

# Mindful Resource Center (MRC)

21 Tamal Vista Blvd, Suite 162 Corte Madera, California 94925

P: 415-634-3500

[www.mindfulresourcecenter.com](http://www.mindfulresourcecenter.com)  
[mindfulresourcecenter@gmail.com](mailto:mindfulresourcecenter@gmail.com)

## CLINICIAN:

- Julie Hartman, PhD (License # 28202)
- JoAnne Forman, LMFT (License # 93812)
- Cynthia Duxbury, LMFT (License # 51207)
- Katherine Schoolland, MFT (License # 103337)
- Dorinda Woodley, MFT (License # 109343)

## BUSINESS POLICIES AND AGREEMENT

**PROFESSIONAL FEES:** The fee for a 50-minute session of individual therapy is \$\_\_\_\_. The fee for an initial evaluation is \$\_\_\_\_. Fees for longer or shorter sessions will be prorated from this amount. There will be no charge for brief telephone calls that are 10 minutes or less, such as those made to schedule appointments or clarify an assignment. However, the client will be charged the typical session fee (prorated according to length) for calls longer than 10 minutes. Other services include telephone consultations, report writing, or other services the client may request of the Clinician. There is typically a small increase in fees each year around January 1 and/or July 1. The client agrees that if the Clinician is involved in any legal proceedings as a result of the client's involvement in those proceedings in any way (whether the client is the plaintiff or the defendant), involving other individuals, agencies, or institutions (such as, but not limited to, disability claims, divorce and custody disputes, personal injury lawsuits, malpractice lawsuits, etc.), the client will pay double the Clinician's hourly fee, with a five (5)-hour minimum. The client will be charged for any time that the Clinician spends on the case, including, without limitation, depositions, telephone calls, review of records, travel time, photocopying, report writing, letter writing, or contact with other professionals, individuals, or entities regarding the case.

**BILLING AND PAYMENTS:** Payments are to be made at the beginning of each session, unless another arrangement has been made. A \$20 late fee will also be added for any charges past due by 1 week and the Clinician will charge the client's securely-stored credit card information (agreed upon at the beginning of services) the amount (plus late fee when applicable). An additional charge of \$50 will accrue monthly for any unpaid balances. If the client's account has not been paid for more than 60 days, the Clinician may use legal means to secure the payment. This will involve either hiring a collection agency or going through small claims court. If such legal action is necessary, its costs will be included in the claim. In most collection situations, the only information the Clinician releases regarding a client's treatment is his/her name, the nature of services provided, and the amount due. Please refer to the 'Payment Information form' about payment options to discuss and confirm payment preference. The Clinician's practice uses the *Therapy Partner* system for electronic record-keeping, credit card processing and invoicing. The policy is to securely store a form of payment on file for all of sessions (and can be stored for cancellations). You will receive *Therapy Partner* generated monthly automated statement by email. Statements will show that you have paid for your services in full and are ready for you to forward to your insurance company if you wish to seek reimbursement. **Please read and sign the Therapy Partner Agreement and complete the Electronic Authorization Form that will be emailed to you shortly to begin utilizing this billing process.**

**INSURANCE REIMBURSEMENT:** The Clinician does not take insurance at this time. Certain health insurance policies will provide some coverage for “out of network” mental health treatment, however, the client (not the client’s insurance company) is responsible for full payment of the Clinician’s fees at time of service. Per the client’s request, the Clinician will provide the client with an invoice that contains information that the insurance company may require, however, it will be the client’s responsibility to complete insurance forms to obtain reimbursement. If the client intends on being reimbursed by their insurance company, it is very important that the client find out exactly what mental health services his/her insurance policy covers. The Clinician will not communicate with the client’s insurance company about any claims - his/her invoice will be the Clinician’s only communication on the client’s behalf concerning the services he/she provides.

