



Office Policy and Disclosure Statement

Burgess & Gugger, PLLC
3503 N. Cheyenne Street
Tacoma, WA 98407
(253) 240-0625
parke@parkeburgess.com

Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC)
Washington State License # LH60522575

You have the right to refuse any treatment you do not want, and the responsibility to choose a mental health provider and treatment modality which best suits your needs. You also have the right to terminate your treatment at any time for any reason. The following information is provided to help you determine if what I offer as a mental health counselor meets your needs as a client. This document contains important information about my therapeutic approach, my education, my fees, and your rights as a client including your rights regarding your private health information. Please read this document carefully and ask any questions that help you fully understand the contents of this disclosure statement and agreement for services.

Professional Qualifications

I am a fully licensed mental health counselor (LMHC) in the State of Washington. In addition to an M.A. degree in Psychology from Antioch University Seattle, I hold a B.A. degree in music history and theory from Yale University, a Master of Music degree from Binghamton University, and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Washington. I have been providing professional counseling services since 2011 and opened my private practice in 2012. I am certified as Focusing-Oriented Therapist with the International Focusing Institute.

Scope of the Work

I work with couples and individual adults. The services provided consist of psychotherapy, sometimes also called mental health counseling. (In general usage, these terms are essentially interchangeable.) I usually recommend to both couples and individuals that we meet for one 60-minute session per week. When working with couples, most sessions will involve both members of the couple, though early on I usually see each member individually one time. There is no pre-determined number of sessions or duration of the therapeutic process. You always have the right to end the therapy for any reason.

By working closely together, deepening our awareness of our own psychological patterns and processes, beneficial movement normally occurs. This work can be difficult, however, and will likely be uncomfortable at times. Positive change depends, among other things, on your ability to step into the discomfort even when it is difficult.

Theoretical Orientation

I practice according to a *focusing-oriented, person-centered approach*. I believe that healing will surely occur if I am able to be truly genuine with you, offering you unconditional acceptance as I try to understand deeply your experience of the world. I believe that we each possess within us a spontaneous capacity to become more at home in our own skin, given the right kind of support from a therapist. And as we become increasingly at home within ourselves, the troubles that brought us into therapy begin to recede. I endeavor to provide my clients with precisely that kind of support.

As a couple therapist, I use Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy (EFT). This method focuses on the emotional needs of both members of the couple, helping each person to discover their own, and their partner's, deepest aspirations for the relationship.

Drawing from current research emerging from the fields of Attachment Theory, Interpersonal Neurobiology, and Affect Regulation Theory, I work from the perspective that the interpersonal dynamic is the most important single element in therapy. Also incorporated into my work are elements of phenomenology, existentialism, and multicultural perspectives.

Therapy Modality

I offer two types of therapy: couple or individual. When you begin your work with me, we agree to work in one of those modalities. Once we have worked in one of these ways, for ethical reasons it is no longer possible for me to work with you in a different modality at any future time. If you would like to work in a different modality, you will need to find a different provider. I am always happy to provide referrals at your request.

Appointments

All sessions are arranged by appointment only. Sessions are typically 60 minutes in length. For couple sessions, for a variety of reasons, the therapy cannot begin until both members of the couple are present. Please wait in the waiting area until your partner has arrived.

Cancellations

Cancellations should be kept to a minimum and communicated by phone or email no less than 24 hours in advance of the beginning of the session. Sessions missed with less notice will be charged at the full rate, except for rare and serious emergencies. For the full policy, **please familiarize yourself with my Attendance and Cancellation Policy**.

Because I offer an online self-scheduling system, *you are responsible for your own appointments, cancellations, and rescheduling*. If you are scheduled on the online system I will expect you to attend and the 24-hour cancellation policy will apply. Consider the automatic email confirmations your receipt of any scheduling changes, and the email reminder as an indicator that the upcoming appointment is still on the system. If you have any questions about what is scheduled, I am always happy to clarify.

Phone Calls, Email, and Emergencies

If you are experiencing a mental health emergency, call 9-1-1 or the Crisis Hotline (Pierce County: 800-576-7764; King County: 206-461-3222). If you need to reach me between appointments for any non-urgent business, please contact me by email at parke@parkeburgess.com. I respond to email within 24 hours Mondays through Fridays, but may not respond on weekends or holidays until the next business day. If you have an urgent need to speak with me between sessions, please call me at (253) 240-0625. I check my voice messages several times a day during business hours on weekdays and once a day on weekends and

holidays. Due to the nature of the work, the phone and other out-of-office communications will be reserved for scheduling and other informational purposes. Because texting is the least secure form of communication, I do not read or respond to texts.

Email Permission

I am happy to use email for informational purposes, and my online scheduling software generates automatic email confirmations and reminders. Applicable laws require, however, that you opt in, giving me permission to contact you by email in order to take advantage of these amenities. Please initial below if you agree to be contacted by email:

_____ I give permission to Parke Burgess to contact me by email at the address we provided to him, including automatic emails generated by the online scheduling system.

Vacations

When I go on vacation for an extended period, I may contract with a colleague to take urgent calls on my behalf. I will always inform you in advance if I make such an arrangement. Otherwise, I will check my messages and return urgent calls at least once a day.

