

INFORMED CONSENT

Accountability

As a counselor at DBCC, I am accountable to the pastors at Inter-City Baptist Church (ICBC). You are encouraged to contact one of the pastors of ICBC if you have questions or concerns about what I do. Any DBCC counselors who are also active members of the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (ACBC) are accountable to the executive board of ACBC. You are encouraged to contact ACBC if you have questions or concerns about what about ACBC members do (<https://biblicalcounseling.com/about/contact/member-complaint-case-policy/>). If you have any reservations about this, I would be happy to discuss them with you. You are of course free to decide if you would rather not have me be your counselor under these circumstances. I reserve the right to make the pastors of ICBC and/or the executive board of ACBC aware of any counseling situation with which I am involved.

The Nature of Counseling with Me

I believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ is what will ultimately change how a person responds to the difficulties of their situation. You should expect my counseling to be shaped by a God-centered view of human life as found in the Christian Scriptures. This biblical view will take seriously the physical, social, and developmental aspects of your difficulties while calling you to make changes in your thinking and behavior.

I believe that people's souls are built up as they grow in their relationship with God. This process doesn't happen apart from a person's personal effort to seek Him. Expect that I will recommend that you engage in some spiritual practices to enhance your relationship with God. If necessary, depending on the need, I may refer you to another professional who has more expertise than I.

You will likely be asked some questions about your past, present, family, church, social relationships, and spirituality to get to know you better. You do not have to answer any questions and can finish a session whenever you wish. Sessions will typically last about an hour.

Confidentiality

It is assumed that everything that is said to me will remain confidential with the following exceptions. Circumstances under which I may need to communicate to others regarding our counseling sessions include (but are not limited to): 1) A counselee indicates an intention to harm him or herself or someone else; 2) A counselee has committed sexual or physical abuse; 3) A counselee has engaged in repeated, ongoing serious immorality (e.g. adultery) that might require the involvement of one's church; 4) The counselee is a minor and I believe it is in the best interest of the child to disclose information to the parent(s) or guardian(s); 5) I need the counsel of an ICBC pastor or the director of DBCC as to how best direct you biblically; 6) A court of law requires the release of information given in our sessions; or (7) any session which involves a third party who is not a representative of DBCC.

At DBCC, we regularly train others in the ministry of biblical counseling. Toward that end we seek to provide opportunities for counselors-in-training to observe live counseling sessions. There may be a counselor-in-training present for your session. This counselor-in-training is bound by the same confidentiality agreements as your biblical counselor. In addition to counselors-in-training, I may involve other people in the counseling session (e.g., an advocate for you, my spouse, etc.). Each third party presence is required to observe the same confidentiality requirements as I.

Mandatory Reporting

Based on Michigan Compiled Law 400.11a, we are required to report the following situations:

- Suspected abuse or neglect of a child

- Suspected abuse or neglect of an adult who is unable to protect himself or herself

Your Rights

As a counselee you have the right to discuss possible outcomes and challenges regarding the counseling and receive an estimate of the predicted length, goals, and outcome of the counseling, as well as alternative options to that counseling. You have the right to ask about and/or refuse any techniques used. You are encouraged to report to a pastor of ICBC, the board of ACBC, and/or the appropriate authorities if you have any grievances regarding the sessions. You may conclude meeting with me at any time.

As a counselee, I understand the following:

1. My DBCC counselor is not practicing at DBCC as a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist. I agree not to expect or rely on the application of any rules or regulations issued by the state of Michigan for professional counselors or interns.
2. My DBCC counselor counsels from a Christian framework as described above.
3. All counseling is confidential with the exceptions noted above. I agree not to expect strict confidentiality, but to expect that my DBCC counselor will exercise his or her discretion based on what he or she believes is in my best interest in determining whether to communicate what we discuss to others.
4. I am free to end the counseling at any time.
5. My DBCC counselor or DBCC is free to end the counseling at any time.
6. Before concluding counseling permanently, I may be referred to another counselor.
7. If I have any concerns about the counseling, I am free to contact one of the pastors of ICBC, the board of ACBC, and/or the appropriate authorities.
8. I will appear timely for my counseling sessions.
9. I will give DBCC at least 24 hours prior notice before canceling an appointment.

I have read this form and the above conditions and understand the nature of this counseling and agree to abide by the conditions.