

# William K McDonald PLC - Counseling & Psychotherapy

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## STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING FOR COUPLE THERAPY

Couple therapy begins with an assessment of the relationship past and present, the readiness of the couple for therapy, and their available resources - to “see whether or not we can work together.”

Information discussed in couples therapy is for therapeutic purposes and is not intended for use in any legal proceedings involving the partners. Therefore, we each agree not to subpoena the therapist to testify for or against either party or to provide records in a court action.

By entering into couple’s therapy, we accept that we both understand that working toward change may involve experiencing difficult and intense feelings, some of which may be painful in order to reach our goals.

The “Client” in Couple Therapy is *the relationship*, not each individual. Legally this means that any disclosure of information to an outside source must be released by both of us.

When the therapist sees either of us for individual sessions as part of couple treatment, secrets will not be kept and the therapist reserves the right to pass on information that furthers therapeutic goals.

There will be times when the therapist may appear to be on one or the other person’s specific side, but is actually working for the marriage/relationship. That’s why having *the relationship as the client* is so important.

It is not the work of the therapist to “save” our relationship, rather to help each become more conscious of what is going on in our relationship, and to make changes that will assist any ultimate decisions about the relationship. If one of us has already made a firm decision to leave the relationship, that will be stated clearly at the outset of the therapy.

If our relationship breaks up and either or both of us wish to re-contract for individual counseling, the decision with whom the therapist continues is at his/her discretion. In some circumstances a referral will be made.

Since session time is limited to 50 minutes, we will try to be concise in presenting our thoughts and feelings.

Therapy works best if we strive for closure in our communications - that is, a point of satisfaction that we have said what we need to say, and asked for what we need to ask for.

By our dated signatures, we agree to the above guidelines.

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date: \_\_\_\_\_

date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This agreement is in effect **January 1, 2014**  
and supersedes any previous agreements.*

File copy \_\_\_  
Copy to Couple \_\_\_