



4461 Buckingham Road Fort Myers, FL 33905

Consent to Biblical Discipleship Counseling And Release of Liability Form



What is Expected of You?

It is our (Lake Family Counseling and Buckingham Baptist Church) belief that change must begin with ourselves as we look to Jesus Christ for the power to change. Therefore, we ask you (counselee) to approach the counseling and encouragement process as an opportunity for personal change and spiritual growth. We ask that you refrain from the temptation of focusing on others, and instead we ask you to focus on what changes God desires to make in your life, in the midst of your circumstances. Be advised that you will be assigned “homework.” Homework is a vital part of the change process; therefore, completion of the homework assignments before your next session is expected.

CONFIDENTIALITY CLAUSE

Lake Family Counseling and Buckingham Baptist Church recognize that confidentiality is essential to an effective counseling relationship. With a few exceptions, everything you share throughout your counseling, including your identity, is confidential. Further, state and federal laws establish rights to confidentiality.

- 1) Absolute confidentiality is not scriptural. In certain circumstances the Bible requires that facts be disclosed to select others (Matthew 18:15ff). In these areas we follow the guidelines of the Bible, and of the state.
- 2) The privacy and confidentiality of our conversations and records are a privilege of yours and are protected by our ethical principles in all but a few circumstances. BY LAW, there are certain situations in which information about individuals undergoing counseling may be released with or without their permission. These situations are as follows: (Romans 13:1-3)
 - Where it is suspected that children are physically abused, neglected, or sexually abused;
 - In emergency situations where it is proven that there may be danger to the counselee or others, as with homicide or suicide, confidentiality may be broken;
 - If a court of law issues a legitimate subpoena relating to a child abuse case, we are required by law to provide the information specifically described in the subpoena;
 - If an unreported life-threatening felony has been committed, we are required by law to report it to the police.

- 3) We reserve the right to consult with others or appropriate church ministry staff members regarding your sessions. This consultation will be held in the same level of confidence as your sessions by using generalizations and absolutely no personal information will be discussed unless absolutely necessary. This may involve issues such as:
- Church discipline matters
 - Seeking wise counsel to help address the matter in a thorough manner.
 - Reporting to other leaders on the status of counseling when necessary and appropriate (i.e. counseling a children's Sunday school teacher may require reporting to the director of that ministry).
 - Training of other counselors to learn how to handle cases of the same nature. No training will be conducted without prior consent from the patient to allow an observer in the room.
- 4) Parental involvement is often a source of concern. Many children desire to be able to experience a judgement free environment. As parents, we want so badly to help. However that desire to help can be misunderstood by the child as controlling. Keeping in mind that as a child grows, they are faced with trying to become their own person, and this push toward individuality makes confidentiality such a tricky issue. At Lake Family Counseling, our goal is to foster strong family relationships. For the benefit of the child that is being counseled, we request that parents honor the client's privilege to express their emotions without fear of betrayal. In return, we promise to do everything we can to keep you informed should there be anything of major concern. We try to follow the following guidelines:
- Should safety be a concern, confidentiality may be broken with or without permission of the client.
 - Under certain conditions, the counselor may encourage the child to discuss things with their parents. After a period of time, the counselor may request a session with child and parent to provide a controlled setting for a discussion to take place. The purpose of healing will always be the top priority.
 - Both parents and children must be made aware that the counselor will always do what they feel is best for the situation. Discussions of confidentiality will be had, and if a mutual agreement cannot be made, the counselor, or the family have the right to excuse themselves from further engagement.

Resolution of Disagreements

If a dispute should arise between the counselee and the counselor regarding the session or the counselor's advice or conduct, one should bring this dispute to the attention of the deacons of Buckingham Baptist Church. If the dispute cannot be resolved at this level, all parties agree to resolve such dispute by submitting to the outlined procedures for matters of discipline found in Matthew 18:15ff for final resolution and conciliation. In church matters, both the counselee and the counselor agree **not** to take church matters to any secular court system. (1 Corinthians 6:1-7) but to seek restitution within house except in areas of a legal issues (i.e. sexual, abusive, or other illegal actions). We take very seriously the ethical and moral integrity of our counseling, and as such hold ourselves to the highest standards.

Furthermore, we both agree that counseling is not a one size fits all approach. The counselor can only give advice. It is up to the counselee to accept and apply said advice. It is also up to the counselee to communicate any issues, misunderstandings, and disagreements so the counselor can do their best to explain reasons or seek another course of action. Open communication is a must for both parties to be able to have a successful and productive relationship.

Waiver of Liability

The undersigned counselee, having sought biblical discipleship counseling as adhered to by Lake Family Counseling, LLC (LFC) and Buckingham Baptist Church (BBC), hereby acknowledges their understanding of the above stated conditions and therefore releases from liability the BBC and LFC and any/all participating churches, pastors, agents or employees, from a claim or litigation whatsoever arising from the undersigned's participation in the above-mentioned biblical discipleship counseling ministry.

It is further understood, in consideration for receiving any form of counseling from the BBC and LFC, the person (counselee) receiving the counseling agrees to release and waive any and all claims of any kind against the ministry, the staff, the pastoral/lay counselors or any participating church, which may arise from, result out of, or be related to conduct or advice/counsel given. Additionally, all counsel provided in BBC and LFC is provided in accordance with the biblical principles adhered to by BBC and LFC and is not necessarily provided in adherence with any local or national psychological or psychiatric association.

That the undersigned agrees that he/she has read and thoroughly understands and agrees to what is expected of them, the confidentiality clause, the resolution of disagreements, BBC and LFC's policy for counseling that is found on our website, and the contents of the waiver, and now willingly (without any coercion) consents to and requests said biblical discipleship counseling from BBC and LFC biblical discipleship counseling ministry.

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) _____

at _____. (County) _____

Signed Name _____

Printed Name _____

Signed Name _____

Printed Name _____

IF CLIENT IS A MINOR

Parent Signature _____

Parent's Printed Name _____