Fees

I offer a risk-free initial consultation: You are under no obligation to pay for your first session unless you continue the therapeutic process with me, in which case you would pay for the first session at the second session. I charge \$125 per session for couple and individual therapy. Sessions are 50-60 minutes. I accept payment by cash, check, or major credit card at the beginning of each session, or by Paypal in advance. You must pay in full at each session. I am in-network with some insurance carriers. In the event you carry a balance due (such as an unmet deductible or other amount not covered by insurance in cases where I am in-network with your insurance carrier), payment in full is required within 30 days of receiving a billing statement from me.

I offer professional services for the primary purpose of counseling and psychotherapy, not for the primary purpose of preparing for litigation. If you are seeking services for preparation of litigation or other legal action, I can help you find a referral to a forensic expert. I generally recommend that you avoid introducing your therapy as evidence in court proceedings, if at all possible, in order to protect your confidentiality. I charge \$100 per hour plus expenses (e.g., travel, parking, etc.) for any services related to a legal proceeding (e.g., depositions, testimony, etc.).

Insurance and Sliding Scale

I am in-network with a limited number of insurance carriers. (See my website for a current list.) I do not bill insurance for couple therapy. To qualify for in-network coverage, you must fill out the Insurance Intake Form in full. Out-of-network: I do not bill for insurance, but I am happy to provide receipts that you may submit for reimbursement with your insurance carrier. I do not fill out or submit forms provided by your insurance carrier. I cannot guarantee that you will be reimbursed for any services I provide. Any reimbursement you seek from your insurance carrier is at your own discretion and risk.

I sometimes am able to offer a sliding scale if requested. If this is of interest to you, we can discuss your circumstances and I may be able to propose a reduced rate that you might find acceptable. There is no pre-set range for a sliding scale.

Client Rights

Your participation in therapy, the content of our sessions, and any information you provide to me during our sessions is protected by legal confidentiality. Some exceptions to confidentiality are the following situations in which I may choose to, or be required to, disclose this information: when I have your written authorization; in response to a subpoena from a court of law or the Washington Department of Health; any case in which I suspect that you might imminently do harm to yourself or others. In addition, I am a “mandated reporter” under state law. As a mandated reporter, I am required by law to disclose certain confidential information including suspected abuse or neglect of children under RCW 26.44 and suspected abuse or neglect of vulnerable adults under RCW 74.34, or as otherwise required in proceedings under RCW 71.05.

In keeping with the standard of care, I seek ongoing consultation from colleagues in order to provide you with the best services possible. I may disclose information about your counseling session in consultation with colleagues, in which case I will withhold your name and limit the information I disclose to the minimum necessary.

In couple therapy, I cannot release protected information unless *both* partners in the couple grant me permission in writing to do so. Also in couple therapy I have a **no-secrets policy**: if one partner discloses to me significant and salient information that is not known by the other, I require that the first partner share this information with the other before we can meet again in a conjoint session.

If we should happen to encounter one another outside of the therapy office, in order to protect your confidentiality, I will not acknowledge you unless you acknowledge me first.

Limitations

No psychotherapy, regardless of orientation or therapist, is successful with every client. Person-centered therapy and emotion-focused therapy with both couples and individuals have nevertheless been found to be highly effective—that is, at least as effective as any other modality—across a broad range of clients and presenting issues. At the same time, if you possess any of the following attributes, you may be less likely to benefit from this therapy: if you are not motivated to change; if you are not inclined or able to process your experience verbally; or, if your worldview clashes significantly with the worldview that underlies my theoretical orientation.

Complaints

A copy of the acts of unprofessional conduct can be found in RCW 18.130.180. Complaints about unprofessional conduct can be made to:

Health Systems Quality Assurance Complaint Intake
Post Office Box 47857
Olympia, WA 98504-7857
Phone: 360-236-4700

E-mail: HSQAComplaintIntake@doh.wa.gov

Closure

You and I both have the right to terminate the services described in this statement at any time for any reason. Because endings are extremely important psychologically, I will make every effort to communicate clearly and well in advance if I believe that you are approaching completion of your goals for the therapy and are ready to close, or if I believe that I am no longer in the best position to continue to help you in your process. When the ending is approached carefully and thoughtfully, it is called *closure*. My aim is to achieve closure whenever possible. If you wish to continue your work with another provider, I will gladly refer you to a professional who, in my opinion, can provide excellent service for your needs.

I will close your file and consider the course of therapy terminated when 1) either you or I announce that we have had our last session, or 2) there has been no contact from you for more than 30 days without some kind of arrangement in place. If you resume therapy after such a hiatus, it will be regarded as a new course of therapy and will require new paperwork.

Changes to this Statement

From time to time I may change the policies described in this statement, and those changes will apply to our work together. You may at any time request a copy of the current version, or consult the current version online at <http://www.parkeburgess.com/forms/>.

Informed Consent

By signing this document, you are attesting that you have received, read, fully understand and consent to the disclosures, terms, and conditions above, including my Attendance and Cancellation Policy, and that you have received a copy of your HIPAA and Washington State Notice of Rights and Privacy Practices, have read and fully understand these rights, and have been given the opportunity to ask questions.

Please PRINT your name(s): _____

Signature 1: _____ Date _____

Signature 2: _____ Date _____

Parke Burgess, Psychotherapist

Revised January 2019