Privacy Policy

Solution Counselling

1. As a counsellor/coach working at Solution Counselling, I have a legal responsibility to protect your privacy and ensure your private personal information is used and stored in accordance with your wishes and legal rights.
2. Solution counselling is registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office, the body upholding Data Protection in the UK (details at 13, below). I work to comply with privacy policies laid down by the ICO.
3. **How I obtain and store your personal information**

I obtain details of your personal information when you:

* + Contact me to discuss and/or have Solution Focused sessions. Information may include the email address you use, your telephone number and Facebook details.
	+ Complete and return your Client agreement document, where you disclose your Date of Birth, GP information and Emergency Contact details.
	+ Share details about your life in the course of Solution Focused sessions you have with me (see ‘Sensitive information’, see 6 below).
1. **Your consent to use and storage of your personal data**

I can only store and use your data because you give consent to do so. This consent can be withdrawn at any time by you, by contacting me direct. I will then delete all the information I hold for you.

1. **How I use your information**

I use your personal information to:

* + Arrange/cancel appointments
	+ Provide an informed, responsive and personalised counselling/coaching service
	+ Carry out follow-up checks I describe in your Client Agreement
1. **‘Sensitive information**’

Sensitive information is defined as any information you share during our conversations together about

* + Your mental and physical health
	+ Where you live and information about your lifestyle
	+ Details about your professional, personal and family relationships
	+ Your sexual history or orientation
	+ Your beliefs and religion
	+ Your use of alcohol, prescribed and non-prescribed drugs
	+ Any criminal offences or alleged offences

I am bound legally and by my professional Code of Ethics to keep your sensitive information secure and confidential and ensure it doesn’t come into the hands of any third party.

1. **Third party information sharing**

I will not share any information about you with any third party, unless you give me formal consent to do so. However, situations might arise where I’m obliged to share your information without your consent, if I have not been able to get consent from you. I would always attempt to get this consent when possible. This exception to confidentiality applies in cases relating to

* + Child protection
	+ A Court Order
	+ Risk to life

Details of these exceptions can be found at 11, below.​

1. **Third party information sharing: professional supervision**

As a counsellor, I’m obliged to have professional supervision by another counselling professional, when I might discuss content of counselling sessions I’ve run. In that case, my Supervisor is bound by the same rules of confidentiality and I will keep the sharing of any identifying information that identifies individuals to a minimum.

1. **How I store your personal information**

I keep written notes from our sessions in a locked cupboard at my address. All notes are identified only with a client number, the key to which is kept on my password-protected laptop. All other personal information, such as contact details, emails, texts etc is kept on my laptop and mobile phone, password protected and accessible only by me.

* + For apple's GDPR policy relating to their products, see: <https://www.apple.com/legal/privacy/en-ww/>
	+ For Google's GDPR compliant security relating to my password-protected Gmail account, please see: <https://privacy.google.com/businesses/compliance/#?modal_active=none>
1. **How long I store your information**

Unless you withdraw your consent to hold your information, I’m obliged by my professional body to keep all client records, including contacts such as emails and texts f**or seven years**.

1. **Sharing your information with third parties: exceptions**

I will never share your information with any third party, unless the following issues apply, in which case I will ask for your consent to contact relevant professionals/organisations to ensure the safety of people involved:

* + **Child protection**: I am legally obliged to disclose ata about the welfare of a child where there is potential physical, mental, sexual abuse or serious neglect involving someone under the age of .
	+ **Court order**: I am legally obliged to share information I have about you, eg if a Court requires me to do so through a Court Order.
	+ **Risk to life**: I’m obliged by local and national safeguarding policies to share your information as needed to prevent serious dangereither
		- To yourself (eg through suicide). In this case, I would contact your GP to make sure that you were able to get all the support you need.
		- To other people you tell me about during our sessions where I feel concern for their safety
1. **Your data protection rights**

Under data protection law, you have the right to:

* + **Ask for copies** of your personal information that I hold
	+ **Correct** (‘rectify’) personal information you think is inaccurate and complete information you think is incomplete.
	+ **Ask me to delete** (‘erase’) – your personal information.

You don’t have to pay anything for exercising these rights. If you make a request, I’m obliged to complete the request within one month.

Please contact me at catherine@solutioncounselling.co.uk if you want to make a request.

1. **How to complain**

If you have any concerns about how I use personal information, you can make a complaint to me at catherine@solutioncounselling.co.uk.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office if you think your rights under GDPR regulation have been infringed or the processing our data doesn’t comply with the law.

ICO Helpline number: 0303 123 1113

ICO website: <https://www.ico.org.uk>

The ICO’s address:

Information Commissioner’s Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire, SK9 5AF

For any other questions, about how your data is processed or shared, contact me on catherine@solutionCounselling.co.uk or on 07980 595440.