

INFORMED CONSENT:

Word Of Hope Ministries provides help from a trained, certified Biblical counselor, Ellen Castillo, to help you through your situational difficulties. In-person counseling is done in what Ellen calls a “hospitality model” of care (we will often meet in informal settings. Occasionally we might meet in a private casual church setting where available.)

Ellen also offers the option to receive counseling online, via Skype, Facetime, or similar. This is explained more thoroughly on the website, www.wordofhopeministries.com. If you would like either kind of help, please read this Informed Consent carefully, ask Ellen any questions you may have, and sign and date it before your first counseling session (you may do so electronically, or bring a signed copy with you).

There are several conditions upon which counseling cases will be initiated. They are listed as follows:

Ellen is a trained and certified biblical counselor. Because she is not medically trained or licensed, she considers her counseling as “lay-counseling.” The advice and counsel she gives will come from her understanding of the gospel, God’s Word, and the approach and methods from her training and ongoing education as a certified biblical counselor. She does not seek to replace medical care, proper diagnosis, or any form of medical advice. You are urged to be under the care of your physician with regular checkups, and she will refer you to your physician for anything potentially physiological that requires diagnosis and medical treatment.

All counseling is conducted in accordance with Ellen's understanding of Scripture. Your counseling will be biblical in which the Scriptures are the authority. This does not negate the need for some to also be under proper medical care for their struggles. Ellen is willing to work along with your medical team when appropriate.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Information disclosed in counseling sessions will be held confidential only as a biblical counselor believes the Bible or the State requires. In certain circumstances, the Bible requires that facts be disclosed to selected others (Matt. 18:15- 20), typically a pastor, elder, or other necessary support that may be needed. Ellen holds a high view of the local church, and her relationship with you is one way that she serves your church.

She will never disclose without your knowledge and you will be offered the opportunity to participate in that disclosure (usually for the purpose of assuring peacemaking and reconciliation where appropriate). If there is domestic violence or other crimes that need to be reported, she is obligated to do so. If she believes that you are in danger to self or others, she will report this to your family and other appropriate authorities. If she suspects child abuse or elder abuse, she is obligated to report to proper authorities.

If Ellen is counseling a minor, an adult parent or guardian must consent by signing below. She will use our best judgment about disclosing counseling session information to parents/guardians, sharing whatever is deemed important and necessary for their role as the authority and primary discipler of that minor. We consider ourselves as partners in caring for the minor, not a replacement for parenting. Parents should not portray counseling as punitive in any way, and must agree to trust the counselor's discretion and judgement while at the same time having full freedom to ask questions, participate in sessions if deemed helpful, and openly discussing the general progress being made in counseling.

IMPORTANT: Parents/guardians are to be nearby at all times while we are counseling a minor. We will do that in such a way that the minor has privacy in conversations. We will go over those logistics with you prior to seeing the minor.

LENGTH OF COUNSELING:

There is no required length of counseling relationships. Generally, you can expect at least 8-12 weeks of meetings with your counselor.

Each adult meeting will be 1-1.5 hours in length, so please be prepared for that. Children and teens will meet for one hour.

At any time during our time together, for reasons sufficient to himself/herself, the counselor—as also the counselee—shall have the option of terminating meetings.

LOCATION OF COUNSELING:

This will be determined by you and your counselor, who will explain your options before you sign this consent form. Please do not sign until we mutually agree on a location.

COST:

Each counseling session costs \$65.00. Please be prepared to pay in advance or immediately after your session. You may pay online on the website, or in person by check or cash or card. If you need the mailing address, please ask.

You will be charged the full session amount for any no-shows.

Please give a 24 hour notice if you must cancel, and you will not be charged.

There are currently no scholarships nor is there any free counseling available, but please ask Ellen for ideas if you are under legitimate financial hardship, to see if you can find options to cover your cost.

HOMEWORK:

Ellen will provide homework assignments that will assist you in your spiritual growth. If you are unwilling to do the homework assigned, our meetings will be terminated.

You may be asked to purchase a notebook or a study book or other resource for your homework. If there is a financial hardship, there are other options.

CONSENT:

I agree to adhere to the above requirements, and I give my consent for counseling with Ellen Castillo at Word of Hope Ministries.

NAME (parent if minor)

DATE