

# Nature-Based Therapy Consent (OPTIONAL)

Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC

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If you are interested in Nature-Based Therapy, please read carefully and discuss any questions you may have with me before signing this consent form. When you sign the document, you will be stating that I provided you with this information and it will represent an agreement between us. IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO INCORPORATE NATURE-BASED THERAPY INTO YOUR THERAPY PLAN, YOU DO NOT NEED TO SIGN THIS FORM.

## About Nature-Based Therapy

Nature-based or nature-informed therapy may take several forms. It may involve sitting outdoors on a bench or chair outside an office or sitting in a public place such as a park pavilion. It may also take the form of walking while addressing therapeutic goals and topics. If you decide to walk, some of the activities you might participate in include walking on sidewalks and bike paths and/or exploring public parks and open spaces. The focus of the experience is therapy, not exercise.

The benefits of outdoor therapy are likely to be helpful for your therapeutic process. For example, some clients experience and appreciate the calming effect of rhythmic movement; potential helpful changes in brain chemistry evoked through physical exercise; less direct eye contact; being in person outside; a less formal/clinical setting; getting "unstuck" in the therapeutic process; enhanced meaning and productivity of therapy sessions; expanded options for meditative grounding and relaxation strategies. Meeting outside the typical office environment will likely provide a therapeutic change of scenery.

In order to participate in Nature Informed Therapy, which is frequently based in public and/or outdoor locations, it is important for you to read, understand, and note that you agree to the following terms for nature-based sessions.

## Land Acknowledgement

Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC carries out nature-based wellness programs in Central Illinois, the original land of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odaa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chicasaw Nations. Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC acknowledges the indigenous people of Illinois and the history of oppression that dispossessed them of their homeland, altered the landscape, and resulted in our presence here today. This land carries all our stories, our cross-cultural relationships with each other, our struggles for survival, and our healing.

## Consent for Nature Informed Therapy

Together with my therapist, I have established that nature informed therapy is clinically appropriate for the therapeutic goals we have agreed upon. By indicating below, I agree to the following:

- I understand that nature informed therapy activities may take place at facilities or on premises not affiliated with Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC. I further understand that Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC does not take responsibility for any aspect or condition of these independent facilities or premises.
- I understand there are potential physical dangers inherent in some of the activities associated with nature informed therapy, many of which are those associated with any type of outdoor activity. I affirm that I am in proper physical condition to participate in nature informed therapy activities and further acknowledge that my therapist is not able to provide any type of medical clearance or advice for me with regard to my readiness to engage in these activities. I understand that if I have questions or concerns about my capacity or readiness to engage in any of these activities I will consult first with my physician or other appropriate health care provider.
- I understand that there are potential risks inherent in nature-informed therapy. I agree to hold harmless Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC for any harm that may befall me related to uncontrollable external factors. These include but are not limited to physical and/or psychological injury or illness related to uneven ground, inclement weather, insect stings, animal bites, falling branches or rocks, sunburn, exposure to cold/heat, equipment failure, acts of Nature, and more.
- I understand that privileged communication between me and my therapist cannot be guaranteed in settings outside the office as I may be seen or heard by others. I understand that my therapist will endeavor to support confidential communications and maintain professional boundaries to the fullest extent possible when we are outside of the office. However, I agree to indemnify and hold harmless Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC or any harm that may befall me related to engaging in therapeutic activities in a public venue.

Based upon my representation that I am in proper physical health and condition to participate in outdoor/nature informed therapy, I agree:

1. To take full responsibility for my physical safety and to not to engage in any activity in which I do not feel safe;
2. To let my therapist know if I have any questions or issues that arise after agreeing to any of these activities and to recognize that simple consent for these services does not require me to participate in them and that I can rescind this consent at any time;
3. To fully disclose any mental, physical, or emotional condition/s or limitation/s which might affect my ability to participate in the activities of outdoor therapy;
4. To assume all risk of injury to myself and all risk of damage to and loss of my property arising out of my participation in outdoor therapy;
5. For myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, personal representatives and assigns, to release and forever discharge Lavina Velasco Counseling, PLLC from any and all liability for any injury, including death, and for any and all liability, claims, demands, actions, loss and damage arising out of or in any

way connected with my participation in nature informed therapy.

By signing below, I agree to these conditions and voluntarily consent to receiving nature informed therapy services.