

Andrew J. Lagomasino PsyD, ABPP
Licensed Clinical Psychologist
Diplomate in Psychoanalysis
www.CoralGablesTherapy.com
250 Catalonia, Suite 607
Coral Gables, FL 33134
Landline: 305-441-6655
Cell: 786-543-2313
ailagomasino@aol.com

INFORMED CONSENT

Welcome to my practice. Here are a few very brief statements regarding some things to be aware of about the process of psychotherapy in general, and how I work.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Psychotherapy has been shown to benefit many people who participate in it (as discussed in the Consumer Reports October 2004 article “Drugs versus Talk Therapy,” for example). It often leads to reductions in feelings of distress, healthier and more satisfying relationships, and a decrease in the problems that lead people to seek professional assistance.

Psychotherapy can be very rewarding, and it can also be emotionally demanding. It is not quick, but it may provide an emotional lift early on, providing that a sense develops that a professional such as myself can understand and make sense of complex thoughts, emotions and behaviors. It can also feel uncomfortable to varying degree; it can stir up uncomfortable thoughts, feelings, or memories.

Psychotherapy is more than counseling or advice giving to change behavior. I generally do not do brief therapy, focusing instead on underlying causes of long-standing and entrenched emotional issues.

It can feel challenging to be as honest as possible in psychotherapy sessions, reporting thoughts, feelings, wishes, fears, behaviors, interactions with others, memories, and dreams. Even if they do not seem relevant or important. It takes time to build a trusting and supportive therapeutic relationship, which can lead to feeling understood. Psychotherapy also enriches life by increasing psychological mindedness—understanding oneself and others in deep ways, by connecting thoughts and feelings with behaviors.

Patience and endurance are required, like with many things that are processes and that evolve over time. Psychotherapy can stir up emotional issues for which there is no quick and easy solution. It works in part by strengthening the emotional muscle needed to tolerate uncertainty and lack of clarity, and to learn more effective ways of coping with challenges in life.

Our first few sessions will involve discussing and evaluating therapeutic needs. This evaluation process usually takes about 3 sessions. I share initial impressions as they occur to

me, suggesting a treatment plan. You can reflect on the initial understanding and formulation of what I think you may need to work on in psychotherapy, letting me know if we're on the same page. If you have questions about how I work, or experience doubts, we should discuss them as soon as they arise. If after thorough discussion you do not feel satisfied with my replies and continue experiencing doubt, I will gladly help you set up a consultation with another mental health provider.

Practically speaking, setting aside time, energy, and finances for psychotherapy requires planning. Carving time out of other priorities, like work, school, or leisure activities to participate in therapy can feel frustrating. But the process only works when given the effort required.

MEETINGS/SESSIONS

During the evaluation phase, we decide whether I am the best person to help you meet your treatment goals. If we begin psychotherapy, we should schedule consistent 45 to 50-minute sessions at mutually agreed upon times. Once appointment times are scheduled, you will be expected to pay for them, unless you provide at least 24 hours advance notice of cancellation. Unavoidable medical emergencies are an exception.

Sessions should be on consistent days and times, to avoid doubt about when we are meeting. And to get momentum going from one week to the next, so we make progress. Like with any other project in life, it is necessary to work consistently to accomplish goals.

PROFESSIONAL FEES & INSURANCE

The only in-network insurance plan I currently accept is Aetna.

If you have health insurance with other companies, please pay me directly. I typically bill at the end of each month. I perform courtesy billing electronically upon request, where possible, if the plan is a PPO (versus an HMO), with out-of-network benefits. Insurance companies may reimburse you directly at least partially, depending on your plan, which may depend on satisfying a deductible first. Benefits usually reset each calendar year.

CONTACTING ME

If you need to reach me, please call (versus texting or emailing). I am not always immediately reachable, especially if I am in session. If a call goes to voicemail, which I monitor frequently, please leave a message indicating good days/times to call back.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Laws governing doctor-patient confidentiality are complex, depending on different situations. In general, I cannot tell anyone anything you tell me without your written permission. The only situations in which I am legally required to break confidentiality is to protect you or someone else from imminent harm. As a mandated reporter, I must notify the authorities if I learn of the current abuse of a child, elderly, or disabled person.

These situations rarely occur in my practice. When they do happen, I make every effort to discuss situations before taking any action. We should discuss any questions or concerns you

may have about this brief statement regarding confidentiality and its limits, certainly if you are the parent of a child or adolescent in treatment with me.

Signing below indicates that you read this form, and that you agree to abide by its terms throughout our professional relationship. I will gladly expand on and answer any questions about any part of this agreement, which only touches on issues connected with the vast literature on psychotherapy. Please let me know if you would like a copy of this agreement.

Patient/Parent Name (Please Print)

Patient/Parent Name (Please Print)

Patient/Child Name

Patient/Parent Signature

Date

Andrew Lagomasino, PsyD, ABPP

Date