

Informed Consent for Psychotherapy

This form provides you, the client, with information that is additional to that detailed in the [Notice of Privacy Practices](#) and it is subject to HIPAA preemptive analysis.

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.

WHEN DISCLOSURE IS REQUIRED OR MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW: Some of the circumstances where disclosure is required or may be required by law are: where there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent, or elder abuse or neglect; where a client presents a danger to self, to others, to property, or is gravely disabled; or when a client's family members communicate to Mateus Porter that the client presents a danger to others. Disclosure may also be required pursuant to a legal proceeding by or against you. If you place your mental status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain the psychotherapy records and/or testimony by Mateus. In couple and family therapy, or when different family members are seen individually, even over a period of time, confidentiality and privilege do not apply between the couple or among family members, unless otherwise agreed upon. Mateus will use his clinical judgment when revealing such information. Mateus will not release records to any outside party unless he is authorized to do so by all adult parties who were part of the family therapy, couple therapy or other treatment that involved more than one adult client.

EMERGENCY: If there is an emergency during therapy, or in the future after termination, where Mateus Porter becomes concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, he will do whatever he 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, he may also contact the person whose name you have provided on the biographical sheet.

HEALTH INSURANCE & CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS: Disclosure of confidential information may be required by your health insurance carrier or HMO/PPO/MCO/EAP in order to process the claims. If you so instruct Mateus Porter, only the minimum necessary information will be communicated to the carrier. Mateus has no control over, or knowledge of, what insurance companies do with the information he submits or who has access to this information. You must be aware that submitting a mental health invoice for reimbursement carries a certain amount of risk to confidentiality, privacy or to future capacity to obtain health or life insurance or even a job. The risk stems from the fact that mental health information is likely to be entered into big insurance companies' computers and is likely to be reported to the National Medical Data Bank. Accessibility to companies' computers or to the National Medical Data Bank database is always in question as computers are inherently vulnerable to hacking and unauthorized access. Medical data has also been reported to have been legally accessed by law enforcement and other agencies, which also puts you in a vulnerable position.

LITIGATION: Sometimes clients become involved in litigation while they are in therapy or after therapy has been completed. Sometimes patients (or the opposing attorney, in a legal case) want the records disclosed to the legal system. Due to the nature of the psychotherapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters, clients' records are generally confidential and private in nature. Clients should know that very serious consequences can result from disclosing therapy records to the legal system. Such disclosures may negatively affect the outcome of custody disputes or other legal matters and may negatively affect the therapeutic relationship. If you or the opposing attorney are considering requesting Mateus Porter's disclosure of the records, Mateus will do his best to discuss with you the risks and benefits of doing so. As noted in this document, you have the right to review your own psychotherapy records anytime. (See also relevant section above: "WHEN DISCLOSURE IS REQUIRED OR MAY BE REQUIRED BY LAW")

CONSULTATION: Mateus Porter consults regularly with other professionals regarding his clients; however, each client's identity remains completely anonymous and confidentiality is fully maintained.

E-MAILS, CELL PHONES, COMPUTERS, AND FAXES: It is very important to be aware that computers and unencrypted email, texts, and e-faxes communication (which are part of the clinical records) can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and hence can compromise the privacy and confidentiality of such communication. Emails, texts, and e-faxes, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers or communication companies may have unlimited and direct access to all emails, texts and e-faxes that go through them. While data on Mateus' laptop is encrypted, emails, texts and e-fax are not. It is always a possibility that e-faxes, texts, and email can be sent erroneously to the wrong address and computers. Mateus' laptop is equipped with a firewall, a virus protection and a password, and he backs up all confidential information from his computer on a regular basis onto an encrypted hard-drive. Also, be aware that phone messages are transcribed and sent to Mateus

via unencrypted emails. Please notify Mateus if you decide to avoid or limit, in any way, the use of email, texts, cell phones calls, phone messages, or e-faxes. If you communicate confidential or private information via unencrypted email, texts or e-fax or via phone messages, will assume that you have made an informed decision, will view it as your agreement to take the risk that such communication may be intercepted, and he will honor your desire to communicate on such matters. Please do not use texts, email, voice mail, or faxes for emergencies.

