**Welcome to Quiet Healing Counselling and Yoga**

This sheet is intended to clarify the process, fees, risks and benefits of accessing counseling with Heather Rowland at Quiet Healing Counselling and Yoga. You are invited to ask any questions you may have about the information on this sheet.

**About Counselling and Your Counsellor**

Counselling has elements of support and care as well as moments of gentle challenge, education or skill building. Generally, a counsellor provides tools and support, but does not offer direct advice or tell people what choices they should make.

Your Counsellor, Heather Rowland, RCSW, CYA-RYT 200 completed her Bachelors of Social Work in 1999 and her Masters in 2004. She completed an additional 1600 hrs of clinical social work training, obtaining her Clinical designation in 2012. She has a passion for integrating various modalities and completed her yoga teacher certificate in 2013. She views counselling as a collaborative process in which people reconnect with their own wisdom and wholeness to experience change.

**Risks and Benefits**

Counselling may have many benefits such as increased capacity to experience intense emotion, healthier relationships and an overall improved sense of well-being. While this is generally positive, it’s important to know that the process itself can be a lot of work. It can leave you feeling a range of uncomfortable emotions such as raw, sad or angry during or after a session. As a result of counselling, you may experience changes in your relationships or beliefs that have unexpected results. These changes may be positive in the long term and may be difficult to experience in the moment.

**Rights and Responsibilities**

It is important to know that as a client, you have both rights and responsibilities within the Counselling Relationship.These are meant to increase safety within the relationship and may include the following:

* You have the right to curiosity and transparency. There are many types of counselling techniques and you are invited to ask questions about any modalities being utilized.
* You have a right and a responsibility to stop or refuse any specific counselling modality that is not a fit for you. Some modalities at Quiet Healing utilize therapeutic touch. You have a right to refuse interventions involving touch should you choose to.
* You have the right to request a referral if your counsellor isn’t is not a good fit for you. Your counsellor has the right to transfer your care if they believe they are not a good fit for you due to their experiences or scope of practice.
* If you feel intense emotional distress or have thoughts of hurting yourself or others you are encouraged to call:
  + The distress line at 403 327 7905 or toll free 1888 787 2880
  + 911
  + or a supportive person in your life you can ask to help keep you or others safer.

**Professional Boundaries and Privacy**

The relationship you have with your counsellor is different than other relationships. As a Registered Clinical Social Worker, Heather is part of the Alberta College of Social Work, which has rules about the types of interactions she is allowed to have with clients.

As part of these guidelines she cannot:

* Have any other kind of business relationship with you.
* Be your therapist if she is related to you or a close friend.
* Give other types of professional advice (legal, medical, financial, etc.)
* Have any kind of romantic, friendship, or sexual relationship with a former or current client, or with any people very close to the client.
* Give or receive gifts from clients except tokens with personal meaning to the therapy process.
* Be your supervisor, teacher, or evaluator while engaged in counselling with you.
* Attend personal parties/events of clients outside of the therapeutic process.

Your counsellor has received training in body-based modalities such as Hakomi, Sensori-motor Psychotherapy and yoga. At times, she may use physical touch as part of the therapeutic process (i.e. providing resistance against a hand, placing a hand on your back). She will ask for consent prior to any physical contact. You have a right to refuse consent or change consent for physical contact at any time in the process. Your counsellor also has the right to refuse requests you may make for physical contact.

If you attend a session under the influence of drugs or alcohol, you may be asked to reschedule your appointment to a later date.

As Lethbridge is a smaller city, you may encounter one another within the community. Any dual relationships that may occur will be discussed with your counsellor.

**Confidentiality and Limits**

Your counsellor deeply values confidentiality but there are times when your counsellor may need to speak to others without your permission as required by law. These include the following:

* The information shared is subpoenaed by a court of law.
* Your Counsellor is concerned you or another person is at serious risk of harm.
* Your Counsellor is concerned a child or dependent adult is in need of protection.

Your counselor may also share information if:

* you are abusing an animal
* You choose to take legal action against your counselor.
* You disclose abusive behavior from a helping professional.

Your Counsellor engages in on-going consultation as a commitment to safe and effective service. Your case may be discussed with other professionals and your name and other identifying information will not be used when consulting.

Your counsellor uses “Waveapp” for invoicing and billing purposes. It is a cloud-based application with a secure login. Your name and contact information will be put into the system and receipts for payment and/or invoices will be emailed to you.

Your name and phone number will be stored in your counsellor’s password protected work smartphone which may at times will be stored outside of the office.

For more information on confidentiality and limits while engaged in telehealth sessions, please see the telehealth section below.

**Fees**

The current fee for one Counselling Session is $160. Your counsellor currently uses a self-pay system and clients are responsible for ensuring they have appropriate insurance coverage if needed. Receipts will be provided for clients who are able to submit claims to their Health or Wellness programs. Please note that it is the client’s responsibility to monitor the number of sessions available to them. If insurance coverage ends prior to the end of your counselling work, your counsellor may assist you in accessing another counselling agency or service that may fit better for your financial situation. Heather is connected with the city subsidy program and if you believe you may be eligible, please discuss this with her.

