



# PASTORAL COUNSELING INFORMED CONSENT

Counselee - Please Print Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## OUR PHILOSOPHY OF COUNSELING

At Meadowbrook Church (MBC), our mission and vision are to “*help people move from where they are to where God wants them to be.*” We have multiple steps you can take: Sunday Services, New Life, Baptism, Growth Track, Small Groups, and Dream Team. Each of these steps is an opportunity for us to come alongside you and help you as become a follower of Jesus and grow spiritually.

Another step that can be integrated at any time during your spiritual journey is pastoral counseling. Our MBC Care & Support Team will help you navigate the process, and our Pastoral Team will provide you with a safe and loving space to process the complexities of life.

At MBC, we believe the Word of God contains everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). We also believe that prayer is effective and powerful and releases the power of God on your behalf (James 5:16-17). As you walk through your counseling journey at MBC, your pastoral counselor will help you integrate Biblical truth, prayer practices, and holy habits that lead you toward a Spirit-led life and inform every decision you make – leading you toward a life that is happy, stable, fruitful and blessed.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) *I understand that my pastoral counselor will provide Biblical counseling. We will discuss spiritual practices such as prayer, meditation and scriptural awareness and integrate spiritual disciplines into every step of the counseling process.*

## GOALS, RISKS and BENEFITS

Counseling is hard work. As you and your pastoral counselor build rapport, you will have to take risks in order to grow. This often looks like remembering painful memories, allowing emotions to come to the surface, admitting sin and practicing vulnerability (Proverbs 28:13). Rest assured, you will be met with compassion and the posture we take is non-judgmental. However, the expectation is growth and growth requires effort and change (John 15:2). The benefit is this: as you do the hard work, God will heal and transform you, changing you from the inside out. As you seek God and move toward a Spirit-led lifestyle, God will help you, strengthen you and show you the path of right living (Proverbs 4:18).

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) *I understand the goal of counseling is to address personal issues that may be difficult to discuss and painful.*

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) *I commit to integrating the spiritual habits and practices my pastoral counselor and I discuss as life strategies.*

## LENGTH OF COUNSELING

The length of counseling varies with each individual. At MBC, our heart is to care and support you in every season of life. Our counseling process follows a model of 3 to 6 sessions. As we spend time with you, we may recognize that we need to refer you to a professional counselor outside of our organization. If we do this, we will prayerfully consider the right fit for you and help you find the help you need.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) *I understand that there are times and situations where MBC may need to refer me to someone else.*

## YOUR CARE PLAN

Care works best in community! With this in mind, we will develop a Care Plan that is unique to you. Once your Care Plan is in place, there will be additional people invited into your healing journey as we endeavor to provide the highest level of support we can. These people may be other pastors at MBC, ministry leaders, dream team leaders, small group leaders, and sometimes close family and friends. And you have a role to play, too! Your Care Plan will have action steps for you and for us as we work together to provide continuity of care.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) *I understand that my healing and restoration will include others and that I will have to commit to being actively engaged in the process.*

## LIMITED CONFIDENTIALITY WAIVER

While our goal is to create a safe space of mutual trust and confidentiality, there are circumstances where we may offer limited confidentiality. Limited Confidentiality includes, but is not limited to, the following circumstances: harm to oneself or harm to others, child safety, child or elderly neglect, or the safety of our staff team. In these situations, we waive the promise of confidentiality because we value safety for all parties involved. In the event we find it necessary to waive confidentiality, we may communicate with the MBC Executive Team, other staff pastors, family members, spouses, caretakers, the appropriate law enforcement agencies, or healthcare entities if we deem intervention is a necessary next step.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) *I understand that it may be necessary for my counselor to practice Limited Confidentiality if my safety or someone else's safety is at stake.*

Our counselors keep pertinent notes about each session for future reference. This helps with continuity of care. These notes are the property of MBC.

\_\_\_\_\_(initial) *I understand that my counselor will write a brief overview of each session in order to provide me with ongoing care.*

Distance counseling is a form of counseling that uses multi-media to meet. These types of sessions can happen over the phone, through emails, texts, or in chat spaces such as Zoom or Google Meet. It can be a useful tool but confidentiality is limited. Our pastoral counselors will

always take steps to remain in a space that offers the best confidentiality possible while you are responsible to maintain confidentiality in the environment you are in.

\_\_\_\_\_ (initial) *I understand that confidentiality is limited with distance counseling, and it is my responsibility to ensure the confidentiality of my own environment.*

**SIGNATURE**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) have read the above information and understand the contents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date