

Harrisburg Biblical Counseling Center  
420 S 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17104  
(717) 232-1713

## AGREEMENT FORM

**Mission Statement:** The **Harrisburg Biblical Counseling Center (HBCC)** is a for profit organization dedicated to promoting a humble, honest, redemptive community in Jesus Christ among children, adults, families and couples who are experiencing varying degrees of difficulty with life's complex and confusing problems.

**Please read the following agreement carefully as you consider entering into formal counseling.**

**Important:** We view the counseling process as forming an alliance with you, in dependence on God, to explore the nature of your problem. Although we will spend much of our time exploring the specific problem that brought you into counseling, we will also explore, in depth, the nature of your relationship with other significant people in your life. In our theoretical orientation, we believe that many of the forces and dynamics that have influenced the complexity and intensity of your problem are rooted in relational issues. In using a Biblical foundation in our counseling, we believe you are made to deeply relate...this is the source of your greatest joy, but also of your deepest pain. This is not to simplify your problem, but rather to highlight the complexity of the problem and how it interferes with the deep enjoyment for which you have been made. Aiming at the source of the problem is meant to give you hope.

Many of the results of counseling will depend upon your determination to deal honestly with the issues that powerfully affect your life. We are human beings who have been profoundly affected by the effects of sin in the world. We are damaged people who do further damage through the way we handle our pain. We are tempted to transform our thirst for God into things under our control that keep us protected, yet, at the same time, in agony. This pain often appears in the form of symptoms such as depression, eating disorders, sexual dysfunction, workaholism, anxiety, rage, etc. Your symptoms are important. They point beyond themselves to the need for an inside look into your life. This "inside look" is intended to surface and over time disrupt old, unhealthy dependencies and to offer the enticing idea that dependency on God is an invitation we have both feared and longed for in the core of our souls. We believe that certain problems can also have (or develop) physical components. In such cases, medical consultation will be advised.

Your counseling will be Christ-centered and Biblical, meaning that the Scriptures (the Word of Christ) will be the authority in all cases. All counseling will be conducted in accordance with the counselor's understanding of Scripture. If you are not sure that you will be interested in Biblically-based counseling, you may attend a session or two to learn more. After this time if you are unwilling to use the Bible as the final authority or do the homework assigned, sessions will be terminated.

If you are not attending a church or your church is not structured to provide the kind of counseling received at HBCC, we encourage you to begin attending a Christian church on a weekly basis and take full advantage of its teaching and worship, fellowship, and oversight. Our

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experience has been that for changes in people to be lasting, people need more than the help they receive in formal counseling. The total ministry of the church in preaching, teaching, and fellowship provides the same kind of help given in the counseling sessions. If you are attending a church, we encourage you to invite the pastor from your local church or someone in its leadership to accompany you to the counseling sessions. We desire to recognize and respect the authority and the discipline of your church. This will also make transfer back to the pastoral care of your church much easier to affect.

### **DESIRE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNSELOR**

Each counselor desires to see the problem that brought you into counseling resolved to your satisfaction. In order to help you, we need to get to know you, how you view your problem, and how you relate to significant people in your life. We, as counselors, are responsible to be honest with you, and to keep careful records about the directions we pursue in counseling. **(These records are confidential; no one else will be allowed to see them.)** We will follow a course of counseling that is in your best interest, and will attempt to resolve only those problems that are within the scope of our training.

**Confidentiality is an important element of the therapy process. Your identity and ongoing work in counseling will be kept strictly confidential, with the exception of the following:**

- 1.) Counselors at HBCC regularly consult with other professionals regarding clients with whom we are working. This allows us to gain other perspectives and ideas concerning how to best help you reach your goals. Such consultations are obtained in such a way that complete confidentiality is maintained. No identifying information is shared in such consultations unless a release form has been obtained from you for a specific consultation.
- 2.) If a court of law orders a subpoena of case records or testimony, we will first assert "privilege" (which is your right to deny the release of your records). We will release records with your written permission or if a court denies the assertion of privilege and orders the release of records.
- 3.) If you are a threat to yourself or others (showing suicidal or homicidal intent) we may need to report these statements to your family and/or other appropriate mental health or law enforcement professionals in order to keep you and others safe.
- 4.) There are a broad range of events that are reportable under child protection statutes. Physical or sexual abuse of a child will be reported to Child Protective Services. When the victim of child abuse is over age 18, we are not legally mandated to report it unless we believe that there are minors still living with the abuser, who may be in danger of being abused. Elder abuse is also required to be reported to the appropriate authorities.

### **FEES AND LENGTH OF COUNSELING**

Counseling sessions will generally last about 60 minutes. Depending on the nature of the presenting problem(s), sessions are held one per week although this may vary according to the needs of the client. It is difficult to predict how many sessions may be needed in regard to a client's presenting problem(s). Your counselor will be better able to discuss with you an approximate number of sessions after you and she/he have explored your situation in some

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detail—usually after two or three sessions. At any time during the counseling, for sufficient reasons; the counselor, or you the counselee, shall have **the option of terminating counseling.**

Fees are based on a sliding scale, which means that the cost of counseling varies according to the client’s annual combined family income. Fees are **payable at the time of your appointment with the counselor.** Unusual circumstances will be considered on an individual basis.

<b>Schedule of Fees</b>	
<b>Family Income</b>	<b>Fee</b>
\$20,000 and below	\$30
\$20,000 - \$30,000	\$35
\$30,000 - \$40,000	\$40
\$40,000 - \$50,000	\$45
\$50,000 - \$60,000	\$50
\$60,000 – and above	\$60

**CLIENT’S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The course of therapy is determined mutually by your counselor and you, the client. You are encouraged to freely ask any questions you have regarding the educational and professional background or therapeutic approach of your counselor. You are also encouraged to freely ask questions pertaining to your specific therapy plan and progress.

**People often ask how long they will be in counseling.** Some clients need fairly brief therapy to understand their conflicts and reach the goals they set for themselves. However, others may require many months or even years of work to achieve the growth they desire. We attempt to work with people in such a way that they have sufficient time to meet their individual therapy goals, but we discourage clients from becoming inappropriately dependent upon therapy. Consequently, treatment duration varies from person to person. Clients typically know when they are beginning to “feel finished” with therapy work. When this happens we encourage you to discuss this with your counselor so that we can close our relationship as carefully as it began. State certification requirements for professional counselors do not imply the effectiveness of treatment. It is your responsibility to determine whether the services offered are appropriate and ultimately helpful. It is always our intention to provide services in a professional manner that is consistent with all accepted ethical standards. If at any time in the course of your work with a HBCC counselor you feel that there may have been a misunderstanding or you have a question or complaint about your counselor’s services, please bring this up immediately so that your counselor can become aware of your concern and resolve the matter with you. We are required to abide by the rules set forth by the **PA Certification Board and the American Association of Christian Counselors.** These rules include guidelines for counseling methods and practices as well as professional ethical standards. You have the right to report, violations to either of these boards. You have the right to end therapy at any time without any moral or legal obligations. Financial obligation will only be those already accrued.

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

By signing this disclosure and consent statement, the client acknowledges having been informed of his/her rights and responsibilities under regulatory laws for counselors in PA. In addition, the client acknowledges he/she has read and understands the administrative policies for this counseling office.

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Signature of Client Date

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Signature of Client/Spouse/Guardian Date

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Signature of Counselor Date