

**THE HAPPINESS PSYCHIATRIST:
SHEENIE AMBARDAR, M.D.**

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CONSENT FOR EVALUATION AND TREATMENT

SERVICES:

INITIAL 75-MINUTE COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL AND PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION: This is the first office visit you will have with Dr. Ambardar in which she will review your full medical, psychiatric, psychosocial, and family history. **Prior to this visit, please remember to complete the New Patient Evaluation Form so that we will be able to make the best use of our time.** During this session, your reason(s) for seeking treatment will be discussed in depth and a full treatment plan (including medications and/or psychotherapy if needed) will be prescribed. *Fee: \$600*

30-MINUTE MEDICATION MANAGEMENT FOLLOW-UP SESSION: This is a follow-up session tailored specifically to any medication management issues you may have. Your mood symptoms and psychopharmacologic treatment plan will be discussed thoroughly, any appropriate changes to your medication regimen will be made, and supportive psychotherapy will be performed. *Fee: \$300*

60-MINUTE MEDICATION MANAGEMENT + PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION: During this dual-purpose, customized follow-up session, we will adjust and alter your medication regimen as needed, as well as engage in intensive psychotherapy. Dr. Ambardar's general treatment principle regarding psychotropic medications is to use the lowest effective dose of medication that successfully alleviates your mood symptoms. Regarding psychotherapy, specific treatment modalities used during sessions include psychodynamic or insight-oriented therapy, solution-focused therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, and journal therapy. *Fee: \$450*

60-MINUTE WALKING PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION: Walking Psychotherapy is a unique and highly-beneficial addition to the therapist's arsenal and *The Happiness Psychiatrist* is proud to be one of the few places in Southern California to offer it to our clients. During these sessions, you will be walking side by side with Dr. Ambardar at a comfortable and unhurried pace, literally moving forward as we work out issues and problems in a casual and peaceful setting. Some patients have reported that they find it easier to relax and let their guard down when walking outdoors as opposed to being face-to-face with a doctor in a formal office setting. For walking psychotherapy sessions, Dr. Ambardar is available to meet her clients at nearby parks or other peaceful locations within a reasonable driving distance from her office. During our walk, we will engage in intensive talk therapy using the same psychotherapeutic techniques we employ at our regular office location. *Fee: \$450*

60-MINUTE MEDITATION + PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION: This session is tailored specifically to those who would like to incorporate meditation and/or Kundalini Yoga into their daily or weekly mindfulness practices. Mindfulness-meditation is a highly effective tool for dealing with a multitude of mood disorders and Dr. Ambardar recommends it frequently to all of her patients, regardless of their specific condition. Meditation and Kundalini Yoga, while founded on Hindu principles, can be used by people of any religious persuasion or philosophic

background. Meditation is universally applied by people of all faiths as a path to calmness, mental clarity, and peace of mind. Kundalini Yoga, also known as the Yoga of Awareness, is an ancient form of yoga that strengthens the nervous system through the regular use of breathing techniques, body postures, and meditation. This spiritual form of yoga is believed to awaken the latent and powerful kundalini energy found at the base of the spine within every human being. Releasing this powerful life force through the use of prana (breath), asana (postures), mantra (sound therapy), and meditation, can lead to an increase in self-awareness, intuition, and peace of mind. We will spend a portion of this session in actual meditation, incorporating elements of Kundalini Yoga if desired; the remainder of the session will consist of regular psychotherapy.

Fee: \$450

60-MINUTE PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION ONLY: During this session, we will address any issues or problems you may be having in your life using an eclectic blend of psychotherapeutic modalities including psychodynamic or insight-oriented therapy, solution-focused therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, and journal therapy. Our goal is for you to leave each session feeling lighter, brighter, and more supported in your journey, having gained valuable insights into your behavior or a new way of looking at the world. ***Fee: \$450***

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: Professional services such as filling out forms, telephone calls, extensive e-mail conversations, preparation of treatment summaries, court proceedings (even if Dr. Ambardar is compelled to testify by another party), or time spent performing any other functions that you may request will be charged \$150 for each 15-minute increment.

MEDICATIONS:

Medications are often used as adjuncts to or in lieu of psychotherapy. Sometimes you will be seeing someone else for psychotherapy, and Dr. Ambardar will only be responsible for your medication management. If this is the case, Dr. Ambardar will coordinate your medical care and medication goals with your therapist. If Dr. Ambardar is responsible for both your medication management and psychotherapy, she will work with you to find the optimal combination of medication (if warranted) and psychotherapy that helps to meet your personal goals.

If medication is indicated, Dr. Ambardar will discuss with you the nature of your illness, the reasons for starting medication, and the likelihood of improvement with and without medication. Dr. Ambardar will also explain any reasonable alternative treatments which have not been tried and explain why they should not be tried first. Furthermore, you will understand the type(s) of medication being recommended, the dosage and frequency of administration, including a discussion of the initial dose and the maintenance dose, as well as the dosage range.

Dr. Ambardar will also discuss with you probable side effects known commonly to occur and any side effects likely to occur in particular cases, as determined by your medical and psychiatric history or known medical conditions, and any possible long term effects which may occur after taking the medication for long periods (usually 3 months) or terminating the medication. We will discuss the effect of sudden withdrawal of the medication against medical advice.

As many psychiatric conditions have an underlying biological and genetic basis, medications can be a very important component of treating certain illnesses. Dr. Ambardar believes that medications in conjunction with psychotherapy provide the optimum benefit to most patients.

PSYCHOTHERAPY:

Psychotherapy may have benefits such as significant reduction in distress, improved social relationships, resolution of specific problems, and a clearer understanding of yourself, your values, and your goals. However, there are no guarantees about what will happen in therapy. For therapy to be most successful, you will have to be able to talk openly and honestly, address any difficulties that arise, and put forth active effort outside of our sessions.

An important part of your therapy will be practicing new skills that you will learn in our sessions. Dr. Ambardar will ask you to practice outside our meetings, and may ask you to do exercises, keep records, and read certain books to deepen your learning. You will probably have to work on relationships in your life and make long-term efforts to get the best results. These are important parts of personal change. Change will sometimes be easy and quick, but more often it will be slow and frustrating, and you will need to keep trying. There are no instant, painless cures. However, you can learn new ways of looking at your problems that will be very helpful for changing your feelings and reactions.

The Benefits and Risks of Therapy

As with any powerful treatment, there are some risks as well as many benefits with therapy. You should think about both the benefits and risks when making any treatment decisions. For example, in therapy, there is a risk that clients will, for a time, have uncomfortable levels of sadness, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, loneliness, helplessness, or other negative feelings. Clients may recall unpleasant memories. These feelings or memories may bother a client at work or in school. In addition, some people in the community may mistakenly view anyone in therapy as weak, or perhaps as seriously disturbed or even dangerous. Also, clients in therapy may have problems with people important to them. Family secrets may be told. Therapy may disrupt a marital relationship and sometimes may even lead to a divorce. Sometimes, too, a client's problems may temporarily worsen after the beginning of treatment. Most of these risks are to be expected when people are making important changes in their lives. Finally, even with our best efforts, there is a risk that therapy may not work out well for you.

While you consider these risks, you should know also that the benefits of therapy have been shown by scientists in hundreds of well-designed research studies. People who are depressed may find their mood lifting. Others may no longer feel afraid, angry, or anxious. In therapy, people have a chance to talk things out fully until their feelings are relieved or the problems are solved. Clients' relationships and coping skills may improve greatly. They may get more satisfaction out of social and family relationships. Their personal goals and values may become clearer. They may grow in many directions—as persons, in their close relationships, in their work or schooling, and in the ability to enjoy their lives.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

I, Dr. Sheenie Ambardar, will treat with great care all of the information you share with me. It is your legal right that our sessions and my records about you be kept private. That is why I ask you to sign a "release-of-information" form before I can talk about you or send my records about you to anyone else. In general, I will tell no one what you tell me. I will not even reveal that you are receiving treatment from me. In all but a few rare situations, your confidentiality (that is, our privacy) is protected by federal and state laws and by the rules of my profession. Here are the most common cases in which confidentiality is not protected:

1. If you were sent to me by a court or an employer for evaluation or treatment, the court or employer expects a report from me. If this is your situation, please talk with me before you tell me anything you do not want the court or your employer to know. You have a right to tell me only what you are comfortable with telling.
2. Are you suing someone or being sued? Are you being charged with a crime? If so, and you tell the court that you are seeing me, I may then be ordered to show the court my records. Please consult your lawyer about these issues.
3. If you make a serious threat to harm yourself or another person, the law requires me to try to protect you or that other person. This usually means telling others about the threat. I cannot promise never to tell others about threats you make.
4. If I believe a child has been or will be abused or neglected, I am legally required to report this to the authorities.

There are two situations in which I, Dr. Sheenie Ambardar, might talk about part of your case with another psychiatrist or therapist. I ask now for your understanding and agreement to let me do so in these two situations.

First, when I am away from the office for a few days, I have a trusted fellow psychiatrist or therapist “cover” for me. This psychiatrist or therapist will be available to you in emergencies. Therefore, he or she needs to know about you. Of course, this psychiatrist or therapist is bound by the same laws and rules as I am to protect your confidentiality.

Second, I sometimes consult other psychiatrists or other professionals about my patients. This helps me in giving high-quality treatment. These persons are also required to keep your information private. Your name will never be given to them, some information will be changed or omitted, and they will be told only as much as they need to know to understand your situation.

It may be beneficial for me to confer with your primary care physician with regard to your psychological treatment or to discuss any medical problems for which you are receiving treatment.

Except for situations like those I have described above, my office staff and I will always maintain your privacy. I also ask you not to disclose the name or identity of any other client being seen in this office. My office staff makes every effort to keep the names and records of clients private. My staff and I will try never to use your name on the telephone, if clients in the office can overhear it. All staff members who see your records have been trained in how to keep records confidential.

If I must discontinue our relationship because of illness, disability, or other presently unforeseen circumstances, I ask you to agree to my transferring your records to another psychiatrist who will assure their confidentiality, preservation, and appropriate access.

As part of cost control efforts, an insurance company will sometimes ask for more information on symptoms, diagnoses, and my treatment methods. It will become part of your permanent medical record. I will let you know if this should occur and what the company has asked for. Please understand that Dr. Ambardar has no control over how these records are handled at the insurance company. My policy is to provide only as much information as the insurance company will need to pay your benefits.

PRACTICE STATUS:

Dr. Ambardar works in an office with a group of independent mental health professionals. While the members share an office space, Dr. Ambardar's professional records are separately maintained and no member of the group can have access to them without your specific, written permission.

Your signature below indicates that you have received, read, and understood this Consent for Evaluation and Treatment Form, which contains information on *The Happiness Psychiatrist* services offered by Dr. Sheenie Ambardar, professional fees, medication and psychotherapy risks and benefits, confidentiality, and practice status, and that you agree to abide by the form's terms for the duration of our professional relationship.

Name of client (print): _____

Date: _____

Signature of client: _____

Name of psychiatrist: The Happiness Psychiatrist: Sheenie Ambardar, M.D.

Date: _____

Signature of psychiatrist: _____