

**THERAPEUTIC CONTRACT AND
AGREEMENT WITH**

Lottie

— PASSELL-SYMS —

SEX & INTIMACY SPECIALIST

Informed consent for Therapy and Treatment

Introduction:

This document is intended to provide important information to you regarding your treatment. Please read the entire document carefully and be sure to ask any questions that you may have regarding its contents.

Information about Your Therapist:

Lottie Passell-Syms will be providing you with therapy services. These services may consist of assessments, therapy sessions, intensives, workshops, and review of records.

Lottie is a fully Qualified Psychosexual Therapist and member of the National Counselling & Psychotherapy Society (NCPS) and College of Sexual and Relationship Therapists (COSRT). She follows their ethical framework for good practice, both of which can be found on their websites respectively (<http://www.ncps.com/>) and (<https://www.cosrt.org.uk/>).

At an appropriate time, Lottie will discuss her professional background with you and provide you with information regarding how she works, her experience, education, specialist areas, and professional orientation. You are free to ask questions at any time about these areas.

The Therapeutic Process:

It is Lottie's intention to provide services that will assist you in reaching your goals. Based upon the information that you provide to Lottie and the specifics of your situation, she will provide recommendations to you regarding your treatment.

Together you will aim to explore effective ways to progress and move forward, whether it's enhancing aspects already working well or navigating the decision to part ways respectfully.

Lottie believes that therapists and clients are partners in the therapeutic process. You have the right to agree or disagree with her recommendations. She will also periodically provide feedback to you regarding your progress and will invite your participation in the discussion.

It is important to be aware that there are benefits as well as risks associated with therapy. Potential risks include a lack of improvement, disruption in one's life following therapeutic changes, and emotional pain related to exploration of difficult experiences. Potential benefits include improved personal relationships, clarification of one's personal values and goals, and an improved ability to behave in new and meaningful ways.

Confidentiality

All communications between you and your therapist will be held in strict confidence unless you provide written permission to release information about your treatment (by both parties when related to couples counselling).

Should you engage in individual therapy sessions with Lottie, please be aware she adheres to a policy of not revealing any information from these individual sessions in the context of couples therapy. Nonetheless, it's crucial to understand that Lottie operates under a 'no current secrets' policy during couples therapy.

This policy implies that if, during individual therapy, you reveal a current secret that could influence the progression of the relationship, Lottie will be unable to proceed with couples therapy. This is because Lottie maintains that the presence of current secrets undermines the ability to fully commit to the therapeutic work in couples therapy.

However, it is important to note that the application of this policy is subject to discussion and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Lottie is committed to navigating these complex situations with sensitivity and discretion, ensuring that the path forward is agreed upon by all parties involved. There are exceptions to confidentiality. These include but are not limited to:

- Should Lottie be concerned that you may be of serious harm to yourself or others, Lottie has a duty of care to contact the relevant public authority to inform them of this. As far as reasonably possible, Lottie will attempt to seek your permission before taking such action but may have to do so without it.
- If compelled by a court or by law to disclose information or any notes Lottie may keep. This could be the case, for example with money-laundering or drug-trafficking or acts of terrorism.
- Clients referred by other agencies such as general practitioners: letters may be written at the start and end of the work to inform the referrer of progress, and at other times if changes occur or medical intervention is required.
- If needed to facilitate the management of the delivery of counselling services, the collection of fees or the management of any complaint.
- In the event of my death or mental or physical incapacity Lottie's Professional Executor will contact you to inform you of this. This person is another therapist working to the same code of ethics.
- You may wish Lottie to refer you to a specialist or to contact your GP on your behalf and therefore she may give information to that person as a background to the referral.
- In adherence to good practice, Lottie will discuss her clients with a fully qualified supervisor, who is also a full member of COSRT, and abides by the ethical code of the relevant professional association. However, at all times, she will protect the privacy of her client(s) by concealing his/her/their name and other identifying characteristics.

Sessions and Fees:

For weekly therapy you have the option of booking a session that will last for 60 or 90 minutes online (Zoom) or face to face (The Butterfly Room, Otterbourne). The fees vary depending on whether you book as a couple or individually. Lottie's prices and online diary can be found on her website: www.lottiepassellsyms.com. Lottie recommends, for effective treatment, that you attend weekly, unless otherwise agreed.

Please note both parties must attend for a session to go ahead. A session will not go ahead with only one person present, unless contracted for individual sessions.

Both parties will endeavour to attend on time as session times will not be extended due to lateness. Please also note Lottie does not have a waiting room so if you arrive early please wait in your car until the time of your appointment. A car parked in my driveway is usually a good indication that a session is still in progress.

If in a session it finishes before the allotted time, Lottie may offer for you to 'bag' the time to be used in another session. However, this is in 15 intervals only and at Lottie's discretion.