**HOURS/AVAILABILITY:** The Clinicians have families with young children and as a result, he/she has limited after-school sessions and evenings available, so please plan accordingly. Sessions are usually scheduled for 50-minute time slots weekly or as agreed upon based on the client’s needs. In some cases, longer sessions or more frequent sessions per week are warranted. Please discuss with your Clinician his/her business hours.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** The Clinician is often not immediately available by telephone. If the client needs to contact the Clinician between sessions, the client may call the office number and leave a message at the voice message ‘box’ associated with Clinician’s name according to (415-634-3500). Voice messages are checked several times a day and clients will be called back as soon as possible within business hours. If the Clinician doesn’t get back to a client within a reasonable amount of time, the Clinician encourages clients to please call again because sometimes messages are not clear in voicemail. The Clinician will make every effort to return calls during business hours on the same day voice messages are left (not on weekends and holidays). If the client is difficult to reach, the client is expected to let the Clinician know of some times when the client will be available. When the client is out-of-town or unavailable due to an urgent matter, he/she will let clients know and will give the name and telephone number of another Clinician who will be available to his/her clients for emergencies. That back-up Clinician’s name and telephone number can also be accessed by calling the office number (415-634-3500) and listening to the outgoing message associated with the Clinician’s voice message ‘box’.

**EMERGENCIES:** The Clinician’s voicemail is not an emergency resource because he/she only checks messages a few times/day. **If the client is in crisis, he/she may leave the Clinician a message but should then access his/her primary care physician, the local emergency room, the police at 9-1-1 or the 24-hour Psychiatric Emergency line in Marin (415-499-6666).**

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY:** In order to maintain clarity regarding the use of electronic modes of communication during treatment, the Clinician has prepared the following policy. This is because the use of various types of electronic communications is common in our society, and many individuals believe this is the preferred method of communication with others, whether their relationships are social or professional. Many of these common modes of communication, however, put the client’s privacy at risk and can be inconsistent with the law and with the standards of the Clinician’s profession. Consequently, this policy has been prepared to assure the security and confidentiality of treatment and to assure that communications are consistent with ethics and the law. If the client has any questions about this policy, please feel free to discuss this with the Clinician.

**EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS:** The Clinician uses email communication only with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless you/the Clinician made another agreement. That means that email exchanges with his/her office should be limited to things like setting and changing appointments, billing matters and other related issues. Please do not email the Clin-

ician about clinical matters because email unless agreed upon with your Clinician. MRC uses a HIPPA-compliant email system, called *Virtru*, to support security of transmission, however if you need to discuss a clinical matter with the Clinician, please ideally wait to discuss it during your therapy session or feel free to call. The telephone or face-to-face context simply is much more secure as a mode of communication.

**TEXT MESSAGING:** Because text messaging is a very unsecure and impersonal mode of communication, the Clinician does not text message to nor responds to text messages from anyone in treatment. So, please do not text message her unless you/the Clinician made other arrangements together.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** The Clinician does not communicate with, or contact, any of his/her clients through social media platforms like Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook. In addition, if he/she discovers that he/she has accidentally established an online relationship with the you, he/she will cancel that online relationship. This is because these types of casual social contacts can create significant security risks for you. The Clinician participates in two social networks in his/her professional capacity: (1) Mindful Resource Center (MRC) facebook page and (2) LinkedIn. The MRC Facebook page is designed to benefit community and not for individual psychological services. LinkedIn is designed to benefit community as a professional contact to other professionals. If you have an online presence, there is a possibility that you may encounter the Clinician. If that occurs, please discuss it with him/her during your time together. The Clinician believes that any communications with clients online have a high potential to compromise the professional relationship. Therefore, please do not try to contact him/her in this way for your psychological services. The Clinician will not respond and will terminate any online contact no matter how accidental.

**WEBSITES:** The Clinician has a page on the Mindful Resource Center (MRC) Website for professional purposes to provide information to others about him/her and his/her practice. Clients are welcome to access and review the information that he/she has on the website and, if the client has questions about it, he/she should discuss this during therapy sessions.