RECORDS AND YOUR RIGHT TO REVIEW THEM: Both the law and the standards of Mateus Porter's profession require that he keep treatment records for at least 7 years. For minor's records, their information is kept until they turn 18 then 7 years after that. Please note that clinically relevant information from emails, texts, and faxes are part of the clinical records. Unless otherwise agreed to be necessary, Mateus retains clinical records only as long as is mandated by California law. If you have concerns regarding the treatment records, please discuss them with Mateus. As a client, you have the right to review or receive a summary of your records at any time, except in limited legal or emergency circumstances or when Mateus assesses that releasing such information might be harmful in any way. In such a case, Mateus will provide the records to an appropriate and legitimate mental health professional of your choice. Considering all of the above exclusions, if it is still appropriate, and upon your request, Mateus will release information to any agency/person you specify unless Mateus assesses that releasing such information might be harmful in any way. When more than one client is involved in treatment, such as in cases of couple and family therapy, Mateus will release records only with signed authorizations from all the adults (or all those who legally can authorize such a release) involved in the treatment.

MINORS IN THERAPY: If you are under eighteen years of age, please be aware that the law may give your parents or guardians the right to obtain information about your treatment and/or examine your treatment records. It is my policy to request a written agreement from your parents or guardians indicating that they consent to give up access to such information and/or, to your records. If they agree, I will provide them only with general information about our work together subject to your approval, or, if I feel it is important for them to know in order to make sure that you and people around you are safe. If I think it is appropriate, I will involve them if I feel that there is a high risk that you will seriously harm yourself or another/others. Before giving them any verbal or written information, I will discuss the matter with you, if possible. I will do the best I can to resolve any differences that you and I may have about what I am prepared to discuss.

TELEPHONE & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: If you need to contact Mateus Porter between sessions, please leave a message at the answering service (650) 549-5683 and your call will be returned as soon as possible. Mateus checks his messages a few times during the daytime only, unless he is out of town or on Sundays. If an emergency situation arises, indicate it clearly in your message and if you need to talk to someone right away call Psychiatric Emergency Services. San Mateo: (650) 573-2662, 24-hour crisis line: (650) 579-0350 or the Police: 911(Mention that you have a mental health emergency and are requesting a Crisis Intervention

Trained Officer). Please do not use email or faxes for emergencies. Mateus does not always check his email or faxes daily.

PHONE CONSULTATION: There will be times when you, the client or parent, may need occasional support during the week or wish to give me, Mateus Porter, additional information that relates to the client's care. Phone consults can range in duration (15min, 20min, 50min, etc) depending on the topics discussed. When you call Mateus Porter and the conversation exceeds 15 minutes then the conversation turns into a phone consultation which has a fee. The fee for phone consultation is \$50.00.

By signing below you agree to the terms and payment of phone consultations with Mateus Porter.

PAYMENTS & INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT: Clients are expected to pay the standard fee of \$150.00 per 50 minute individual session and \$200.00 per hour of family therapy(or Couples Therapy) at the beginning of each session or at the end of the month unless other arrangements have been made. Telephone conversations, site visits, writing and reading of reports, consultation with other professionals, release of information, reading records, longer sessions, travel time, etc. will be charged at the same rate, unless indicated and agreed upon otherwise. Please notify Mateus Porter if any problems arise during the course of therapy regarding your ability to make timely payments. Clients who carry insurance should remember that professional services are rendered and charged to the clients and not to the insurance companies. Unless agreed upon differently, Mateus will provide you with a copy of your receipt on a monthly basis, which you can then submit to your insurance company for reimbursement, if you so choose. As was indicated in the section, *Health Insurance & Confidentiality of Records*, you must be aware that submitting a mental health invoice for reimbursement carries a certain amount of risk. Not all issues/conditions/problems, which are dealt with in psychotherapy, are reimbursed by insurance companies. It is your responsibility to verify the specifics of your coverage. If your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no written agreement on a payment plan, Mateus can use legal or other means (courts, collection agencies, etc.) to obtain payment.

THE PROCESS OF THERAPY/EVALUATION AND SCOPE OF PRACTICE:

Participation in therapy can result in a number of benefits to you, including improving interpersonal relationships and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek therapy. Working toward these benefits, however, requires effort on your part. Psychotherapy requires your very active involvement, honesty, and openness in order to change your thoughts, feelings, and/or behavior. Mateus will ask for your feedback and views on your therapy, its progress, and other aspects of the therapy and 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 therapy, remembering or talking about unpleasant events, feelings, or thoughts can result in you experiencing considerable discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, etc., or experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc. Mateus may challenge some of your assumptions or perceptions or propose different ways of looking at, thinking about, or handling situations, which can cause you to feel very upset, angry, depressed, challenged, or disappointed.

