**Living Hope Christian Counseling (LLHC)**

**A Ministry of Crossroads Baptist Church**

\*\*PLEASE INITIAL WHERE INDICATED\*\*

Living Hope Christian Counseling is a ministry of Crossroads Baptist Church. We humbly thank you for giving us the privilege to journey with you during your time of need. We recognize our responsibility to God, to you and to the Church as we come alongside you to learn and grow together in God’ grace. Please take the time to read this short but important document that explains what you should know and expect while receiving Biblical counseling from Living Hope Christian Counseling.

**What is Biblical Counseling?**

Biblical counseling is a way of caring for you as we seek to understand your struggles. We will see how Christa and His gospel truths apply in deeply personal and specific ways to the realities of your life, so that you can live out the Gospel by faith in community, made possible through the power of the Holy Spirit. At Living Hope Christian Counseling, we believe the Gospel powerfully transforms our individual lives, our relationships, and the world. Please read what Biblical counseling is not:

1. Biblical counseling is not just quoting or prescribing Bible verses and asking you for more faith and effort.
2. Biblical counseling is not following a fixed paradigm of method and sequence, expecting the same “results” for each person.
3. Biblical counseling is not merely teaching Biblical principles in general, while ignoring the specific details of each person’s story.

**What to Expect from Biblical Counseling Versus Traditional Counseling:**

In traditional counseling, the term “counseling” has come to imply a cone-on-one “professional relationship” between a psychiatrist and a “patient” or “client”. Traditional “therapist” are typically licensed by a local or national accrediting body and are subject to the restrictions set by their licensing boards. Therapist usually meet with a “client” in an office setting, provide some form of psychological assessment using secular tools and DSM-5 criteria, set restrictions on personal interactions outside the office, deep a written record and charge a fee. LHCC provides trained but not licensed or traditional counselors.

Other expectations from LHCC Biblical Counselors include:

1. In most situations, basic notes may be taken, so that LLHC can better care for you through the details of your life.
2. LLHC does not conduct psychological assessments based on secular theory.
3. LLHC does not provide medical care or prescribe medications.
4. LLHC does not function as a crisis center. Should suicidal or homicidal risk emerge, the counselor will take necessary measures to ensure the counselee’s safety. This may include notifying the family, calling 9112, going to the emergency room for a psychological assessment or calling the Suicide Hotline at 988.
5. LLHC counselors are not able to represent a client in courts of law. If this is or becomes your intent, we will immediately refer you to other counseling options. Should one of our counselors receive a subpoena to appear in court, we will comply with the Georgia law, but we will terminate our counseling relationship immediately and refer you to another service.
6. LHCC does not charge for services.

**Biblical Counseling and Psychiatric Medication**

God Designed our body and soul to function in an integrated manner. Given the pervasive effects of living in a fallen world, we recognize there are times in which the body/brain does not function as God designed. In such cases, medical treatment and/or psychiatric medication may be necessary. We recognize that counseling approaches that discourage the use of psychiatric medication may prevent people from seeking treatments that are at times appropriate and necessary. Therefore, we are careful not to advise against the use of medication. We do not discourage or keep those requesting care from seeking help elsewhere.

**Counselor’s Limits of Confidentiality**

The Bible teaches that Christians should carefully guard any personal and private information that others reveal to them. Protecting confidences is a sign of Christian love and respect. It also encourages people to seek needed care. Since these goals are essential to the ministry of Living Hope Christian Counseling, all staff and counselors will respect the confidentiality of others. Those involved in counseling cases will carefully protect all information that they receive through the sessions and case management. **ALL COUNSELORS ARE MANDATED REPORTERS PER GEORGIA LAW AND AS SUCH, ARE REQUIRED TO DISCLOSE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IN ACCORDANCE TO THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:**

1. When we believe that the one receiving care could be in danger of harming themselves or others. INITIAL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. When we believe that there is ongoing abuse taking place-i.e. sexual, physical, domestic, child abuse, etc. INITIAL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. When a Living Hope Christian Counselor is ordered by a court of law to release the client’s information. INITIAL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. In the event a client discloses or is involved in activities that are detrimental to the ministry of Crossroads Baptist Church, our counselors are directed to disclose such information to the Senior Pastor for his review and guidance. INITIAL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. It is understood that the counselors are supervised by a Lead Pastoral Counselor. Please be assured that we will keep personal information confidential and will make every effort to resolve issues as privately as possible. LHCC cannot be responsible for any information shared to staff or others by the individual counselee. I hereby release LHCC and counselors from all liability resulting from any disclosure herein. INITIAL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Cancelling Appointments**

Please contact your counselor when needing to cancel an appointment. We ask that you give 24-hour notice, but we also know there are times when this is not possible. If you have scheduled an appointment but have not notified us of your need to cancel, we reserve the right to not reschedule you for any future appointments.

**Legal Release**

Your signature below serves as acknowledgement that you have read and understand the information contained in this document. As one receiving care:

1. I agree to receive Biblical counseling, knowing what it is and is not.
2. I understand I can choose other forms of counseling offered outside of Living Hope Christian Counseling.
3. Subject to the provisions of this Informed Consent form (including confidentiality), I am free to end my counseling sessions at any time.
4. The assigned counselor is free to terminate the counseling sessions at any time and/or refer the client to another facility.
5. To ensure my health and wellness, the assigned counselor at Living Hope Christian Counseling my refer me to another ministry leader, psychologist or psychiatrist.

**Authorization and Consent**

I acknowledge and understand that I take full responsibility for decisions made by me after this Biblical counseling session. I acknowledge and understand that I will not be under the care or custody of the Biblical counselor(s) for the church by obtaining Biblical counseling or by attending Biblical counseling sessions.

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Printed Name Signature

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Date Witness