



Suzanne Heffner

Welcome! I hope that our relationship will help to resolve the issues that brought you here and that you will experience the change in your life that you are seeking.

Qualifications

I am a Licensed Clinical Marriage and Family Therapist (LCMFT) in the state of Kansas and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in the state of Missouri. I have provided counseling to individuals, couples, and families since 2000. I received a Master of Science degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Oklahoma State University. I have seen clients and conducted classes in nonprofit community counseling centers, churches, and schools. I am also a clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. I am a trained administrator of the PREPARE/ENRICH inventories. The scope of my practice includes premarital and couples counseling, individual counseling with adults and children, and family counseling. I do not provide personality, ability, or vocational testing or evaluations, custody evaluations, or prescription of medications.

Confidentiality

I place a high value on confidentiality of the information that my clients share with me. Please be aware of these important instances when confidential information will be released to others. These include:

- If the client presents a clear and present danger to him/herself and refuses to accept appropriate treatment, a therapist is mandated to release relevant information to protect the client in order to place or retain the client in a hospital.
- If a therapist has reason to believe that there is clear and present danger of physical violence against an identified victim by the client, the therapist may be required to report to proper authorities.
- If the therapist suspects physical abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect of a child or and elderly adult, the therapist is mandated to report this information to the proper state agency.
- If the legal system requires testimony resulting from a subpoena.
- If the client initiates legal action against the therapist, the therapist may disclose confidential client information necessary to her defense.
- Information acquired by a therapist in the course of practice may be disclosed to another appropriate professional as part of professional consultation or supervision, without specifically identifying an individual client.

If a client would like information released to a third party, a client will need to give written consent.

What to Expect

I use a systemic approach to counseling meaning I examine an individual in the context of their family and their environment. I examine how other people and other factors influence the individual and how the individual influences others. I help clients clarify reasons they are seeking counseling and set appropriate goals for therapy.

Research shows that many clients effectively address their goals in six to eight sessions. However, some clients may have the need for longer treatment depending on the nature of their presenting concerns and goals. Each session will be 50 minutes long unless additional time is scheduled.

Documentation for each client includes an informed consent form, release of information forms, financial record keeping, progress notes, and any other correspondence or information related to the client. Records are stored in a locked cabinet for confidentiality purposes and will be held for at least seven years after termination.

Benefits and Risks to Therapy

Any time you seek therapy to work with issues in yourself or in your relationships there are benefits and risks involved. The benefits can include a greater self-awareness, greater ability to cope with your specific concerns, and a stronger connection in interpersonal relationships. This can lead to greater happiness as an individual, couple, or as a family.

However, therapy can be challenging and uncomfortable at times and there are no guarantees of the outcome you desire. Remembering and resolving an unpleasant situation may cause intense feelings of fear, anger, depression, and frustration. As you work to resolve personal issues or issues with others, you may experience discomfort and an increase in conflict. There may be changes in your relationship, which you had not originally intended.

I will discuss with you the benefits and risks involved in your particular situation. I encourage you to discuss with me any concerns you have as you progress.

Fees

The standard fee is \$120 per 50 minute hour. Clients are expected to pay at the time of service. If a client has an overdue balance of more than two sessions, additional appointments will not be made until account is paid in full. Brief telephone calls lasting less than five minutes will not be billed to a client's account. Extended phone calls lasting more than five minutes or brief multiple calls will be billed at the same rate as face to face sessions.

Clients who have elected to use health care insurance are expected to file claims directly with their insurance company. I will provide clients with documentation required in order to file a claim with their insurance company, health savings account, or employer's flexible benefits/cafeteria plan. This will include provider's name and credentials, date of service, type of service, cost, and diagnosis code.

Cancellation Policy

A 24 hour notice is required if a client is unable to keep a scheduled appointment. If a 24 hour notice is not received, the client will be charged and liable for the full visit fee. This fee will need to be paid at the next appointment.

Emergency Services

You may contact me at my office at 913-735-9334. I am not available for 24 hour emergency care. A client cannot assume I will be available at all times. In case of an emergency and the inability to reach me, immediate contact should be made to one of the following crisis hotlines or your local emergency room:

Rape Crisis Line	816-531-0233
Child Abuse in Kansas	1-800-922-5330
Johnson County Mental Health	913-782-2100
Suicide	1-800-SUICIDE

Client Rights

- To be treated with respect and dignity
- To be informed about the qualifications of my therapist including her education, experience, and professional licensure
- To receive an explanation of services offered, your time commitments, fees, and billing policies prior to receipt of services
- To be informed of the limitations of the counselor's practice and areas of expertise
- To have all that you say treated confidentially and be informed of any state law that places limitations on confidentiality
- To ask questions about the counseling techniques and strategies used, and be informed of your progress
- To participate in setting goals and evaluating progress toward meeting them
- To be informed of how to contact the counselor in an emergency situation
- To request a referral for a second opinion at any time
- To request copies of records and reports to be used by other counseling professionals
- To request a copy of the code of ethics to which your counselor adheres
- To contact the appropriate professional organization if you have doubts or complaints relative to the counselor's conduct
- To terminate the counseling relationship at any time

Client Responsibilities

- Set and keep appointments with your counselor. Let her know as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment.
- Be an active participant in your counseling by helping determine your goals and following through with these goals.
- Keep your counselor informed of your progress toward meeting your goals.
- Terminate your counseling relationship before entering into arrangements with another counselor.