Attempting to resolve issues that brought you to therapy in the first place, such as personal or interpersonal relationships, may result in changes that were not originally intended. Psychotherapy 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 be easy and swift, but more often it will be slow and even frustrating. There is no guarantee that psychotherapy will yield positive or intended results. During the course of therapy, Mateus is likely to draw on various psychological approaches according, in part, to the problem that is being treated and his assessment of what will best benefit you. These approaches include, but are not limited to, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, cognitive, psychodynamic, existential, system/family, developmental (adult, child, family), humanistic or psycho-educational. Mateus **provides neither custody evaluation recommendation** nor medication or prescription recommendation nor legal advice, as these activities do not fall within his scope of practice.

TREATMENT PLANS: Within a reasonable period of time after the initiation of treatment, Mateus will discuss with you his working understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives, and his view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have any unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your therapy, their possible risks, Mateus' 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.

TERMINATION: As set forth above, after the first couple of meetings, Mateus Porter will assess if he can be of benefit to you. Mateus does not work with clients who, in his opinion, he cannot help. In such a case, if appropriate, he will give you referrals that you can contact. If at any point during psychotherapy Mateus either assesses that he is not effective in helping you reach the therapeutic goals or perceived you as non-compliant or non-responsive, and if you are available and/or it is possible and appropriate to do, he will discuss with you the termination of treatment and conduct pre-termination counseling. In such a case, if appropriate and/or necessary, he would give you a couple of referrals that may be of help to you. If you request it and authorize it in writing, Mateus will talk to the psychotherapist 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 therapist, Mateus will give you a couple of referrals that you may want to contact, and if he has your written consent, he will provide her or him with the essential information needed. You have the right to terminate therapy and communication at any time. If you choose to do so, upon your request and if appropriate and possible, Mateus will provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer.

DUAL RELATIONSHIPS: Despite a popular perception, not all dual or multiple relationships are unethical or avoidable. Therapy never involves sexual or any other dual relationship that impairs Mateus' objectivity, clinical judgment or can be exploitative in nature. Mateus will assess carefully before entering into non-sexual and non-exploitative dual relationships with clients. It is important to realize that in some communities, particularly small towns, small communities, military bases, university campuses, spiritual and rehabilitation communities, etc.,

multiple relationships are either unavoidable or expected. Mateus will never acknowledge working with anyone without his/her written permission. Many clients have chosen Mateus as their therapist because they knew him before they entered therapy with him, and/or are personally aware of his professional work and achievements. Nevertheless, Mateus will discuss with you the often-existing complexities, potential benefits and difficulties that may be involved in dual or multiple relationships. Dual or multiple relationships can enhance trust and therapeutic effectiveness but can also detract from it and often it is impossible to know which ahead of time. It is your responsibility to advise Mateus if the dual or multiple relationship becomes uncomfortable for you in any way. Mateus will always listen carefully and respond to your feedback and will discontinue the dual relationship if he finds it interfering with the effectiveness of the therapy or your welfare and, of course, you can do the same at any time.

SOCIAL NETWORKING: I do not accept friend requests from current or former clients on social networking sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. I believe that adding clients as friends on these sites and/or communicating via such sites can compromise their privacy and confidentiality. For this same reason, I request that clients not communicate with me via any interactive or social networking web sites.

AUDIO OR VIDEO RECORDING: Unless otherwise agreed to by all parties beforehand, there shall be no audio or video recording of therapy sessions, phone calls, or any other services provided by Mateus Porter.

CANCELLATION: Since the scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24 hours (1 day) notice is required for re-scheduling or canceling an appointment. Unless we reach a different agreement, a fee of \$50 will be charged for sessions missed without such notification. Most insurance companies do not reimburse for missed sessions.

I have read the above Office Policies and General Information, Agreement for Psychotherapy Services or Informed Consent for Psychotherapy carefully (a total of 7 pages); I understand them and agree to comply with them:

**Parent/Guardian of Client
(print)** _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Client's Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Psychotherapist's Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____