

ALPHA MINISTRIES
BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER
POLICIES

BIBLICAL COUNSELING PHILOSOPHY

- The God of the Bible is the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of the universe.
- Man was created in God's image as a responsible being.
- Sin, which is thinking or acting independently of God, results in misery both temporal and Eternal.
- The Bible is the only complete and authoritative textbook which was written specifically to provide both the answers to man's behavioral problems and the means for man's behavioral changes.
- Apart from organically-caused factors, all of man's voluntary thought and behavior is moral, for which man is responsible before God and neighbor.
- Every functional behavioral problem which man experiences is a result of failure to love God or man or both as the Bible says he should.
- Regeneration by the Holy Spirit is a prerequisite for biblical change and obedience on the part of the counselee.
- The only behavioral changes in man which are pleasing to God and are ultimately beneficial to man are those which are effected by means of the Holy Spirit applying the Word of God in sanctifying power to the will and mind of the counselee in accordance with biblical methods and directives.
- All methodology must grow out of Biblical principles and practices.
- Counselors (and counsees) should expect and see results from Biblical counseling.
- Biblical counseling requires and includes church discipline where it is Biblically necessary. Thus Biblical counseling should ultimately be done under the local church.
- God requires and equips all believers to counsel. Additionally, God holds the officers of His church responsible to counsel as a part of their life calling.

COUNSELING POLICY

APPOINTMENTS: There may be a waiting period for an appointment to see our counselors. Each session lasts approximately fifty minutes. Managing appointments can be one of our most serious problems. We request that if you cannot keep an appointment, you notify us at least 36 HOURS IN ADVANCE. Keeping your appointment or calling in advance is very important for three reasons. First, failure to keep an appointment wastes the counselor's time. The Bible holds us accountable for our management of time. Second, we usually have people on standby waiting to come in should we have a cancellation. Third, we will be most likely to reschedule those people who have been faithful in keeping their appointments.

The normal session fee of \$75.00 will be charged for missed appointments without any notification at all. A \$35.00 fee will be charged for canceling an appointment within less than 24 hours. You may leave a message on the answering machine to cancel or reschedule should no one be available to speak with you personally. We will make every effort to work with you in rescheduling your appointment if necessary (provided we are given sufficient notice to do so.)

Child care is your responsibility as we do not provide assistance in this area. Also, children are not allowed in counseling sessions, unless requested, as they may hinder the effectiveness of the session.

If a female is to be counseled one on one in the evening, she must arrange to bring a chaperone with her.

ALPHA MINISTRIES
BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER
POLICIES

CHARGES/PAYMENTS:

- The counseling fee is \$75.00 per session. (All fees are prepaid)
- Counseling charges should be paid in full after the session unless other arrangements have been made. If you are not able to pay in full, please discuss this with the administrative assistant **before** your session. **You will also be required to purchase any books or tapes the counselor has assigned.**
- A statement of your account will be provided upon request.
- Returned checks will be resubmitted automatically.

HOMEWORK:

Homework is a very important part of the biblical counseling process. Homework is somewhat unique to biblical counseling and it is one of the reasons why this type of counseling is so effective. It continues the counseling process between sessions and teaches you how to find your own help for the future. Therefore, you will be required to spend a minimum of three to four hours per week on homework. When done consistently, the work you do at home will speed up the counseling process, saving you time and money. Homework can include reading material, cassette tapes, lists/logs, Bible studies, as well as practical assignments such as practicing techniques of communication or holding family conferences. Depending on your reason for counseling, your counselor will design your homework for you. The continuation of your counseling will depend on your effort and commitment to complete the assigned tasks.

LOCAL CHURCH INVOLVEMENT:

In order to achieve lasting Biblical change over the problems of life, it is vital that you become established in a consistent Christian walk. The Lord has provided the local church to assist in this process. *If you are not consistently involved in a local church, we will strongly encourage you to attend at least one service a week at Sherwood Baptist Church.* As we have previously stated, if you are part of a local church on a *consistent* basis, the assistance of your church's leadership is requested so that you may more fully receive the benefit of all the spiritual resources given to you by God. *BCC reserves the right to evaluate a continuing counseling relationship on the basis of your commitment to faithfully attend (at least one time per week) your local church services.*

TELEPHONE COUNSELING:

Your counselor will not normally be available for telephone counseling due to their scheduled appointments. If you do have an emergency, please talk with the administrative assistant and if she cannot help you, the counselor will return your call as soon as possible. If no one is in the office, please leave a brief message on the answering machine so the administrative assistant can return your call. There will usually be someone to answer you call personally between 9:30 am and 3:00 pm. Please do not be discouraged if your counselor does not call you back on the same day. Thank you for your understanding in this area.

AFFILIATION:

The Biblical Counseling Center is in the process of becoming a training facility and also being certified by the National Association of Nouthetic Counselors. There may occasionally be a counselor-in-training asked to

observe your counseling session as part of their required training. If the counselor desires to have a counselor-in-training sit in on a session, the counselor will notify you beforehand.

By signing pages 3& 4; you indicate your willingness to abide by the terms of this agreement.

**ALPHA MINISTRIES
BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER
PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT**

The counseling which you will receive from the Biblical Counseling Center involves a fee of \$75.00 per counseling session or premarital package cost _____. We ask your assistance in carrying out your financial responsibility to this ministry. If you have financial needs please let the administrative secretary know.

-

“I, _____

(Clients; Please list all names on above line)

have read the policy information provided to me. I understand that it is my responsibility to pay for the counseling and materials that I receive from Biblical Counseling Center. I understand that it is my responsibility to communicate to my pastor the BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER staff’s desire for my church's involvement in the counseling process and if possible, to assist in covering the costs associated with counseling. I understand the procedure for rescheduling appointments and the fees associated with missed or late cancelled appointments. I also understand the necessity to complete homework assignments and faithfully attend my home church while receiving this counseling.”

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

ALPHA MINISTRIES
BIBLICAL COUNSELING CENTER
CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

The undersigned are presently involved in counseling or are seeking counsel with the staff of Biblical Counseling Center.

We acknowledge that according to the policies and practices of Sherwood Baptist Church and Biblical Counseling Center, confidentiality cannot be granted in all situations. If a threat of physical harm or report of criminal activity is made, appropriate civil authorities **may have to** be notified. Also, if there is ongoing and unrepentant grievous or aggravated sin in the life of one of its counselees, the counselors of Biblical Counseling Center reserves the right to contact the church authorities of the counselee's church.

a. 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 (see Matt. 7:12). It also discourages harmful gossip (Proverbs 16:28; 26:20), invites confession (see Proverbs 11:13; 28:13; James 5:16), and encourages people to seek needed counseling (see Proverbs 20:19; Rom. 15:14). Since these goals are essential to the ministry of the gospel and the work of this counseling center, all counselees are expected to refrain from gossip and to respect the confidences of others. In particular, our counselors shall carefully protect all information that they receive through counseling. When a pastor or counselor is uncertain of how to counsel a person about a particular problem, he may refer such person to (or seek the advise of) another biblical counselor.

b. Although confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the pastors or counselors of this church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:

1. When the person who disclosed the information or any other person is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (see Proverbs 24:11-12).
2. When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (see Matt. 18:15-20 and/or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies within the counselee's church. (See, e.g., Rom 13:1-5).
3. When required by law to report suspected child abuse.

We understand the confidentiality provisions as described above and agree to abide by their terms and admonitions.

Signed _____

Date _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Signed _____

Date _____