Payment can be made via Cash, Cheque or e-transfer sent to [quiethealing1@gmail.com](mailto:quiethealing1@gmail.com) at the end of the session. An on-line Invoicing and Accounting program called “Waveapp” is utilized to assist with billing and book-keeping. Invoices will be sent to the email you’ve provided on your intake form. Following payment, a receipt will be emailed to your email. If you prefer to utilize paper receipts, please let Heather know.

**Missed appointments and cancellations**

If you need to reschedule or cancel an appointment, please inform your counselor via text or call at (587) 691 4466 or email [quiethealing1@gmail.com](mailto:quiethealing1@gmail.com). Heather understands a number of factors may impact your capacity to attend a session. If there is a pattern of frequent no shows your counsellor may wish you to discuss your individual circumstances and you may be charged for future missed sessions.

Should your counsellor need to cancel or reschedule they will contact you as indicated on your intake form to give notice and arrange for an alternate session time.

**Documentation and Your File**

Your counselor is required to collect and record information relevant to your care. File notes, emails, letters etc. are kept in a paper file, in a locked cabinet and kept for a minimum of 10 years. You may request access to your file and discuss its content with your counsellor. Your file will be closed when you complete services, or if your counsellor has not heard from you for six months. In the case that your counsellor is unexpectedly unable to provide services, an assigned registered counselling professional will have access to your files and will store them for the required 10 years.

**Complaint Procedure**

If you have a concern about your counselling at any time, please know your counsellor takes suggestions and feedback seriously and will respond with care and respect. If you believe that she would be unwilling to listen and respond, or that they have behaved unethically, you can contact the Alberta College of Social Work at [(780) 421-1167](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=ACSW) to file a complaint.

**Counselling through TeleHealth**

**Videoconferencing & Phone Based Sessions – The Basics**

Video Conferencing and Phone Based sessions are an evidence-based alternative to Face to Face Counselling. Research suggests they can be as effective as face to face sessions.

To use videoconferencing, you will need a smartphone, I-pad or computer with a camera and a microphone. You will need an email address and will need to download the Zoom app onto your device in order to access the appointment.

**Privacy via Telehealth**

For sessions accessed via videoconferencing your counsellor is using a software program called Zoom Pro with additional HIPPA qualification. This means that there are protections on the software to help increase privacy and reduce the risk of a breach in privacy.

To help ensure the privacy of your sessions, your counsellor will work from the Quiet Healing office space. To access zoom, your counsellor is utilizing multi-factor authentication on both her devices and software. This means she is using multiple passwords and identification factors to access the computer and software.

To help ensure the privacy of your sessions, you are invited to access the session in an area relatively free of distraction, to use headphones, and to ensure you are not disrupted by others during the session.

At this time, all email communication is not encrypted so it is vulnerable to confidentiality breaches. We suggest deleting meeting invitations, any forms you’ve emailed, or receipts to help increase your privacy.

**Risk/Challenges specific to telehealth**

While engaging in videoconferencing has many benefits, there are some unique risks that are outlined below:

* Using videoconferencing or phone for counselling might feel uncomfortable initially and it may feel a bit stressful to get the initial software set up.
* It may be annoying or irritating for technology to unexpectedly pause or not work the ways in which you would like it to.
* At times your counsellor may have to ask more descriptive based questions to better understand your present moment experience.
* If you disclose imminent threats or risks of harm to self or others, you counsellor may need to utilize more intrusive means to help ensure your safety.
* As with any technology, your counsellor cannot guarantee your privacy.

**Benefits**

* On-line counselling can be a rich and beautiful counselling environment
* You may be able to have your session from the comfort and privacy of your own home.
* It may be a helpful option in moments of self-isolation and/or social distancing.
* You may find it is easier for you to share your thoughts and feelings through a videoconferencing or phone format.

**Accessing Your Appointment**

Via phone: If you are connecting by phone, your counsellor will phone you at your pre-determined appointment time and conduct the session on the phone, allowing for auditory connection.

Via videoconferencing: You will receive an email inviting you to your Zoom meeting. The first time you use Zoom, at the top of your screen there will be a prompt to download the Application. Click on “download”. The program may request your name and email. Once entered, the program may direct you to join the meeting. Once selected the system may request a Meeting ID or Password which will be provided in your invitation email. Enter this into the provided space and you should be directed to your meeting.

 If you have never used Zoom before, you will need to download it to your device.

<https://explore.zoom.us/resources?_ga=2.61789548.1530482369.1613233550-817582368.1609818468>

For more information on Zoom's privacy and security limits you might find this link helpful as well.  <https://zoom.us/trust>Like any telehealth format, complete privacy cannot be completely guaranteed, but the version I have does have additional privacy controls and meets HIPAA Compliance, the additional security needed for Counselling. <https://zoom.us/docs/doc/Zoom-hipaa.pdf> Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns and I will be happy to discuss them as best as I can.

If you struggle with any of the steps, please contact me at [quiethealing1@gmail.com](mailto:quiethealing1@gmail.com) or (587) 691 4466 and we will work together to address any challenges.

**In Gratitude**

If you have any questions or concerns about any of the information in this form please let me know and we can discuss it further.