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What is Feminist Therapy, and how might it shape your experience of therapy with me?

The words *feminist* or *feminism* can sometimes feel polarising or be misunderstood. You may already have ideas about what they mean, or assumptions about what working with a feminist therapist might involve. To support clarity and comfort, this handout explains what feminist therapy looks like in my practice and what you can expect from our work together.

A person-centred, socially aware approach

Feminist therapy is a person-centred, politically informed approach that understands each person's wellbeing as inseparable from the world they live in. Our experiences are shaped not only by our biology and personal history, but also by our relationships, communities, cultural messages, and the wider sociopolitical environment.

This means that distress is not viewed as a personal failure or a sign of pathology. Instead, it is often a completely understandable response to difficult, unjust, or oppressive experiences.

I do not subscribe to approaches that pathologise human suffering or reduce people to diagnoses. My work is grounded in social constructivism and anti-oppressive practice.

“The personal is political”

You may not think of yourself as political, and therapy with me will never require you to be. However, feminist therapy recognises that many of our “personal” struggles—such as domestic labour, childcare, relationship dynamics, identity, or self-worth—are shaped by broader systems of power. What feels private or individual often has social roots.

Understanding this can reduce shame, increase compassion for yourself, and open up new ways of making sense of your experiences.

A collaborative, egalitarian relationship

You are the expert on your own life. My role is to notice, reflect, and explore your narratives, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours alongside you. Therapy is a collaborative partnership, not a hierarchy.

I may offer gentle challenge at times to support deeper understanding or to widen perspective, but always with care and with your goals at the centre.

I also acknowledge that therapy naturally contains power dynamics—such as the financial contract, the sharing of personal information, and the role of “seeking help.” Rather than ignoring this, I name it and work with it openly so that our relationship can feel as equal and transparent as possible.

Thoughtful therapist self-disclosure

As a feminist therapist, I sometimes use carefully considered self-disclosure. This might involve sharing something about myself to normalise your experience, or reflecting on my experience of our relationship to support insight and connection.

I do this with intention, and always check with you about whether it feels helpful. You are involved in the process, and we explore together how it impacts you.

Feedback is welcome and encouraged

If I say something that feels off, uncomfortable, or potentially oppressive, I want you to tell me. Feminist therapy values accountability and repair. Your feedback helps me adjust, learn, and better support you.

Empowerment and agency

A core aim of feminist therapy is empowerment. I support clients to recognise their strengths, build agency, and become active participants in shaping their lives—not simply adjusting to unequal or limiting circumstances.

Intersectionality matters

Feminism has evolved far beyond its early focus on (primarily white) women. My practice recognises that identities such as race, gender, sexuality, disability, class, and culture intersect to shape lived experience. These intersections can create unique forms of oppression or resilience, and they are central to how we understand your story.

Commitment to social change

Where possible, I use my voice to advocate for social change, challenge stigma, and support environments where people can feel safe, valued, and understood. You will *never* be pressured to take part in activism or speak out yourself. Therapy is your space, and your choices guide our work.

Feminist therapy supports people of all genders

Feminist therapy is not “therapy for women.” It challenges restrictive social structures—such as patriarchy—that limit all of us. Many men find feminist therapy helpful in

exploring identity, emotional expression, relationships, and the pressures of gendered expectations.

In summary

Feminist therapy in my practice means:

- Your experiences are understood within the context of your life and the world around you.
- You are treated as the expert on yourself.
- Power dynamics are acknowledged and worked with openly.
- Your voice, agency, and strengths are central.
- Oppression, inequality, and social context are taken seriously—not ignored.
- Our relationship is collaborative, reflective, and grounded in respect.

If you ever have questions or concerns about this approach, we can explore them together. Therapy is a space where curiosity, honesty, and dialogue are always welcome.