

Cukula Counselling Privacy Policy

Cukula Counselling understand how important your privacy is. Cukula Counselling take care to maintain your confidentiality in accordance with current data protection laws (GDPR, 2018) and the ethical guidelines of British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy. These guidelines have been set up to protect your confidential material and ensure that your therapist always conducts themselves with professionalism and integrity.

In order to provide you with the best service possible, Cukula Counselling will hold your personal contact details and records of your therapy sessions. Please find below important information about how this information will be held and used.

Your personal information

We use the secure, encrypted and password protected hard drive to store your personal data. At the point of booking your initial consultation with Cukula Counselling, you will be asked for your personal contact information, for example your name, address, email address and telephone number and you may also choose to share details of the issues you are looking for help with.

Your contact information is stored securely and can only be accessed by staff at Cukula Counselling.

In order to be able to fulfil our duty of care to you, in your initial contact or first session, will ask you for contact information for your GP and elected Emergency Contact person. These details will be stored securely on an encrypted and password protected hard drive and will only be accessible to your counsellor.

This personal information will be held for the duration of your therapy. It will be kept for 7 years and then deleted

Please note that we will need to keep a record of your name and client reference number for seven years after the end of your therapy, so that we can respond effectively to any potential requests regarding your clinical notes and treatment.

We will never pass on your contact details to any third party organisations for the purposes of sales, marketing or research and will never use your personal data for any purposes other than the administration of the counselling service we are providing to you i.e. to arrange, cancel and rearrange appointments and collect payment for sessions.

Your payment details

All payments made via BACS. Therefore we do not hold your payment information.

Your therapy sessions

Everything that you discuss with your counsellor is confidential. Confidentiality will only be broken if there is concern about your safety or the safety of someone else or if we believe a serious crime is being committed such as terrorism, money laundering and drugs trafficking. We also will break confidentiality if we are instructed to do so by a Court of Law. We will always endeavour to speak to you about this first unless it places you at further risk

During remote working your counsellor will ensure that they are conducting online and telephone sessions in a quiet, private and confidential setting. We have selected video calling platforms that offer end to end encryption to ensure maximum privacy. Please note however that we cannot be held responsible for any breaches that occur due to failures in this technology.

Your counsellor discusses their clinical work with a supervisor. This is to ensure that they are offering you the best service possible. These conversations are bound by confidentiality and you will only be referred to by your first name.

Your counsellor will also keep notes of each session. These are anonymised and are stored on Google Drive. These notes are for your counsellor's use only and help to keep a track of everything that is being discussed. In line with industry guidelines, these notes will be kept securely for up to seven years after your therapy comes to an end. After this time, they will be confidentially destroyed.

If your sessions are paid for or arranged via a third party, (e.g. your employer, a friend, or a family member), other than payment requests, invoices or receipts your counselling information will not be shared. Details about what is discussed in your sessions will remain confidential between you and your counsellor. Any other information can only be shared if you provide your written consent.

Your communications with us

All of our email accounts use the secure GSuite server and are double password protected. If you send an email to your therapist's email address, only they will have

access to it.

All phones, tablets and laptops used to respond to your emails are encrypted, fully protected with anti-virus software and password protected.

Data Usage

We will only use your email address and telephone number to contact you about your appointments. Your counsellor may also contact you directly via email in order to share information with you that is pertinent to your therapeutic process.

Your phone number may also be used to issue appointment reminders via text message.

Your rights

Any personal data retained by Cukula Counselling is kept in accordance with the GDPR, 2018.

Under these guidelines you have the following rights

- The right to request access to your data

You can request to view the information that we hold about you (contact details, appointment logs etc.) at any time. If during counselling you would like to see your session notes, please make this request to your therapist directly. Should you require a copy of your notes after your therapy has come to an end you can make this request by emailing annie@cukula-counselling.co.uk or calling 07827 168 877

- The right of rectification

At any point during your time using our service or during the seven years thereafter, while we retain your records, you have the right to request amendments to your contact details or session notes. This right can be exercised either by speaking directly to your counsellor or by contacting us in writing.

- The right to be forgotten

You can request that we delete and confidentially destroy the information that we hold about you and your sessions at any time. This request can be made by contacting at annie@cukula-counselling.co.uk.

Instances where we would not be able to comply with your request are as follows:

- a) It is necessary for us to retain these records in order to continue providing an effective service

- b) We are compelled to retain these records by a Court of Law
- c) We require these records in order to establish, exercise or defend legal claims

Consent

When you book your first session with us, you will be asked to sign a consent form to confirm that you consent to the storage and processing of your personal data for the purposes of providing therapeutic services.

You are entitled to withdraw this consent at any time and can do so by emailing annie@cukula-counsellor.co.uk

Breaches of data protection

In the event of any breach of our data protection policies, we will notify you and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within 72 hours and will seek to rectify this immediately.

Raising concerns

Should you have any concerns about our data protection practices, you can raise these directly with your counsellor. You can also notify the Information Commissioner's Office. We are registered with ICO under the reference number C1296418.