

General Information & Informed Consent

The ethics codes of the organisations that I, Aernout Zevenbergen, am a member of (the Swiss Association for Counselling – SGfB, the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists – BACP, and the American Counseling Association - ACA), encourage counsellors to be transparent about the way they work.

Here below I will highlight the most important aspects of confidentiality and limits to confidentiality, competence and referrals, record-keeping, rates and payments, safe ways of communication in between sessions, and matters around distance counselling (via video link). I will also refer to the pages on [my website](#) where you can find copies of my degrees and certificates, as well as proof of affiliation to or membership of professional organisations.

Please read this document carefully. If you have any questions, you can raise them at any moment during our work together. Once you have read through the document, please sign the last page, and return that page to me prior to our second session.

Confidentiality & Record Keeping

The process of counselling is based on trust and confidentiality. Everything we discuss during counselling sessions and in electronic conversations is confidential. However, there are limitations to that confidentiality which you need to be aware of: in case you express a desire and intent to inflict harm to yourself, to others or to cause damage to property I am legally obliged to report this to relevant authorities. Safety is crucial to counselling.

It is standard practice for counsellors and psychologists to receive and provide peer-supervision. The purpose of this supervision is to share insights and knowledge, and to continue learning. I, too, partake in and/or receive (peer) supervision. As a rule of ethics, no identifying information of clients will ever be shared with supervisors: none will ever be asked, and none will ever be provided.

I will make notes during and after our sessions so I can design a plan for our interaction and to keep track of our progress. These notes will be stored in a secure location. Electronic storage devices where I might keep notes and where our emails are saved are encrypted.

You can rest assured that I will **not** search for you on any search engine (like google), or on social media at any moment before, during or after our work together. The only material that is relevant to our work together is what you choose to bring into our counselling sessions.

Distance Counselling & Confidentiality

You are responsible for making sure that you have privacy when partaking in video sessions or during telephone conversations with me. Keep in mind that public or free WiFi tends not to be secure/encrypted. In case of technical problems (line drop, device runs out of battery power, etcetera) I will try to call you on your phone to reschedule our session. Do please provide me beforehand with an emergency contact in the event of a crisis situation. As your counsellor, I may determine that due to

certain circumstances, distance counselling is no longer appropriate and that we should continue our sessions in-person. As my client, you too might wish to continue the work in-person. If I am unable to facilitate that, I will do my best to seek a fitting referral for you.

Competence & Referrals

Please note that I am a counsellor and not a psychotherapist; my services do not fall under what is generally understood to be psychotherapy; people I work with are *clients* and not *patients*. Counsellors address “the emotional, social, work, school and physical health concerns people may have at different stages in their lives, focusing on typical life stresses and more severe issues with which people may struggle as individuals and as a part of families, groups and organizations. Counseling psychologists help people with physical, emotional and mental health issues improve their sense of well-being, alleviate feelings of distress and resolve crises.” (Source: [the American Psychological Association](#))

The human mind and human consciousness are immeasurably vast, and the ways in which issues might arise in the course of our lives is incredibly diverse. I provide counselling in the fields in which I am trained and competent because you, the client, deserve professional services. If during our work together either you or I (or both of us) feel it might be helpful for you to find specialized intervention I will do my best to refer you to suitably qualified professionals. We can adjust the frequency of our interaction accordingly, or otherwise postpone or end it, if so desired.

Pausing or Terminating the Sessions

You are at any time at liberty to postpone or terminate our sessions. If you wish to pause our sessions, it would be wise to try set a date by which we recommence as a commitment to yourself and to the process of counselling. If you wish to terminate our work, I recommend to have one final session in which we can evaluate the work we have done together.

Rates & Payment

My standard rate is CHF 140 for a 60-minute session. I also offer 90-minute sessions at a rate of CHF 210. Payment can be in cash, with a debit or credit card, cheque, electronic transfer or by invoice. I will issue a receipt for cash or card payments at the end of the month, or latest at the start of the following month. Appointments that are cancelled less than 24 hours in advance will be charged.

If you are facing financial constraints, please know I can offer a so-called sliding scale. I will not ask for proof of such constraints and trust you to be sincere and genuine when requesting an adjusted rate. Do please mention this during or prior to our first session so we can agree on a fee that is realistic for us both.

Insurance Matters & Reimbursement

Please note: Medical insurances in Switzerland have very specific policies in regard to reimbursement of counselling services. On [my website](#) I explain the difference between counselling and psychotherapy. Do check beforehand the policy of your insurance company regarding possible reimbursement.

Making Appointments

You can make, cancel or reschedule appointments on [my website](#). New appointments are usually set at the end of a session. If you find you are unable to attend a session, I'd appreciate it if you would let me know at least 24 hours in advance, or cancel yourself on the page mentioned here above. I do charge "No show appointments".

Communication

You are always welcome to email me or call me. However, if such interactions occur frequently and take me longer than 15 minutes to respond, I will charge a fee in increments of 15 minutes based on the per hour rate. You can communicate confidential materials to my encrypted and secure email address: aernout@counselingmail.com. Do remember to always be conscientious when using computers, tablets or smartphones to which other people might have access.

Further Information: Credentials, Approach and Ethics

I refer to information available on my website for my [credentials and training](#), my [approach](#) to counselling, and the [ethics code of conduct](#) I adhere to as a member of the SGfB and of the BACP.



Full name :
Place :
Date :
Phone number :
Emergency contact (name) :
Their phone number :

Prior to our second session I have read and understood the document "General Information & Informed Consent", provided to me by Aernout Zevenbergen, MA, counsellor.

Signature