

INFORMED CONSENT

In order to be fully informed about the counseling you will be receiving, please read through this following agreement, sign and date it at the bottom. This form must be signed and the intake form must be completed and returned to the church office before the first session. (Note to couples: Each individual should fill out their own set of forms.)

DESCRIPTION OF PASTORAL AND BIBLICAL COUNSELING:

The goal of the counseling that we are offering at The Crossing is to help an individual think biblically about their current struggles in the context of a confidential, caring environment. We rely on Scripture as the sole authority for faith and conduct and recognize that lasting change is the result of the power of God, the grace of Christ and the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit. Guided by biblical principals, the counselors role is to utilize guided questioning, empathetic support, problem definition, reflection/reading assignments, encouragement, and prayer to provide wise, biblical and faithful counsel to those who are hurting and in need. Our counselors are not infallible, and although they do not have exhaustive knowledge about biblical teaching and its applications to life, they are well equipped and competent to help people change. This counseling is conducted under the authority and leadership of The Crossing Church.

REFERRAL POLICY/DISCLAIMER

If you have significant medical, legal, financial or other technical questions, you should seek advice from a competent independent professional. Our counselors will cooperate with such advisors and help you to consider their counsel in the light of scriptural principles.

More specifically, we urge our counselees to properly care for their physical bodies and to seek proper medical treatment for all physiological problems. Our counselors will assist you in responding to such problems in a Godly manner, but our counsel is not intended to replace the services of a qualified physician where organic problems are present or where medication has been prescribed.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an important aspect of the counseling process. We will carefully guard the information you entrust to us to the fullest extent possible. There are times, however, when it may be necessary for us to share certain information with others. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Where a person refuses to renounce a particular sin, it may become necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation (Proverbs 15:22, 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20). In such cases, we will reveal only such information as is necessary for such purposes, and only to those biblically required to be involved. Where a counselee is a member of another church, it will most likely to be necessary to contact the pastor and/or elder of such church.
2. Where a counselor is uncertain as to how to address a particular counseling issue, he may seek advice from a pastor or another counselor.
3. Where a counselee threatens harm to another person, it may be necessary to intervene in order to prevent such harm.
4. The law may require a counselor to reveal spousal or child abuse, or some other crime, to the appropriate authorities.
5. Selected and trusted observers may sit in on counseling sessions, either to assist in the process or for training purposes.

RIGHTS AS A CLIENT

1. You are entitled to information about any procedures, methods of counseling, techniques and possible duration of counseling.
2. You have the right to end counseling at any time, compliant with cancellation policy (see below) without any legal or financial obligations other than those already accrued.
3. You have the right to expect confidentiality within the limits described.

MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION

On rare occasions, a conflict may develop between a counselor and counselee. 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 forbids Christians from bringing lawsuits against one another in secular courts of law. In order to ensure that such conflicts are resolved in a biblically faithful manner, we require all of our counselees to agree that any dispute with a counselor or with this church will be settled by mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration conducted in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Institute for Christian Conciliation. (<http://www.peacemaker.net>). The arbiters will be the elders of The Crossing Church. If one or more elders of the church is a part to the dispute, then three arbiters will be selected from the elders of churches in the Presbytery, with each party to the dispute choosing one arbiter, and the two arbiters then selecting the third. It is expressly understood that, by consenting in advance to such arbitration, the counselee is waiving his/her right to a trial in the civil courts.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If you need to cancel or reschedule a counseling session, we request that you notify your counselor at least 24 hours before your scheduled appointment time. This should be done by either e-mail or direct voice interchange as determined by agreement during first visit. Failure to do so could result in full payment of the missed appointment. If deemed necessary, this charge should be paid before or at the time of your next appointment to continue in the counseling relationship. Exceptions are for sudden illnesses and emergencies only.

CONTACTING THE CROSSING COUNSELING CENTER

For scheduling and canceling your appointments, you can:

1. Contact The Crossing church office at 573-256-4410 and ask for Kay.
2. E-mail Kay at kay@thecrossingchurch.com
3. Contact your counselor directly by either e-mail or whatever means you have established during first visit.
4. For emergencies after-hours, please call 911, or go to your local emergency room.

By signing below, you are acknowledging that you understand and accept the guidelines stated above.

Signed _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____