Payment will be made upon booking either with Lottie directly (BACS transfer) or via the online booking system. Having an appointment means that time has been reserved for you, Lottie reserves the right to charge the full fee for appointments missed or cancelled with less than 48 hours' notice. Please note, fees are reviewed annually.

If for some reason you find that you are unable to continue paying for your therapy, please inform Lottie and she will help you to consider any options that may be available to you at that time.

Lottie also offers intensive sessions (consisting of a block of therapy over the course of between 1 - 3 days). For an intensive Lottie will require 2 weeks notice for a full refund, minus a 12.5% administration fee. Within 2 weeks, then you would be entitled to a 50% refund of the total cost.

Payment plans may be provided to those wishing to spread the cost of the intensive. The payment plans will incur an additional cost, due to the administration involved. The refund policy will remain the same, even if some monies have not been collected yet, so please bear this in mind.

Online Sessions:

You will either be sent a password protected Zoom link by Lottie directly or via her online booking system. Lottie will let you into that meeting and then lock the room after you have entered.

Please ensure you are in a private secure space where there will be no interruption or presence of other household members, children, or pets. There should be no eating or drinking of alcohol during sessions.

Should the signal be lost and cut off Lottie will try the Zoom link again, failing that she will telephone you and either agree to continue by phone or bring the session to an end. For couples, please ensure that you can equally share the screen or access from two different devices if not.

Therapist Availability:

Lottie is available between the hours of 9am - 8pm Monday to Thursday and Friday between 9am - 1pm. She is contactable via text, phone call and email. However, due to the demands of her private practice, she might not always be able to answer phone calls immediately. Emailing her or booking a 15-minute consultation call through the online system is the most reliable way to establish contact.

Lottie prefers to keep interactions between sessions concise, as she believes that significant concerns should be addressed during the regular sessions. All communications involving couples will include both partners, except when coordinating individual sessions.

Understanding that circumstances can arise between sessions that may cause distress, Lottie offers a 15-minute consultation if you feel an urgent need to communicate with her before or after a scheduled session. This is available within her working hours stated above, and she will make an effort to reply to any enquiries as promptly as possible. Additionally, any need for immediate discussion or concerns that arise will be considered on a case-by-case basis, ensuring that critical issues are given the attention they require.

In the event of a medical emergency or an emergency involving a threat to your safety or the safety of others, please call 999 to request emergency assistance.

Code of Conduct:

We will always speak to each other with respect. We will not unduly raise our voices or threaten violence or try to intimidate in any way. You will not physically harm yourself, each other or myself, or cause damage to property during the appointments. You will not attend any session while under the influence of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs. Lottie reserves the right to end a session if she believes you are intoxicated or under the influence of non-prescribed drugs.

Data Protection:

As required by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) your name and contact details will be kept in a secure, locked cabinet. Lottie will not keep data any longer than is necessary and it will be destroyed securely at the end of the recommended period of retention.

Lottie's notes are minimal and they are a reflection of the creative time together which means they only make sense in that therapeutic space. Sometimes, permission is asked by clients, their solicitors, the police and the courts to access to client records. As these records are not suitable for use in legal proceedings, I reserve the right to resist legal requests to produce these in court (for example for divorce proceedings).

Any request to provide a written report made will be considered on a case by case basis on receipt of written consent by you to the request.

I am also registered with ICO.

Endings:

The conclusion of the couples counselling contract typically occurs through mutual agreement and naturally concludes over time. Yet, endings can sometimes be challenging, as the therapeutic relationship often plays a crucial role in personal growth and development, making farewells difficult. Lottie recognises the importance of these moments and encourages you to approach endings in therapy as opportunities to reflect on both past and future departures. Rupture and repair are fundamental aspects of any relationship, and this dynamic can also occur within the therapeutic context. Ending therapy by mutual decision and providing notice is integral to fostering self-awareness and managing the emotions associated with change.

You are entitled to discontinue therapy at any point. It is preferable to discuss the decision to end therapy together, allowing for a meaningful conclusion where feelings about the ending can be processed, and any unresolved issues can be addressed. Should Lottie determine that your needs exceed her professional capabilities, she may conclude the sessions. This decision would be thoroughly discussed during our meeting, and she would offer recommendations for further support.

If sessions are missed by more than one consecutive session without communication, Lottie will attempt to contact you to understand the reasons for these absences. Should she be unable to reach you after a reasonable period, she will conclude that you have chosen to end the therapy sessions. In such cases, the therapeutic relationship will be considered concluded, and your file will be closed.

Additionally, therapy may be terminated if attendance becomes too sporadic to allow for meaningful progress, but any decision to this effect will be communicated to you beforehand, with explanations provided for the decision.

I understand the agreement and I agree to the terms and conditions.

Client Signature

Date

Therapist Signature

Date

Lottie

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