

Ralph W. Wilson, N.D., M.S. Acupuncture  
 Licensed Naturopathic Physician: #NP-0015  
 Washington DC 20016

Natural Connections Healthcare  
 c/o 5101 Wisconsin Ave NW Suite 100  
 Appointments: (202) 237-7681

## AGREEMENT FOR COUNSELING SERVICES CONDUCTED BY RALPH W. WILSON, ND

### THE PROCESS OF COUNSELING/EVALUATION

Participation in counseling and coaching can result in a number of benefits to you, including improving interpersonal relationships and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek my services. Working toward these benefits requires effort on your part. The counseling process requires your very active involvement, honesty and openness in order to change your thoughts, feelings and/or behavior. I will ask for your feedback and views on your counseling, its progress and other aspects of the counseling and I will expect you to respond openly and honestly. Sometimes more than one approach can be helpful in dealing with a certain situation. During evaluation or counseling, remembering or talking about unpleasant events, feelings or thoughts can result in your experiencing considerable discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, etc. or experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc.

**My policy about recalling past traumas:** I specifically do not require that you re-experience trauma and traumatic emotions. I may challenge some of your assumptions or perceptions or propose different ways of looking at, thinking about, or handling situations that can cause you to feel upset, angry, depressed, challenged or disappointed.

Attempting to resolve issues that brought you to counseling in the first place, such as personal or interpersonal relationships may result in changes that were not originally intended. The counseling process may result in decisions about changing behaviors, employment, substance use, schooling, housing or relationships. Sometimes a decision that is positive for one family member is viewed quite negatively by another family member. Change will sometimes happen quickly, but more often it will take time and patience on your part. There is no guarantee that the counseling process will yield positive or intended results.

**Approaches Used:** During the course of counseling, I may choose to include utilize various counseling and natural medicine approaches according, in part, to the problem that is being addressed and my assessment of what will best benefit you. These approaches include but are not limited to: insight counseling, body awareness approaches (which I classify as to include Craniosacral Therapy, Somato-Emotional Release, and FlexAware® mind-body exercise); Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) correlations of organ systems to emotions, Ayurvedic medicine insights, Brain Type assessment using the model of psychiatrist Daniel Amen, homeopathic personality assessment, self-inventory assessment such as the Play and Creativity inventory of the National Institute for Play.

**Referral or Collaboration:** When it is appropriate I have established referral relationships with psychiatric and psychology specialists to whom I can refer you for additional support.

### DISCUSSION OF TREATMENT PLAN

During the first session and in future review of your progress I will discuss with you your understanding of your concerns, treatment plan, counseling and therapeutic objectives and your view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your counseling, their possible risks, my expertise in employing them or about the treatment plan, 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.

## DUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Not all dual relationships are unethical or avoidable. However, sexual involvement between therapist and client is never part of the counseling process, nor are any other actions or dual relationship situations that might impair my objectivity, clinical judgment, or therapeutic effectiveness or that could be exploitative in nature. In addition, I will never acknowledge working therapeutically with anyone without his/her written permission. In some instances, even with permission, I will preserve the integrity of our working relationship. For this reason I will not accept any invitations via social networking sites nor will I respond to blogs written by clients or accept comments on my blog from clients.

## TERMINATION

During the initial intake process and the first couple of sessions, I will assess if I can be of benefit to you. If you have requested online counseling or coaching, my assessment will include your suitability to the counseling process delivered via technology. I do not accept clients who, in my opinion, I cannot help. In such a case, I will give you a number of referrals that you may contact. If at any point during the counseling process, I assess that I am not effective in helping you reach your life and health goals, I am obliged to discuss this with you, up to and including termination of treatment. In such a case, I would give you a number of referrals that may be of help to you. If you request and authorize in writing, I will talk to the practitioner of your choice in order to help with the transition. If at any time you want another professional's opinion or wish to consult with another practitioner, I will assist you in finding someone qualified and, if I have your written consent, will provide her or him with the essential information needed. You have the right to terminate counseling at any time. If you choose to do so, I will offer to provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer.

## PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

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. Likewise, you are expected to keep our communications confidential and you understand that all records of communication between client and practitioner remain the property of Ralph Wood Wilson, N.D. Most of the provisions explaining when the law requires disclosure were described to you in the Notice of Privacy Practices that you received with this form.

When Disclosure Is Required By Law: Some of the circumstances in which disclosure is required by the law include: 1) when there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent or elder abuse or neglect; 2) when a client presents a danger to self, to others, to property or is gravely disabled (for more details see also Notice of Privacy Practices form).

When Disclosure May be Required: Disclosure may be required pursuant to a legal proceeding. If you are involved in a custody dispute or if you place your mental status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain the counseling records and/or testimony by me. In couples and family counseling, or when different family members are seen individually, confidentiality and privilege do not apply between the couple or among family members. I will use my clinical judgment when revealing such information. I will not release records to any outside party unless I am authorized to do so by all adult family members who were part of the treatment or unless compelled to do so by law or a valid court order.

Harm to Self or Others: If there is an emergency during our work together or in the future after termination 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 law enforcement, hospital or an emergency contact whose name you have provided.

**Communications Via Technology:** Re confidentiality of E-mail and Chat, Cell Phone and document transmission -- Therapeutic email exchanges are delivered via HushMail (DrWilson@hushmail.com). You agree to work with me online using HushMail or another encrypted email/chat service determined to be suitable by Ralph Wood Wilson, N.D. If you choose to email me from your personal email account, please limit the contents to housekeeping issues such as cancellation or change in contact information. I will not respond to personal and clinical concerns via regular email. If you call me, please be aware that unless we are both on land line phones, the conversation is not confidential. Likewise, text messages are not confidential. Any computer files referencing our communication are maintained using secure and encrypted measures. Files sent from you to me to the HushMail address are stored securely on the HushMail server. If you wish to use email as a way to “journal” information between sessions, you understand that I may not have the opportunity to review your journal emails until our next scheduled session. You understand that emails between sessions that contain confidential information will be sent utilizing encryption through the HushMail service. In addition, you may choose to use the MentalHealthPros secure password-protected information and journaling portal; information about that is on my website in the Telehealth and Coaching section; a passcode will be provided for you to register with your own private security code.

I make every effort to keep all information confidential. Likewise, if we are working online together, I ask that you determine who has access to your computer and electronic information from your location. This would include family members, co-workers, supervisors and friends. I encourage you to only communicate through a computer that you know is safe, i.e. wherein confidentiality can be ensured. Be sure to fully exit all online counseling sessions and emails. If we are unable to connect or are disconnected during a session due to a technological breakdown, please try to reconnect within 10 minutes. If reconnection is not possible, email to schedule a new session time.

**Litigation Limitation:** Due to the nature of the counseling process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.), neither you (client) nor your attorney, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will call on me to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the counseling records be requested.

**Consultation:** I may consult with other professionals regarding my clients; however, the client’s name or other identifying information is never disclosed. The client’s identity remains completely anonymous and confidentiality is fully maintained.

\* Considering all of the above exclusions, if it is still appropriate, upon your request, I will release information to any agency/person you specify unless I conclude that releasing such information might be harmful in any way.

## TELEPHONE & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

I do not have Crisis services. If an emergency situation arises that requires immediate attention, you may call the emergency National Suicide Hotline at 800-784-2433 or dial 911. If a life-threatening crisis should occur, you agree to contact a crisis hotline, call 911 or go to a hospital emergency room. If you need to notify me between sessions to alert me of an emergency, email is available to document that you informed me of the emergency. Messages are checked daily (but never during the night time). Messages are checked less frequently on weekends and holidays.

## PAYMENTS

Session payments via credit, debit card or direct checking account one-time payment can be processed through PayPal. Sessions are generally purchased in 30 and 60 minute increments. Therapeutic email exchanges can be purchased one at a time or as a package.

FEES

Current rates for counseling and coaching services are posted on my website, however please consult with office staff regarding most recent updates.

MEDIATION & ARBITRATION

All disputes arising out of or in relation to this agreement to provide counseling services shall first be referred to mediation, before, and as a pre-condition of, the initiation of arbitration. The mediator shall be a neutral third party chosen by agreement of Ralph W. Wilson, N.D., and the client(s). The cost of such mediation, if any, shall be split equally, unless otherwise agreed. In the event that mediation is unsuccessful, any unresolved controversy related to this agreement should be submitted to and settled by binding arbitration in accordance with the rules of the American Arbitration Association that are in effect at the time the demand for arbitration is filed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event that your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no agreement on a payment plan, I can use legal means (court, collection agency, etc.) to obtain payment. The prevailing party in arbitration or collection proceedings shall be entitled to recover a reasonable sum for attorneys' fees. In the case of arbitration, the arbitrator will determine that sum.

CANCELLATION

Since scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24 hours notice is required for re-scheduling or canceling an appointment. Unless we reach a different agreement, the full fee will be charged for sessions missed without such notification.

You as the client understand that phone and email sessions have limitations compared to in-person sessions, among those being the lack of "personal" face-to-face interactions, the lack of visual and audio cues in the counseling process, and the fact that most insurance companies will not cover this type of counseling. You understand that telephone/online counseling with me is not a substitute for medication under the care of a psychiatrist or doctor. You understand that online and telephone counseling is not appropriate if you are experiencing a crisis or having suicidal or homicidal thoughts. As stated previously, if a life-threatening crisis should occur, you agree to contact a crisis hotline, call 911, or go to a hospital emergency room. You also understand that I follow the laws and professional regulations of the District of Columbia (USA) and the counseling will be considered to take place in the District of Columbia (USA).

Your signature below indicates that you have reviewed the information available on my website and have read and understand this Informed Consent and the HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

We will discuss this Informed Consent during our first session. If our sessions are scheduled online please email, fax or mail this form with your signature. EMAIL: DrWilson@hushmail.com; FAX: 202-966-8999; MAIL: 5101 Wisconsin Ave NW Suite 100, Washington DC 20016