

*Helen Rudinsky, MS*

## **Preparing for the First Session**

### Completing All Consent Forms

Please take time to fill out all forms 1-6. This will help you prepare for the session. Try to spend quality time on **Form 6-My Goals**. Think about why you are coming for counseling, and what you want to change. Please have all consent forms completed before the session and bring hard copies with you. Please become very familiar with **Payment Policies** and **Code of Conduct** and make copies for your own records.

### First Session—What to Expect

Sometimes people are nervous about their first counseling session. That is normal, but my goal is to put you at ease from the start.

### Individuals and Children

We will discuss the reason you came for therapy. Children are often asked to draw a picture of their family and house.

### Couples Counseling

To insure that couples sessions are a safe and nurturing place for both partners, the **Code of Conduct** of specific behavior is required. Each partner is asked to treat the other respectfully. Arguing is not allowed. Instead, we look at why you are arguing in the first place.

The session is a time to learn new ways to clearly communicate your concerns in a way that empowers you to get your needs met. Abusive behavior such as insulting, criticizing or blaming your partner is not allowed. Each partner is helped to learn healthy ways of speaking using “I” statements.

Couples will be asked to fill out short questionnaires and watch a 12 minute video to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their relationship to help them decide what their next step should be.

### Treatment Plan

The rest of the session will be spent looking at various options for treatment going forward and the goals desired to be achieved. Each person will be given an idea of the treatment plan and can decide if that is what he/she is looking for at this time. Each person will have the option of committing to a treatment plan, coming back for just a few sessions, or not coming back at all.

### Notebook and Folder

Clients are asked to bring a folder to organize forms and handouts, and a notebook for note taking and recording homework assignments

### Food and Drinks

Eating and drinking is not allowed during the session, so please eat before you come.

I look forward to meeting you soon!

Helen Rudinsky