



Kim Sturgeon
Counselling & Psychotherapy

PRIVACY POLICY

Introduction

The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** is a legal framework that sets guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information from individuals. As I collect and process personal information from you, I have a legal obligation to comply with this framework and manage your information responsibly. As such, I am registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) (registered no ZA688679).

What information do I collect?

When initial contact is made, I ask you to provide me with your name, telephone number, email, location, and a brief summary of what it is you are looking for help with. This information is required so that I can communicate with you. I may then request information such as your availability, and other information related to organising an initial appointment.

At an initial appointment I may ask about your current personal, social, medical and financial circumstances. I may also ask about your background and family history, as well as the issues which are affecting you now. I require this information to inform my decision on whether I am able to work safely and ethically with you.

Following our initial appointment, I ask you to complete a form which asks for further information such as your address, the name of your GP and surgery, a name and contact number of your next of kin, details of any medical conditions and any medication that you are currently prescribed. I collect this information for safeguarding purposes. I also ask that you sign a two – way agreement between you and myself prior to commencing sessions. This is to ensure that you know what you can expect from me as your counsellor/ therapist and agree to these guidelines.

All personal information is stored securely in a locked filing cabinet which is only accessible to me.

Following our sessions, I will write case notes with basic information about each session such as details of when the session took place and main themes that arose. These notes are coded and stored digitally on a password protected computer.

Unfortunately, the transmission of information via the internet is never completely secure. Although I will do my best to protect your information, I cannot guarantee the security of your data transmitted to me via email, including forms completed on my website which are also transmitted by email. This is at your own risk. If you have any concerns, please don't hesitate to discuss this with me.

Sharing your personal data

Your personal data will be treated as **strictly confidential**. The exceptions to this are:

- If there are safeguarding concerns – ie contact with your GP if I feel that there is imminent risk of harm to yourself or others
- If I am required by law to disclose information related to a serious crime

Your rights

You have the right to ask me to provide a copy of the information held by me, and the right to require me to correct any inaccuracies in your information. You also have the right to ask that your information is erased where it is no longer necessary. You may withdraw your consent for me to hold and process your information at any time. However, your counselling would have to end. If you would like to do this, please contact me using the contact information below. Unless you make a request for your information to be erased, I will store your data for 5 years from the date that our counselling agreement ends.

Questions or concerns

If you have any concerns, would like to make a complaint related to the collection or processing of your information, or would like to request that your information is erased, you can contact me via:

Mobile: **07923601626**

E-mail: kimsturgeon@protonmail.com

You can also make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office at:
<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>