**WEB SEARCHES:** The Clinician will not use web searches to gather information about clients without permission. He/She believes that this violates privacy rights; however, he/she understands that clients might choose to gather information about him/her in this way. In this day and age there is an incredible amount of information available about individuals on the internet, much of which may actually be known to that person and some of which may be inaccurate or unknown. If the client encounters any information about the Clinician through web searches, or in any other fashion for that matter, the client agrees to discuss this with the Clinician during the session so that he/she can address it with the client and its potential impact on treatment. Recently it has become fashionable for clients to review their health care provider on various websites. Unfortunately, mental health professionals cannot respond to such comments and related errors because of confidentiality restrictions. If the client encounters such reviews of the Clinician or any professional with whom he/she is working, the client agrees to share it with him/her so he/she can discuss it with the client and its potential impact on the psychological services. Please do not rate the Clinician's work while in treatment together on any of these websites. This is because it has a significant potential to damage the ability to work together.

**SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS:** The Clinician recommends that in order to maintain the commitment and focus to the psychological services, the client arranges a predictable weekly session time during the duration of working together. However, when the client wishes to schedule a different appointment time (see Cancellation Policy below), the best way to schedule appointments is to email the Clinician via the Clinician's email as indicated on the Mindful Resource Center (MRC) website.

**WAITING LIST:** When a client prefers a time that is occupied by another client, the Clinician will first approach that client to see if a change is possible. If not, he/she can add the client to the waiting list.

**RECORD-KEEPING:** The Clinician maintains an electronic chart for each client. Information in the chart includes a description of client's condition, psychological services goals, treatment plan and progress, dates of and fees for sessions, and notes describing each session. The Clinician also keeps records of any consent, release, assessment, insurance, or other forms completed in the course of treatment. If the Clinician is not able to maintain your records, he/she will transfer them to be maintained by a licensed psychotherapist who is required by law to preserve the security of information.

**SUBSTANCE USE:** The type of psychological services that the Clinician provides are significantly less effective when the client uses substances, even for recreational enjoyment. The client agrees to be honest with the Clinician about the amount of substance used so that the Clinician can assess if her psychological services are appropriate and when appropriate, will assist in transferring treatment to a professional who specializes in providing psychological services with individuals who use substances.

**COLD/FLU SYMPTOMS:** In order to maintain a healthy atmosphere for everyone, the Clinician asks that all clients not enter the office if a cold/flu is suspected. The Clinician will also not enter the office if he/she suspects a cold/flu. He/She will not charge for a missed session due to cold/flu symptoms. If the client still wants to talk during illness, the Clinician can arrange a phone appointment.

**CANCELLATIONS, MISSED SESSIONS, AND TARDINESS:** Once an appointment is scheduled, you will be charged for it unless you provide 48 hours advance notice of cancellation, regardless of the reason for cancellation (the only exception is illness). This is not meant to be a penalty. The Clinician requires 48 hours in order to offer the appointment time to another client on the waiting list. Generally sessions will start on time. Sessions will end at the scheduled time, even if you are late. If the Clinician begins a session late, he/she will make up the missed time in some mutually agreeable fashion.

**FRAGRANCE-FREE WORKPLACE:** Please read MRC's 'Fragrance-free Policy' and your signature here indicates compliance with that policy in addition to agreeing to sign that policy.

By checking this box, I agree to be added to the Mindful Resource Center (MRC) E-newsletter where I will receive periodic updates, news and offers from the Center. I know I can unsubscribe at any time by clicking the link in the email.

I/We have read and understand this Business Policies And Agreement and I/we have had questions answered to satisfaction. I/We accept, understand, and agree to abide by the contents and terms of this agreement. I/We consent to respect and honor these policies. I/We also authorize the Clinician to charge my credit card according to the policies in this agreement.

Print name of Adult/Parent/Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Adult/Parent/Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

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