



CONTACT

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CONSULTING CONTRACT

Welcome to my consulting practice. This document constitutes a partnership between us. Please read it carefully and ask any questions you have before you sign it.

The services to be provided by Dr. Sarah Sarkis are consulting or tele-consulting as designed jointly with the client.

Please consult the cancellation policy document for reference if you need to cancel or change the time of an appointment.

Payment for all consulting services with Sarkis Performance LLC. is to be made via Paypal.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONSULTING & PSYCHOTHERAPY

In addition to being a consultant, I am also a licensed psychologist in the states of Hawaii & Massachusetts, with training and experience in diagnosing and treating emotional problems. While there are some similarities between consulting and psychotherapy, they are very different activities and it is important that you understand the differences between them.

Psychotherapy is a health care service and is usually reimbursable through health insurance policies. This is not true for consulting. Both consulting and psychotherapy utilize knowledge of human behavior, motivation and behavioral change, neurobiology and interactive therapeutic techniques. The major differences are in the goals, focus, and level of professional responsibility.

The focus of consulting is development and implementation of strategies to reach client-identified goals to personal satisfaction. Within my consulting role I will often work with multiple members of a team, organization, or business. Additionally, I work with people in a group and individual environments, all in an effort to optimize performance and reach strategically targeted goals. Consulting may address specific personal projects, life balance, job performance and satisfaction, or general conditions in the client's life, business, or profession. Consulting utilizes personal strategic planning, values clarification, brainstorming, motivational counseling, positive psychology, and other counseling techniques.

The primary foci of psychotherapy are identification, diagnosis, and treatment of mental and emotional intersections. The goals of psychotherapy include alleviating symptoms, understanding the underlying dynamics which create symptoms, changing dysfunctional behaviors which are the result of these disorders, and developing new strategies for successfully coping with the psychological challenges which we all face. Psychotherapy patients are often emotionally vulnerable. This vulnerability is increased by the expectation that they will discuss very intimate personal data and expose feelings about themselves about which they are understandably sensitive. These factors give psychotherapists greatly disproportionate power that creates a fiduciary responsibility to protect the safety of their clients and to "above all else, do no harm."

The partnership between the consultant and client does not include the same level of intimacy and depth as patient and therapist. The client sets the agenda, and the success of the enterprise depends on the client's willingness to take risks and try new approaches. The partnership is designed to be more direct and challenging.

To this end, I will often push you to do, change, and behave in ways that are difficult or uncomfortable. That is part of the pace and rhythm of the consulting business versus the psychotherapeutic process, which can be meandering in ways that consulting does not afford. I will be direct and straightforward.

You are expected to evaluate progress and when consulting is not working as you wish, you should immediately inform me so we can both take steps to correct the problem. This is a partnership and as such, it is relational not contractual. If at any time you not feel you are getting value from our partnership, we can decide to either disengage amicably or intensify our work towards your desired goals.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important that you understand the differences between consulting and psychotherapy as it relates to confidentiality too. Please read this section carefully and follow up with me if you have questions or concerns.

As a licensed psychologist, I am ethically and legally bound to protect the confidentiality of our communications. This is a central and integral part of any successful therapeutic relationship. In my role as a therapist, I honor this boundary as a sacred dynamic between us that is unshakable except under very certain (and rare) circumstances. I will only release information about our work to others with your written permission or in response to a court order. There are some situations in which I am legally obligated to breach confidentiality in order to protect you or others from harm. If I have information that indicates that a child or elderly or disabled person is being abused, I must report that to the appropriate state agency. If a client is an imminent risk to him/herself or makes threats of imminent violence against another, I am required to take protective actions.

Here are some of the key ways that confidentiality is navigated differently as a consultant than a therapist. With consulting, I will very often know you and interact with you in multiple environments, not only in the confines of my therapy office. Furthermore, if we are targeting the design of your corporate culture, I will work with multiple key players on your team.

Additionally, while I will always keep confidential the specific targeted goals and areas of optimization we worked on, I may acknowledge to others outside of your organization, team, or business that I work with you as a consultant. As such, our “worlds” may interact socially, professionally, and otherwise in ways that I would avoid or discourage entirely in a therapeutic relationship.

Finally, as you are no doubt aware, it is impossible to protect the confidentiality of information that is transmitted electronically. This is particularly true of e-mail and information stored on computers that are connected to the internet, which do not utilize encryption and other forms of security protection. Please be mindful of the types of material you share with me via email, etc.

By signing this agreement, you acknowledge that you understand these differences and are comfortable with these nuances as they pertain to our partnership as consultant-client.

Name (Print)

Signature

Date