Privacy Notice

Who I Am

I am Vicky Williams, a counsellor registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) under registration number **ZC113165**.

If you have any questions about how your personal information is used, please contact me at **VickyCounselling@protonmail.com**.

What Information I Collect

I may collect and store the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number and email address
- Date of birth
- GP and emergency contact details
- Information relating to your health and wellbeing
- Assessment forms and counselling notes
- Appointment, communication and payment records
- Information you provide when submitting an enquiry through my website, including your name, contact details and the contents of your message

Some of the information I hold about you, particularly information relating to your health and wellbeing, is treated as sensitive personal information and handled with additional care in accordance with UK data protection law.

Where Information Comes From

Most of the personal information I hold is collected directly from you during the counselling process. Initial enquiries may be received through my website contact form, through third-party directories such as Counselling Directory, or by email and telephone before information is transferred into my practice systems.

Please avoid including detailed sensitive personal information within a website enquiry form where possible. More comprehensive personal information can be discussed during the assessment process or counselling sessions if counselling proceeds.

In some circumstances, information may also be provided by a GP, healthcare professional, family member or other third party, where you have given permission or where there is a legal or safeguarding reason for doing so.

Why I Collect Your Information

I collect and use your information to:

- Provide counselling services
- Arrange appointments and communicate with you
- Maintain appropriate clinical records
- Meet professional, legal and insurance requirements
- Protect clients and others where safeguarding concerns arise

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Lawful Basis for Processing

I process personal information in order to:

- Provide counselling services under our working agreement
- Meet legal and professional obligations
- Maintain appropriate clinical records
- Protect the vital interests of clients or others where necessary

Health-related information is processed in accordance with UK data protection law and the professional requirements of counselling practice.

Information submitted through website enquiries is processed for the purpose of responding to enquiries and taking steps at your request before entering into a counselling agreement where appropriate.

How Your Information Is Stored

I use secure digital systems to support my practice, including:

- **Kiku** for client records, appointments, invoicing and secure messaging
- **Proton Mail** for email communications
- **Microsoft Teams** for online counselling sessions where applicable
- **Wix.com Ltd** for website hosting and website enquiry forms

Reasonable steps are taken to protect your information through the use of secure systems, passwords and encryption where available. However, no electronic system can guarantee absolute security.

Who I May Share Information With

Your information will remain confidential except where:

- There is a serious risk of harm to yourself or others
- There are safeguarding concerns involving a child, young person or vulnerable adult
- I am legally required to share information
- Information is discussed anonymously within professional supervision or consultation
- It is necessary to protect your vital interests or those of another person

Where possible, I will discuss any disclosure with you before sharing information.

Data Processors

To support the running of my practice, I use carefully selected service providers who process information on my behalf, including:

- Kiku (practice management system)
- Proton Mail (email communications)
- Microsoft (Teams online sessions)
- Monzo (business banking and payment processing)

These providers are required to maintain appropriate standards of security and data protection.

How Long I Keep Information

In line with professional guidance and insurance requirements, client records are normally retained for **5 years** after counselling ends and are then securely destroyed.

Your Rights

Under UK data protection law, you have the right to:

- Request access to the personal information I hold about you
- Request correction of inaccurate information
- Request restriction of processing in certain circumstances
- Request information about how your data is used
- Request deletion of personal information where applicable
- Lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

Some rights may be limited where records must be retained for legal, safeguarding or professional reasons.

Complaints

If you have concerns about how I use your personal information, please contact me in the first instance.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk