



PRIVACY NOTICE

This privacy notice outlines what personal information I collect, why I collect it and how I use it. I also outline your rights over your personal information and the procedures I use to protect it.

I adhere to the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. I, Helen Young, am the sole data controller and my registration number with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is: ZA866089. I also follow the ethical guidelines of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

My Commitment to You

I am committed to using your personal information lawfully, fairly, and transparently. This includes:

- Only using your information for the purposes explained to you.
- Keeping your information accurate, up to date and secure.
- Retaining your data only for as long as necessary for the purposes outlined.

How Your Personal Information is Collected

I collect personal information in the following ways:

- When you contact me to make an enquiry.
- During our counselling sessions.
- When you visit my website

What Personal Information is Collected

I may collect:

- **Contact Information:** Name, address, phone number, email address, emergency contact, GP details.
- **Special Category Information:** Health/medical information, gender, and any other information you choose to share relevant to your mental health and wellbeing.

Lawful Basis for Processing Your Information

The UK GDPR requires that I have a lawful basis for processing your personal data. These include:

- **Contract:** If you are engaging with me for counselling, processing is necessary for the performance of our contract.
- **Legitimate Interests:** If you have completed therapy, I may retain necessary information for professional and legal obligations.
- **Special Category Data:** I process sensitive information under UK GDPR Article 9(2)(h) — “the provision of health or social care or treatment”. In some cases, I may also rely on Article 9(2)(f) — “for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims”.

How I Use Your Information

- **Initial Contact**
 - Where possible I use your personal information to respond to your enquiry.

- If someone contacts me on your behalf, I may receive your personal details from them.
- If you decide not to proceed with counselling, your information will be deleted within **three months**, or earlier at your request.
- **When You Are Accessing Counselling**
 - I use your personal information to provide the counselling service outlined in our working agreement.
 - Your personal and emergency contact details are securely stored in a locked filing cabinet.
 - I keep brief, factual session notes to support our therapeutic work. These are anonymised and stored separately from your identifiable information.
 - I may record information related to safety concerns, such as suicide risk or safeguarding.
 - If necessary for your safety, I may contact your GP. I will try to discuss this with you beforehand unless there are safeguarding issues.
 - I attend regular clinical supervision and may discuss our work, anonymously, with a qualified supervisor who also abides by professional confidentiality standards.
 - In the event of my incapacity or death, a trusted therapeutic executor—bound by the same confidentiality—will contact you using your information stored on an encrypted memory stick, kept in a locked cabinet.
- **After Counselling Has Ended**
 - In line with my insurance and professional guidelines the following information is retained for **7 years**, or until you turn 25 if you were under 18 at the time of therapy (whichever is later).
 - Your identifiable personal data
 - Safeguarding information
 - Anonymised session notes
 - Email correspondence
 - Your contact details (email and phone) are deleted from my systems within 3 months of the end of counselling.

Processing Data

- I will never use your personal data for any purposes other than the administration of the therapy service that I am providing to you.
- Your personal information will not be actively shared, except where required by law, such as, being summoned by a court, or if life or safety is seriously threatened. In these instances, I have the right to contact your GP or relevant authorities. Whenever possible I will endeavour to discuss this with you beforehand unless there are safeguarding issues that prevent this.
- Some of your personal information is also retained for as long as legally required in respect of tax or accounting purposes.

Data Security

- My email, phone, and laptop are all password-protected.
- Handwritten notes are stored in a locked filing cabinet.
- Digital records are stored securely using encrypted cloud storage (Office 365) and/or password-protected memory sticks.
- I use your initials when saving your number on my phone, which is deleted within three months of therapy ending.

- Text messages are deleted within one month and any relevant content is added to your written record.
- Please note while I take every step to protect your data, emails and texts are not fully secure and are best used for administrative purposes only.

Sharing Your Information

- Your information is confidential. I will not share it with third parties unless:
 - Required to do so by law (e.g. court order).
 - You are at serious risk of harm to yourself or others.
 - There are child or adult safeguarding concerns.
 - It is necessary to contact emergency services or your GP for your safety.
- Where possible, I will discuss this with you first—unless doing so would increase the risk.
- Some information may also be retained for legal or tax purposes (e.g. invoicing).

Your Rights

- You have the right to:
 1. **Access** your personal information.
 2. **Correct** any inaccurate or incomplete information.
 3. **Request erasure** of your data where there is no legal reason to retain it.
 4. **Object** to certain types of data processing.
 5. **Restrict** how your information is used.
 6. **Data portability**, allowing your data to be transferred to another provider.
- Please note: Some rights are not absolute and may be limited by legal or ethical obligations.
- To exercise any of these rights, please contact me in writing.

How to Contact Me

- If you have any questions about this notice or how I handle your data, please contact me at:
 - 122 Sunlight Gardens, Fareham, Hampshire, PO15 6DQ
 - info@hycounselling.co.uk
 - You also have the right to contact the Information Commissioner's Office if you are not happy with how I used your personal information
<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>.