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Contract for Mediation Services

Welcome

The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision about participating in mediation, as well as to answer any questions you may have about office policies and the mediation process. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have after reviewing the enclosed information.

Licensure

I am licensed by the State of California as a Marriage Family Therapist. I have been licensed by the state of California since 1980. I have a Masters degree in Psychology.

Confidentiality

All clients are assured of confidentiality. Only a release of information, signed by you, authorizes me to discuss any information with others. There are, however, important exceptions when I am required by law or ethics to reveal information about you without your permission.

1. I am required by law to notify the intended victim and the appropriate law enforcement agencies if I judge that a client has an intention to cause serious bodily harm or death to another individual.
2. I am required by law to report to the appropriate authority any suspected child abuse, neglect, or molestation to protect the child or children involved, which would include downloading, streaming, or otherwise accessing images of any person under the age of 18 engaged in an act of obscene sexual conduct.
3. I am obliged by law to report to the appropriate authority any suspected abuse, neglect, or molestation of an elderly person or dependent adult to protect the elder or dependent involved.
4. If I assess a client to be suicidal, I am required by law to notify the individuals or agencies necessary to prevent self-harm, including, if necessary, initiating involuntary hospitalization.
5. In cases of alleged criminal or civil liability, I may be court ordered to release treatment information and/or records.

6. I may determine it appropriate to discuss some aspects of your mediation with another qualified professional in order to further the mediation process. If I seek such consultation, I will not reveal your name or any information that would enable my consultant to identify you.
7. Because mediation encourages trust between the parties and requires trust between each party and the mediator, neither party should provide me with information that I cannot share with the other party; and I reserve the right to share any such information with the other party, except when I believe the safety of either party or another person would be placed at risk by such disclosure.
8. I am permitted to release your name if necessary for collections processing. No mediation-related information, however, would accompany such disclosure.

Client's Rights

1. You have the right to decide to end mediation at any time. If you request, I will provide you with the names of other qualified mediators.
2. You have the right to learn about alternative methods of mediation. If you request, I will discuss these with you during our work together.
3. You have the right to refuse the use of any mediation technique. I will inform you if I intend to use any unusual procedures and will explain any risks involved.
4. You have the right to ask any questions about the procedures used in mediation. If you would like, I will explain any unusual methods of practice to you.

Emergencies

You may leave a message for me at (510) 543-8854, and I will return your call as soon as I can. Unless otherwise mutually and explicitly agreed in advance, I will not discuss case-related issues with one party unilaterally. I am willing to discuss logistical matters briefly with one party, however, such as appointment times or rescheduling appointments, as long as the other party is aware of the matter. In the event that you are experiencing a life threatening emergency, you should call 911, the 24-hour crisis team at 1-800-479-3339 or 1-800-784-2433, or go to the emergency room of a local hospital.

Mediation Relationship

Mediation with a Marriage and Family Therapist or any other professional mediator has only one purpose: to help the parties discuss and have the opportunity to resolve one or more disputed matters and to avoid, if possible, having an impersonal, external authority (such as a judge) make the decision for them. Because parties often disclose many deeply felt,

personal thoughts and experiences during mediation, the relationship can become very close and important. Sometimes, one or both parties come to want the relationship to become a personal or similar relationship. Although these feelings are understandable, it is necessary for you to understand that I can not have a social friendship or engage in any business endeavor with either party. These boundaries are important for effective, ethical mediation.

Mediation

Mediation is a joint effort, the results of which cannot be guaranteed. Resolution of disputed matters depends upon multiple factors including each party's motivation, the effort devoted by each party, each party's willingness to compromise appropriately, and external circumstances. Helping you to discuss disputed matters and to attempt to reach a resolution is the purpose of our work together. You can do your part by communicating your thoughts and feelings openly and honestly, even though this may be difficult at times. It is possible you may feel worse before you feel better and before your dispute is resolved. It is also possible that, at times, you will feel anxious, depressed, frustrated, angry, or hopeless during or after a mediation session. These feelings are not unusual during the mediation process and, unless they represent a deeper problem, often disappear when the disputed issues are resolved. Both parties' good faith in working toward resolution can help get us through any difficult times. If you are ever concerned that our work together is not helping, please let me know so that we can discuss your concerns.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read this form and have had any questions I had answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in mediation with Stuart Lord, MA, LMFT (MFC 15429).

Print Name

Signature

Date

Print Name

Signature

Date

Stuart Lord, MA, LMFT

Mediator

Signature

Date