**Tides Counselling - Privacy Policy**

This privacy policy sets out your rights and my obligations in relation to the recording and storing of your personal information. Personal information is any information that can be used to identify you, such as your name, address, phone number and email address. The data controller for Tides Counselling who determines the purpose and means of processing your personal information is Amanda Sheridan. I am registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO).

**What laws protect my personal information?**

Under the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation, your personal information must be processed lawfully, fairly, and transparently, and be collected only for specified and legitimate purposes. This information must be adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary; accurate and up to date; kept in a form that allows you to be identified for no longer than is necessary; and processed securely.

**Why do you need to process my personal information?**

My contractual obligations to you as a counsellor are the lawful basis for processing your personal information, for example, so that I can assess whether I can offer you counselling and then so that I can provide effective counselling to you.

I am also likely to need to process some sensitive “special category information” about you, mainly information about your mental health, in order to fulfil my contractual obligations in providing you with effective counselling.

**How will you collect my personal information?**

I will collect your personal information on the phone, via this website, on Zoom, in writing, and in person during our sessions.

**How will you store my personal information?**

I will store your personal information electronically on devices that are password and fingerprint protected and in files that are password protected and only accessible by me. I will store your name and contact details separately from your additional personal information. I will also store information in paper records kept in locked storage, also in anonymised form and only accessible by me.

**How long will you store my personal information?**

I usually keep information for seven years after our last session. However, I may need to store information for longer than this to comply with my professional insurance.

**What type of information will you collect about me?**

When you visit my website, your I.P. address, location, search engine, date, time, web pages visited, operating system, and device will be collected. If you contact me using my web form, your name, email, date, and time will be collected. Before providing counselling to you, I will ask you for your name, phone number, address, availability, and details of why you are seeking counselling. Once you start counselling, I may collect further information from you, including details of what you would like to achieve through counselling, your GP’s contact details, current medication, support network, health issues, alcohol and drug use, family, employment circumstances, counselling you have had before, and previous criminal convictions.

**Who will my personal information be shared with?**

In very exceptional circumstances, I may share your personal information with others, including your G.P. or another healthcare professional. This could be, for example, because of the threat of severe harm to you or others, or to comply with a Court order.

**Can I have a copy of my personal information?**

Under the Data Protection Act, you may ask for a copy of the personal information I hold about you in a “subject access request”, and I must respond as soon as possible, usually within one month.

**Can I ask you to delete my personal information?**

You have the right to request that your personal information be deleted.  There may be an administrative charge for this. I may also have the right to refuse to comply with your request, for example, to comply with my insurance terms and conditions. I will let you know my response to your request within one month.

**Can I object to you processing my personal information?**

I hope that this policy reassures you that your personal information is secure, but if you have a concern about how I am handling your personal information, please tell me as soon as possible. I will do my best to resolve your concern. If you have any further concerns, you may contact the Information Commissioner’s Office. My ICO reference number is C1296468.