



Dr. Shari Geller  
Supervising Psychologist  
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## INFORMED CONSENT

Shari Geller, PhD (C. Psych) is a registered psychologist (#3828) with the College of Psychologists of Ontario. Information about your care is shared with Dr. Geller for the purpose of providing treatment or for preparing a report on your behalf.

Your therapist, Sarah Schlote, MA, RP, CCC, SEP is a Registered Psychotherapist with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (#3402), a certified member of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (#0476) and a Somatic Experiencing Practitioner. Sarah is incorporated as the Schlote Psychotherapy Professional Corporation (operating as The Refuge: Centre for Healing and Recovery), and is supervised by Dr. Shari Geller for your optimal clinical care.

Before your first session, we would like to give you an idea of what to expect from working together.

### Description of Services

Counselling and psychotherapy involve the skilled and principled use of relationship to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources. The overall aim of counsellors is to provide an opportunity for people to work towards living more satisfyingly and resourcefully. Therapy relationships will vary according to need but may be concerned with developmental issues, addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis, developing personal insights and knowledge, working through feelings of inner conflict or improving relationships with others.

### About Your Therapist

Sarah Schlote earned her Master's degree in Counselling Psychology from the University of Victoria, BC, and is active in her ongoing personal and professional development. Aside from Somatic Experiencing, she has also completed training in EMDR, complex early developmental trauma and attachment ruptures, and incorporates mindfulness, self-compassion, skills inspired by DBT, ego state and parts work, and elements of Gestalt therapy, Focusing, psychodynamic therapy, CBT, and other modalities in her work. She operates from a diversity-sensitive, anti-oppressive, trauma-informed and harm reduction framework, with an integrative, holistic view of healing that aligns well with the indigenous Four Directions model of wellness. She has also completed specialized advanced training in touch and table work for trauma resolution, which is not covered under Dr. Geller's supervision at the present time but nonetheless informs her understanding of working with complex trauma, as well as equine-facilitated therapy, which is supervised by registered psychologist Lesley Hannell, C. Psych (#5708) and is possible to include as part of your overall plan of care. For more information, please visit [www.healingrefuge.com](http://www.healingrefuge.com)

### Risks and Benefits

Psychotherapy may involve the risk of remembering unpleasant events, feeling unfamiliar sensations, or arouse strong or unanticipated feelings or memories. You may face issues or aspects of yourself that are uncomfortable, and counselling may lead to unforeseen changes in your relationships or take you out outside of your comfort zone to explore and expand your growing edge. Benefits may include an increased ability to live more effectively by improving your ability to cope with a variety of stressors and life challenges. You may also gain a better understanding of yourself, your goals and your values, which will assist you in your personal and career growth. You may

experience relief or resolution of trauma symptoms, and develop skills, increased resiliency and a healthier relationship with yourself and others.

## Outcomes and Ethics

The intention of therapy is to resolve some of the difficulties you are experiencing. The outcome of counselling and psychotherapy depends on a number of factors such as the fit between you and your therapist, current adverse conditions that are actively contributing to your symptoms, and your readiness and willingness to work towards set goals. Sarah will do her best to help you to handle the risks safely and experience some of the benefits. If you have any questions or concerns, you can discuss these with Sarah or Dr. Geller at any time.

Alternately, you may direct your questions to the College of Psychologists of Ontario ([www.cpo.on.ca](http://www.cpo.on.ca)), the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario ([www.crpo.ca](http://www.crpo.ca)) or the CCPA Ethics Committee (<http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/ethics/>).

## Your Responsibilities

Personal commitment to psychotherapy is crucial for success. In order to maximize the effectiveness of therapy services, we suggest that you make counselling a high priority and not cancel sessions except in the case of an emergency. It is important that you be active, open and honest with Sarah. Your most important responsibility is to work toward the goals you and Sarah have agreed upon. Seeing a therapist is often enhanced with additional efforts made between sessions, such as: thinking about the material covered in your sessions, monitoring the behaviours you are trying to change, reading a book or article, completing worksheets, practicing a new skill, or taking other concrete actions to support your growth. It is your responsibility to tell Sarah when you are uncomfortable with any parts of the treatment. If you have any questions, please ask and Sarah will do her best to answer your questions in full.

