff and your therapist have an obligation to respect your right to confidentiality for the information you share within this clinical setting. Confidentiality of client information is governed by federal law (Health Information Portability and Accountability Act) and by state law.

Master’s prepared therapy interns are an integral part of our counseling team and are obligated to abide by the relevant code of ethics and HIPAA privacy guidelines regarding confidentiality when participating in individual supervision with a primary clinical supervisor (licensed mental health professional

There are instances in which administrative individuals associated with Turning American Families Around have duties that require access to the information you may share for claim processing, scheduling, reports, consultations, etc.

In keeping with standards of practice, your therapist may consult with other mental health professionals regarding care and management of cases. The purpose of this consultation is to ensure quality of care. Your therapist will maintain confidentiality and protect your identity by not using real names or any identifying information.

Therapists seeing members of your family or your significant others will obtain a signed Release of Information (ROI) prior to discussing specific details of your situation.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY your therapist may not be available for after-hours crisis or emergency situations. In a crisis or an emergency situation, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

MISSED APPOINTMENTS

We realize that on occasion you will not be able to make a scheduled appointment. However, please remember that your therapist has reserved this time for you alone, so our policy is to charge a minimum of \$25 for missed without a AT LEAST 24-hour advance notice.

TELEPHONE & EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Voicemail is available between sessions. Messages will be returned as soon as possible during business days. A prorated charge is applicable to time spent with you on the telephone by your therapist beyond appointment scheduling or similar matters (lasting more than 5 min).



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Telephone sessions between sessions may be scheduled in advance, based on availability of both parties. Therapy sessions conducted on the telephone are not billable to insurance.

Email should ONLY be used for scheduling purposes and may not be checked on a daily basis. Email correspondence is not considered to be a confidential medium of communication and your therapist is not responsible for any information transmitted via email.

INSURANCE BILLING

Please call us at 913-706-3609 to update insurance or registration information. We are in-network providers for most major insurance companies. As a courtesy to you, we work directly with your insurance company.

You must notify us in advance of your first appointment if you intend to use an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Once services have been provided under insurance, we will not bill your EAP.

Once your appointment has been scheduled, we will verify your coverage and obtain any necessary authorizations.

Verification of coverage is not a guarantee of claim payment. Coverage is subject to the terms and conditions (e.g. authorizations, network requirements) outlined in your member contract with your insurance company.

It remains your responsibility to understand your plan's limitations, deductibles and exclusions. For benefit coverage questions, please call the customer/member service number on the back of your insurance card. We have no authority to make specific representations to you regarding coverage of services.

It is your responsibility to provide us with updated information when your insurance policy changes or your coverage terminates. If the insurance information you provide to us is later determined to be inaccurate, resulting in denial of your claim, then you will be responsible for paying the amount of the denied claim.

If you attend any appointment without verification of your current insurance coverage, you are responsible to pay the private pay fee for services at the time of your visit.

ACCOUNT RESPONSIBILITY

Because we are a "fee for service" provider, billing statements from Turning American Families Around will NOT automatically be sent - should you need a statement or itemized receipt, please inform your therapist, and we will provide this for you upon request.

Per your agreement with your insurance company, it remains your responsibility to immediately pay any copayments, deductibles, coinsurances or other amounts your insurance carrier determines as payable by you. This payment is to be collected by your therapist.

We do not have the ability to waive copayments, deductibles, or coinsurance amounts due, as this is a violation of the contract we have with your insurance company.

Cost estimation tools provided by your insurance company allow the collection of coinsurance and deductible amounts up front at the time of service, rather than waiting until after the claim is processed. This collected payment is based on an estimate of your out-of-pocket costs for services provided.



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Actual coverage and member liability amounts are determined once the claim is processed and you receive an explanation of benefits (EOB). Any overpayments will be applied to ongoing balances or refunded within 30 days of claim processing.

Any underpayments must be paid by mail, online at our website, or at your next scheduled appointment (if scheduled appointment occurs within 1 week of receiving your EOB).

To ensure proper credit, please make checks payable to Turning American Families Around (TAFE) There will be a \$40 fee for returned checks. Thereafter, payment will only be accepted in the form of cash, credit card or money order.

You are responsible for charges not eligible and/or covered by your medical insurance plan. If you discontinue care for any reason, all balances will become immediately due and payable in full by you, regardless of any claim submitted.

Should you default on any payment obligations, we reserve the right to forward your information to collections, and an additional 30% may be assessed to cover the costs of this action. We are not obligated to provide continuing services in the event that Turning American Families Around is named as a creditor in any bankruptcy filing.

PREPARATION OF FORMS AND REPORTS

These require chart review and often, discussion with the client. A prorated charge is applicable to time spent and is not billable to your insurance.

