

For your information; please read and take home

Dear Client/s:

I am so pleased to be able to work with you as you improve your life and relationships. Below is important legal and ethical information. **Please** take this home and keep it for future reference. This information is also available on-line (www.shorecounselling.ca/)

About me as your therapist

Ian Gartshore, M.Th, is a family system's therapist, is a member of the B.C. Association of Clinical Counsellors (member #2560), to whom complaints may be directed (250-595-4448), and possesses third-party liability insurance. My goal is to turn client's obstacles into opportunities for improved relationships and emotional health through a variety of modalities. Sometimes difficult emotions are experienced in this process as change is experienced. Sometimes clients feel worse before feeling better. Changes may impact relationships. If you have concerns about the therapeutic process you are urged to raise these in the session, as our relationship is vital to the outcome.

I maintain the strictest of confidentiality in order to protect my clients. Confidentiality is broken only when written permission is granted by the client(s) or when I believe a person (e.g. client, child of client) is at risk or in danger, or when mandated by law (e.g. subpoena by a court of law). Case notes can be obtained by the client for a minimal fee (normally \$25). If case notes are for joint sessions then a release of confidentiality will be required by both/all participant(s).

It is the normal practice of Ian Gartshore to consult with other professional therapists in order to improve the quality of counselling. Confidentiality is strictly maintained by such professionals. As a client/s you are free to ask me about my credentials and/or our contract, and that you may elect to end therapy at any time.

As my client/s you understand the purpose of attending this counselling, and consent to it. Storage and collection of client information is in accordance with the personal information protection act (PIPA) and in accordance with the BCACC guidelines. Feel free to ask Ian about this.

If you are a private client you agree to be responsible for the agreed payment (unless otherwise negotiated), or unless 24+ hours notice of cancellation of an appointment has been made. If you are a client of Island Integrated Counselling Society then a failure to notify me of a needed change or cancellation of a session may result in the loss of future sessions with me and the agency.

How to contact me; about using e-mails and Facebook

E-mails: If you elect to contact me via e-mail (ian@shorecounselling.ca) please be aware that such a form of communication is **not confidential**. While my reply will always include a standard notice that the communication is confidential, such does not guarantee that an unauthorised person may read our correspondence. **It is wise** to avoid writing anything that is personal in nature. It is **much** preferred that we communicate on the telephone (250-754-0698), or especially in person, as these are far more confidential.

While I make every attempt to respond to e-mails within 24 business hours sometimes e-mails are lost in transmission and so are not reliable. Leaving a voice message is far more trustworthy, and secure. The content of messages, apart from simple scheduling issues, will be added to your client record; as such the conditions outlined above apply. Do **not** e-mail in a **crisis** situation; instead phone me at my office (250-754-0698) or especially the 24-Hour Vancouver Island crisis line at 1-888-494-3888. I do not immediate offer crisis counselling. Such is available for free at the Island Health's Crisis Walk-in Clinic Monday through Friday from 10 am to 6:00 pm. This clinic can be found at the Brooks Landing Mall, #203-2000 Island Highway, Nanaimo (facing Departure Bay Road).

Facebook: I avoid allowing clients (past or present) to be my 'friend' on my personal page so as to avoid harming our therapeutic relationship and to avoid a loss of client confidentiality. To communicate you may use my alias account as this will provide a little more security for you. Look for "John Shore" of Nanaimo:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100012154867754>, but note that this is also not strictly confidential. Avoid using any identifying information (e.g. name, address, phone number). Do not 'friend' me (I will not accept this request in order to maintain your confidentiality). *Please note* that I may not check for messages there every day. **It is best** to phone me (250-754-0698). Apart from an emergency, and for the sake of our relationship, I will not view or post on your F.B. page or elsewhere on social media. If you choose to follow or comment on my Shore Counselling page such is according to your discretion, as this medium is open to the public. My utmost concern is for your privacy.

I will never ask you to endorse me or my practise. Such is unethical. The British Columbia Association of Clinical Counsellors states, "an RCC should never solicit testimonials, expressly or by implication, from clients or other persons who, because of their particular circumstances, may be vulnerable to undue influence." Search engines (such as Bing, Yahoo, Google, Yelp) may provide this opportunity to past or current clients. Please be aware that any such listing is **not** a request by me for an endorsement or comment. You may be wise to use a pseudonym so as to protect your identity. Due to confidentiality issues I will not respond to any comment you might make, even should I happen to see it. I invite you to take your confidentiality as seriously as do I. Of course if you wish to reveal that I am your therapist you are free to do so.

To protect you, should we meet outside the therapeutic setting I will leave it up to you as to whether we have any contact or conversation. I will not approach you.

If your mobile device has a tracking function be aware that others could surmise that you are my client. This location it is also my home and as well as the site of another business. Yet the risk is still present. In addition, should your mobile device is stolen or lost any history of its use (including e-mails, social media, phone calls or texts) may reveal your association with me.

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