

Privacy Policy & General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

On 25th May 2018 it became a legal requirement under the **GDPR** (General Data Protection Regulation) 2016 for your counsellor/psychotherapist make clear to you their data processing procedure. Most importantly the GDPR made it a legal requirement for you to actively opt in and consent to these arrangements and the handling of your data.

I collect information for the purposes of running therapy whilst providing an ethical service in accordance with the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapist (BACP) Code of Ethics.

I abide by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and am the data controller and processor for Vanessa Zopp. You can find out more about the GDPR and the UK Data Protection Act from the ICO (Information Commissioner's Office) - <https://ico.org.uk/>

What information is collected

- Personal details, such as name, address, DOB, contact details, GP details. Such details will be kept separate from any therapeutic information.
- Therapeutic information, such as, background information, psychological and physical health, previous and current social and family circumstances during your appointments. Those may include personal information defined as 'special category data' such as your sexual orientation or behaviour. I also collect information when you voluntarily complete questionnaires.
- I also keep brief, minimal as possible session notes as per BACP good practice.
- Phone no., email address

Why this information is collected

I collect relevant personal information from clients as 'Legitimate Interest' as defined under GDPR.

- I collect clients details to enable a working record of contact information, in case of emergencies (explained below) and for the ongoing work to deliver the services that clients have requested.
- use the information to contact my clients as necessary in accordance with the services they have requested.
- I gather maintain my own accounts and records.

How this information is used

- Personal details are used for contacting you directly. I will be keeping your mobile number on my phone in case I need to contact you via text or call. I also store your e mail address in my contacts on my PC, tablet, and phone (unless you explicitly express that you do not want me to do so) and platforms I use for my work with you. My phone, PC, Tablet are all password and/or face recognition protected.
- I discuss aspects of my work in supervision with a supervisor who is a counsellor and psychotherapist. I will refer to you by your first name. The purpose is to ensure that my practice is safe, effective, in your best interests and as requested by my professional body as essential to ethical good practice. The information is treated with strict confidence and, in compliance with GDPR, your identity is protected, and any details that might identify you are not disclosed.
- I also produce invoices for remittance. I need to be able to provide you with an invoice, you need to specify whether you wish to receive a paper copy or whether I have your permission to email you the invoice electronically. Some clients do not require an invoice and are happy to just do a bank transfer. My invoices will only reference you by first name (and a combination of code/number) in order to keep your identity private. Where I am invoicing to a company, I will adhere to their GDPR policy.

How this information is stored, and how long

- I keep your information in paper and electronic files anonymised where possible and using client codes (combination of your initials and numbers) as identifiers.

- The information is stored behind lock and key and/or password/facial / fingerprint recognition protected. Your identifying personal information are kept separately from your record.
- I keep the information for 7 years, at which point it will be shredded or permanently deleted.
- Texts and Email Communications are regularly erased permanently.
- Website: none of your personal information is stored on my website, other than to momentarily collect & send it to my mail account for the purposes of our initial contact.

Sharing your information with third parties

I take confidentiality very seriously and I will not discuss with anyone what is said to me (unless you ask me so) with the following exceptions:

Supervision: I am required by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) to engage in regular supervision. You may be discussed during the supervision; however, your identity will remain anonymous. Clinical supervision is in place to ensure that your counsellor/psychotherapist is working ethically and safely, and to ensure that you receive the best practice. Your identity is not disclosed, and you will be referred with your first name.

Therapeutic will: your personal details may be passed on to my Therapeutic Executor so that they can inform you in case anything happens to me that prevents me to attend session and from communicating with you directly (death, illness).

Emergency: I am required to breach confidentiality by law if I assess that there is serious grounding to make me believe that there are severe life-threatening risks to you or others, or in cases in which children are put at risk (such as by sexual, physical abuse, neglect). I may disclose such information with the most appropriate person/body in the circumstances. If therefore an issue arises where I believe it necessary to disclose session content, because I feel that you are a danger to yourself or others, or if there is sufficient evidence to raise a concern of the health, welfare or safety of children or vulnerable adults, I will try to discuss beforehand. I will initially encourage you to contact an appropriate source of support/help. Yet, if I feel that you are unable to do so, I will have to make this contact myself. Whilst I will try to discuss this with you first before passing any information on to others and explain why I am taking this course of action; this might not always be possible.

Law I: Under the GDPR the counsellor/psychotherapist/supervisor also has a legal requirement to disclose data if you are involved in drug money laundering, planning terrorist's offences or if a Court Order has been made.

Law II Online Counselling: via email, text/message, and webcam, the police and other authorities can ask for access to an individual's email account or synchronous messaging account where there is suspicion of illegal or terrorist activities. They can also ask counsellors/psychotherapists for access to stored records. Counsellors/psychotherapists/ are not able to guarantee confidentiality in these circumstances.

Public Health - COVID: applicable for in-person sessions. Should you, another client, a person in the building, or I, the therapist, test positive for Coronavirus, then confidentiality will be broken if necessary, for reasons of public interest in the area of public health. I may need to share your name and contact details with the NHS/Track Tracer, who will contact you then to offer support and testing. However, there will be no information sharing about what you were doing and why you were in the premises. Where appropriate and possible I will try to discuss beforehand.

Risks

I want to acknowledge that electronic intrusion by the online communication provider is to some degree unavoidable when using any of the platforms or applications (e.g. Zoom, WhatsApp, Skype) that make online communications possible.

Apart from when you send me your application pack via protonmail, which I request you to do so for privacy, presently I am not using an encryption program for my email communication. This means they can be vulnerable to viruses and human error. Please be mindful of this when it comes to what information we might exchange through email and what material you chose to include in emails to me. Also, if you chose to email me please be aware that emails are retained in the log of Internet service providers which can make them vulnerable to viruses.

When sending mail/texts be aware that also phones there is always a possibility for confidentiality to be breached, for example shall my phone be stoles, even if it is locked by passwords or fingerprints, so you may wish to ask me to delete your communication after having read it.

Your rights and your personal data

Unless subject to an exemption under the GDPR, you have the following rights with respect to your personal data:

- The right to request a copy of your personal data which I hold about you;
- The right to request that I correct any personal data if it is found to be inaccurate or out of date;
- The right to request for your personal data to be erased
- The right to withdraw your consent to the processing of your data at any time
- The right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioners Office about the processing of your personal data: www.ico.org.uk although I trust that you will try to discuss with me in the first instance.

Session recordings

In my commitment to your confidentiality, I would also like to assure you that I will never record a video/phone session and I ask that the agreement is mutual unless we discuss and agree otherwise.

It is not permissible to publicise the content of our exchanges or share them with a third party using social media or other aspects of personal and public forums.

On social Media

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc). I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. I also believe that it is best if I learn about you and your life directly from yourself within the therapeutic context apart a few exceptions such as referrals.

Also, note that I will not follow you back or search for you online. I only follow other health professionals and I do not follow current or former clients. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

You are welcome to view my Facebook Page or Twitter share articles posted there, but I do not accept clients as Fans of this Page.

Changes to this policy

I keep this policy under regular review and this privacy policy was last updated on 15 August 2020.

Your signed consent acknowledges that you fully understand and accept the policy for records held by Vanessa Zopp and gives your consent to use of personal and sensitive personal data for the stated purposes.

(Please Print your name in BLOCK CAPITALS and then Sign and Date)

I, (name).....do consent to Vanessa Zopp recording, collecting, processing, and storing my personal data and have read and consent to both the contract and privacy statement information received.

Signed.....Date.....