RELEASE OF RECORDS Most of the information a clinician collects about you will be classified as confidential. However, when insurance is involved, Turning American Families Around does not have control over and cannot assure its clients of confidentiality. That means employees of the insurer and employees of contracted organizations of the insurer have access to your chart. This is provided for in the insurance policy between you and your insurance company. The client record is legally the property of Turning American Families Around. However, clients may have access to information contained in the file, except in those cases where the release of such information may be deemed harmful to the client's well-being. Information can be released to others only upon written informed consent of the client. In a few cases, information is unavailable to a client. Certain confidential data may be available only to the clinician and particular government agencies. Classified material falling into this category might deal with adoption, civil or criminal investigations, some medical data and the names of persons who report suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults. Copies of records are available for a \$17.21 processing fee, plus \$1.30 per page for copying.

COURT & LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

TAFE does NOT provide disability determination, custody studies, or handle court issues.

TAFE providers do not perform court evaluations nor do they appear in court on behalf of individuals, children or adults.

TAFE services are designed to assist in alleviating problems through individual or relational psychotherapy.

TAFE providers are not trained for, nor do they maintain records with the intended purpose of court involvement.

In addition, the legal process is such that we may be compelled to reveal information about you that could affect you negatively or undermine your relationship with your therapist. Because the client-therapist relationship is built on trust with the foundation of that trust being confidentiality, it is often damaging to the therapeutic relationship for the



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therapist to be asked to present records to the court, testify whether factual or in an expert nature, in court or deposition.

Should we be called to court by a judge court order, or our records court ordered or subpoenaed, we will charge the full amount applicable under law for our services. Copies of records are available for a \$10.00 processing fee, plus \$1.30 per page for copying.

In the event that it is necessary, by court order or by subpoena, for the therapist to testify before any court, arbitrator, or other hearing officer to testify at a deposition, whether the testimony is factual or expert, or to present any or all records pertaining to the counseling relationship to a court official, the client agrees to pay the therapist for his or her services, (including but not limited to: travel, necessary expenditures (copies, parking, meals, and the like), time spent speaking with attorneys, reviewing records and preparation of reports) @ the rate of \$250.00 per hour, rounded to the nearest half hour.

The client further agrees to pay a retainer fee of \$2,000.00 two weeks prior to the appearance, presentation of records, or testimony requested. Checks will not be considered an acceptable form of payment for these services.

Policies and Practices to Protect the Privacy of Your Health Information
Elton Priddy, MA, LCPC
Turning American Families Around (TAFA)

CLIENT BILL OF RIGHTS - TAFA does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, gender, marital status, age, sexual orientation, national origin, previous incarceration, disability or public assistance status. Every client: - shall be informed prior to, or at the time of, the intake appointment of services available at TAFA and of any financial charges that are the client's responsibility to pay beyond the coverage of health insurance. - can expect complete and current information concerning his or her diagnosis and individual treatment plan in terms he or she can understand. - shall have the right to know by name, and the competencies of, the licensed mental health professional responsible for coordination of his or her treatment. - shall have the freedom to place grievances and recommend changes in policies and services to TAFA staff free from restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal.

In addition to the rights listed above, services offered by practitioners licensed by the State:

- (a) expect that a practitioner has met the minimal qualifications of training and has the experience required by state law;
- (b) examine public records which contain the credentials of the practitioner;
- (c) obtain a copy of the rules of conduct.

Every client:

Has the right to be informed of and to refuse to participate in any experimental research.

May expect courteous treatment and to be free from verbal, physical, or sexual abuse by RRC staff.

Has the right to a coordinated transfer of care when there will be a change of providers.

May assert the client's right(s) without retaliation.

Has the right to choose freely among available mental health professionals and practitioners in the community and to change providers after

Mental health services have begun within contractual limits of the client's health insurance (if any).

Protecting our patients' privacy has always been important to this practice. A new state and federal law, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), went into effect on April 14, 2003 and requires us to inform you of



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our policy. At the Turning American Families Around, we are very careful to keep your health information secure and confidential. This law requires us to continue maintaining your privacy, to give you this notice and to follow the terms of this notice. The law permits us to use or disclose your health information to those involved in your treatment; for example, a review of your file by a specialist doctor whom we may involve in your care. We may use or disclose your health information for payment of your services. For example, we may send a report of your progress to your insurance company.

We may use or disclose your health information for our normal healthcare operations. For example, one of our staff will enter your information into our computer. We may share your medical information with our business associates, such as a billing service. We have a written contract with each business associate that requires them to protect your privacy.

We may use your information to contact you. For example, we may send newsletters or other information. We may also want to call and remind you about your appointments. If you are not home, we may leave this information on your answering machine or with the person who answers the telephone.

In an emergency, we may disclose your health information to a family member or another person responsible for your care.

We may release some or all of your health information when required by law.