## Confidentiality

We respect the privacy of our clients, hold in strict confidence all information about clients and comply with applicable privacy and other legislation. No information will be released to a third party without your prior written authorization. At any time, you have the right to withhold or withdraw consent to, or place conditions on, the disclosure of your information. **Exceptions to confidentiality** include the legal and/or ethical obligations for your therapist to:

- Inform a potential victim of a client's intention to harm them;
- Inform an appropriate family member, health care professional, or police if necessary of a client's intention to end his or her life;
- Release a client's file if there is a court order to do so;
- Inform the Children's Aid Society if there is suspicion of a child at risk of harm or in need of protection due to neglect, or physical, sexual or emotional abuse;
- Report abuse of a client by another health professional.
- Report reasonable suspicion of abuse or harm of a person living in a Long Term Care Facility or Retirement Home as a result of unlawful conduct, neglect, or incompetent care by staff in the home.

While these events are rare, they do exist. Sarah's overall goal is to make this a place where you feel comfortable to talk about personal concerns. Also, Sarah and Dr. Geller have contact on a regular basis for supervision. Dr. Geller will be aware of Sarah's clinical work with you as required, including your contact information, assessment, counselling goals and focus, progress, discharge and billing matters. Sarah will also consult with other professionals for guidance specific to the therapeutic modalities she uses, for the purposes of providing you with the highest quality care. Information provided in these other contexts will be anonymous.

Finally, psychologists and psychotherapists are regulated by their respective Colleges, which may inspect our records as a part of their regulatory activities in the public interest.

### **Privacy and Record Keeping**

Therapists in Ontario are required by law to keep a record of each contact and therapy session with a client. Records are kept for a minimum of 10 years after a client turns 18 years of age. All information is maintained in compliance with the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) of the Federal Government of Canada and the Personal Health Information and Protection Act (PHIPA) of the Province of Ontario. This means that all personal information obtained, used, and disclosed in therapy sessions is done so with your consent. Your personal information is protected by specific safeguards including locked cabinets and computer passwords. You may request a copy of your records for a reasonable fee. Please note that records cannot be released when they contain the name of another person, and that reports from other professionals cannot be released without the consent of that professional.

### **Payment Policy**

- The initial intake session is 75 minutes for \$240.00.
- Therapy sessions are 60 minutes for \$190.00.
- Work done outside of sessions (letters, reports, check-in calls, consultations with other professionals, etc.) is also charged by the hourly rate.
- Full payment is required at the time of each scheduled appointment in the form of cash or personal cheque made out to Dr. Shari Geller.
- Payment for sessions will be required prior to scheduling subsequent appointments. In the event that payment is not received for an appointment, clients will be given the opportunity to do so and if payment is still not made, Sarah and Dr. Geller reserve the right to employ the services of a collection agency to recover unpaid fees.
- Payment not received within 30 days of the session date will be invoiced at a 5% annual interest rate.
- A \$25 service charge will be added to the amount owing for NSF cheques.

### **Extended Health Insurance**

Payment for services should be made out to Dr. Geller directly. You will then be provided with a receipt from Dr. Geller to be submitted to your insurance company for reimbursement. It is your responsibility to contact your insurance company in advance of starting therapy to determine your annual coverage and whether you need a referral from a medical professional, as each insurance plan is different.

### **Cancellations and Missed Sessions**

Please contact Sarah directly by phone or email to change your appointment with **at least 48 hours'** **notice** if you are unable to keep your scheduled time.

- Cancellations within 48 hours from the session time will be billed at half of the agreed-upon hourly rate.
- Missed sessions are billed at the full cost of the scheduled appointment.
- If you cancel or miss more than 3 consecutive appointments, or fail to respond to your therapist's attempts at contacting you, your therapist reserves the right to discontinue your treatment and you will be provided with information about other services that might be of assistance if this is of interest to you.
- Note: fees for missed or cancelled sessions are not typically covered by extended health benefits plans.

Cancellation fees will only be waived on compassionate grounds, such as in the event of a medical emergency requiring urgent professional treatment, death in the family, dangerous weather conditions or in the event of an accident or natural disaster.

**In Case of Emergency**

Emergency services are not available by your therapist between sessions. In case of emergency, dial 911, go to the nearest emergency department of any hospital, or call your local crisis line.

**Informed Consent**

Informed consent for counselling and psychotherapy is essential and out of respect for your right to choice and self-determination. Consent must be given voluntarily, knowingly and intelligently. You have the right to change your mind and withdraw informed consent at any time, terminate treatment, or refuse a particular treatment modality if you are not comfortable with it.

**Statement of Informed Consent**

I have read and understand the information presented in this document. I hereby consent to psychotherapy and counselling services offered by Sarah Schlote under the supervision of Dr. Shari Geller.

Client name: \_\_\_\_\_

Client signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_