

## Laura Altierstrom, M.A.

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### **Patient/Client Information & Consent to Treat**

Welcome to my practice. I look forward to working with you regarding the concerns that brought you here, and I intend for you that our work together be fruitful. Please read carefully the following information concerning my professional services and business policies and discuss with me any questions you may have. Your signature at the end of this document indicates you have read and understood this information, thus providing an agreement for proceeding with treatment.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** I am glad you are here, and I am committed to providing you with quality care. This document is designed to inform you about my background and provide information regarding our working relationship. I have been a Licensed Professional Counselor since 1998, and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist since 1992. My Bachelor of Arts degree is from University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, where I majored in psychology. I hold a Master of Arts in Counseling from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas. The counseling program was fully accredited by the National Association for Marriage and Family Therapists. I have owned and operated a private counseling practice for over 20 years providing services to adults, couples, adolescents and families.

**MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES:** While it may not be easy to seek help from a mental health professional, the goal in counseling is to increase your self-awareness so that you will be better able to understand your situation and feelings and move towards resolving your difficulties. Counseling is collaborative, in order to maximize the effectiveness of the process you will need to take an active role in working toward your goals both during our sessions and between sessions. In discussing your situation, you may experience difficult feelings such as anger, sadness, or disappointment. As a result, sometimes clients express that they feel worse before they feel better. However, research identifies the benefits of counseling which include symptom relief, improved communication, more satisfying relationship and a more positive perspective. I will help you to identify choices to deal with your situation that you might not have identified on your own. It will be important for you to explore your feelings and thoughts and to try new approaches for change to occur. I am trained in a variety of approaches to therapy, including cognitive-behavioral, family systems, solution-oriented, and short-term therapy. My overall goal in therapy is to assist you in being as healthy as possible physically, mentally, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually. You may bring other family members to a therapy session if you feel it would be helpful or I may recommend that other family members attend.