



## General Information

Thank you for choosing Daymark Pastoral Counseling to provide counseling resources. It is my desire to provide the best care possible. To orient you to my procedures and policies the following information is provided.

1. **Training and Degrees** I (Betty Carter) am a Licensed Professional Counselor with a Master of Arts in Counseling (UAB) and Concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy. I use an integrated approach to counseling, grounded in the healing love of God and wisdom of Scripture while drawing on the most current research to treat trauma, anxiety, depression, relationship distress, OCD, faith struggles and other common problems. I have a Master of Arts in Counseling from UAB (2020), with a concentration in Marriage and Family Therapy. I also have certificates in basic EMDR, Gottman Therapy for couples and Emotion Focused Therapy. Before becoming a counselor, I served for 10 years as children's ministry director at a local church. I am happy to work with children (4 years and up) and adolescents as well as adults.
2. **Confidentiality:** All information disclosed within a counseling session is confidential and may not be revealed without your written permission, except for the purpose of supervision. If you choose to have Daymark Pastoral Counseling keep any other individual apprised of your progress in counseling, it will be necessary to complete a "Release of Information" form that will be kept on file. If you consent to the release of information to an attorney or law firm, Daymark will only produce your written records to that person or entity. Daymark's counselors will resist any subpoena compelling them to testify under oath in any legal proceedings about you or your counseling. If subpoenaed to testify in any legal proceedings, Daymark and its counselors reserve the right to object to the subpoena and to assert any applicable legal privileges. Without a properly executed release, everything about your visit will be held in strictest confidence with the exception of the following circumstances:
  - When a client intends to take harmful, dangerous, or criminal action against themselves or another individual
  - When a client or their family is likely to suffer threats, or the results, or harmful behavior
  - Where there is a reasonable suspicion of the abuse of elderly persons or the children under the age of eighteen
3. **Note-Taking and Record Keeping:** Counselors will have a file created in his, her, or their name(s) containing intake forms, signed consents and notes taken from and after sessions. The purpose of a file is to help the counselor remember relevant information and to carry out his/her responsibilities effectively and efficiently. Records will be created, maintained, stored, and disposed of in accordance with the law. All physical records will be kept in locked cabinets with counselor-only access and will be completely shredded 7 years after the last dated appointment.
4. **Forms of Communication:** Although I will do whatever is possible to maintain confidentiality, please be advised that email, phone, voicemail, fax communication, as well as conversations in other internet-based forms of communication are not necessarily secure.
5. **Counseling Orientation:** I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Alabama who has been trained in the best evidence-based practices available. The treatment methods I employ will vary depending on individual circumstances. Many problems stem from a breakdown in relationships and talking about these relationships may open levels of awareness that cause pain and anxiety as well as lead to changes that produce disruptions or turmoil in your present circumstances. If at any time you have questions or concerns about this process, please discuss them with me. I am a Christian and value the spiritual dimension of life. When appropriate, my approach to counseling utilizes prayer Scripture, and Christian values and perspectives to help the client (and family if applicable) deal with identified problems. You are entitled to receive information about my methods of counseling, the techniques used, and the duration of counseling (whenever possible). You may seek a second opinion from another counselor or terminate counseling at any time. Although the advice I provide is intended to be practical, it is entirely the Counselor's decision how to (and whether to) implement that advice. I (the Counselor) am not providing legal, tax, financial, medical or other technical or professional advice, and I undertake no duty to recognize or opine when such advice is needed.

6. **Appointments:** We will do our best to work with you to find an appointment time that suits your schedule. Please note that the office building doors are locked after 5:30 p.m. Counselors will be out to meet counselees for any appointments scheduled after that time. If you are late for any reason, you will receive the remainder of your scheduled time. This is necessary so we can see following patients at their scheduled time. Our cancellation policy is described separately. Two consecutive missed sessions without prior notice constitutes a termination of the counseling relationship.
7. **Emergencies:** Our office number (205-871-3332) is not an emergency number and Daymark Pastoral Counseling does not offer 24-hour crisis coverage. Therefore, the following procedure is to be followed if you experience a crisis:
  - a. Call 911 if you are in immediate danger
  - b. Call the local crisis center (205) 323-7777 or National Crisis Hotline 988 if you need to speak with someone immediately
  - c. Call your psychiatrist if you are under psychiatric care.
  - d. Leave a message with your Daymark counselor letting him or her know of the emergency and that you have already called placed a call to 911 or the crisis center and to your psychiatrist (if applicable).
8. **Calls to the office after hours:** Phone calls to your counselor in between sessions are generally discouraged. If a need arises outside of your scheduled appointment please email or call the office to check for appointment availability. Phone calls, which last longer than 10 minutes, will be charged at half of your hourly rate.
9. **Counseling Renumeration:** Below you will note our Sliding Scale that shows a suggested contribution for counseling services. If, because of extenuating circumstances, you are unable to contribute the amount indicated below, please discuss this with your counselor during your first appointment and we will work with you. Daymark Pastoral Counseling is a non-profit organization (501C3) that receives charitable contributions for the purpose of providing counselee scholarships and a sliding fee scale. When you make a counseling contribution you can do so by cash, credit card or check. If you use a check, please make your check out to Daymark. If you pay by credit/debit in the office, you will be charged a 3.95% processing fee. A receipt will be provided upon request whenever you make a payment.

**Sliding Scale for Suggested Contribution:**

Family Income:	0-\$70,000	\$70,001-\$85,000	\$85,001-\$100,000	\$100,001 or above
Counseling Fee:	\$85	\$110	\$130	\$150

**Please note:** To keep costs at a minimum we do not have a full-time secretary to make appointments and answer questions. As such, if you call the office, you may get voicemail frequently, but we will return calls as promptly as possible. Each counseling session will be 50 minutes so that each counselor has ample time to prepare between sessions.

My signature below acknowledges that I have read and been able to ask questions regarding the above information.

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Signature of Counselee

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Date