

Chaplain Family Life Center

*** * * Informed Consent * * ***

How We Work:

1. **We are committed to your well being.** We believe in your ability to find what you need to reach your therapeutic goals. We believe God is already at work in your life. The pastoral counselors at the Family Life Center (FLC) are committed to helping you reach your goals. You are the reason we exist as an organization. It is our privilege to serve you by taking time to listen and partner with you so that you may grow from where you are to where you want to be.
2. **We work as a team.** Although you will have one or two primary counselors, the entire staff of the Family Life Center is working for you. We have discovered that the best care results when counselors collaborate together and receive professional supervision from more experienced counselors. The primary means of collaboration and supervision comes by capturing video of the sessions. By signing this form, you accept the necessity of observation, recording, and supervisory discussion of the sessions in which you participate. You give permission to your pastoral counselor to obtain digital video recordings of the sessions to use for professional review, and to share these recordings with his or her clinical supervisor, as well as other members of the pastoral counseling team at the FLC for the purpose of obtaining professional assistance in the therapeutic process. All digital video recordings and written materials will be treated with strict confidentiality in compliance with the Chief of Chaplain's policy on Chaplain Confidentiality (see No. 4 below). All video will be destroyed after supervision and/or consultation and written records will be destroyed at the conclusion of the counseling relationship. No records will be maintained after termination.
3. **We are pastoral counselors, not medical personnel.** We are professionally trained counselors and professional, ordained clergy. We do not judge or force religion on anyone. However, we recognize the reality of the spiritual realm and explore that dimension of a person as part of the process. We offer positioning for spiritual, emotional, and psychological healing. We often partner with other helping professionals, such as medical doctors, psychiatric professionals, psychologists, and others by referral. We do not make medical diagnoses and do not have the capability to prescribe or dispense therapeutic drugs. We do not recommend stopping medications unless a medical professional has directed you to do so. However, the pastoral counselors are trained to recognize signs of mental, emotional, and physical injury and may encourage you to seek proper medical care. We believe in a holistic approach to health that may require other professionals to get involved and serve you as a healing team.
4. **We take your confidentiality seriously.** All personnel who work in this center will comply with the Chief of Chaplain's Policy for Protection of Confidential Communications between Unit Ministry Team Members and Military Constituents, dated 25 September 2007. All information you disclose to your pastoral counselor (Chaplain), or any other staff member of the FLC, is considered to be a religious act and therefore strictly confidential. Confidential information between you as the counselee and your pastoral counselor is considered privileged communications for legal purposes. Privileged or confidential communication can only be released to third parties with your voluntary permission to do so, and will never be released without your specific written consent on the proper form. We can not disclose communication from you (shared in private) with other members of your family, even in the process of couples or family therapy, without your written consent. The chaplains and staff of the FLC are committed to protect your right to absolute confidentiality.
5. **We are not in a hurry.** As with physical healing, we believe lasting transformation and change take time. We recommend a minimum of once-a-week sessions. Our counseling hour lasts exactly 50 minutes, so be ready to work from the beginning. However, trust and the therapeutic relationship takes time to build. While change began the moment you determined to reach out for pastoral care, expect the beginnings of lasting change to come along with many hours of hard work. You are expected to call should you be unable to keep your appointment. You are expected to show up on time for your appointments. You are expected to consult with your counselor when you are ready to terminate therapy.
6. **We charge no fee.** There is no financial cost or obligation associated with receiving pastoral counseling at the Family Life Center. Services are provided for military ID card holders (i.e. active duty and reserve component military personnel, dependents, DoD civilians, and retirees).
7. **We acknowledge the risks.** The process of pastoral care, counseling, and inner healing usually involves emotional reactions, which can be unpleasant. Reactions can range anywhere from mildly annoying to severe episodes of anxiety or panic. You may find yourself more irritable, angry, sleepless, sad, depressed, dreaming uncomfortable dreams, or any other number of negative reactions. Your symptoms may get worse before you get better. There is no guarantee that you will be 'fixed,' 'cured,' or 'better' by the process of therapy. While trained and competent, your care providers may choose an intervention or modality of therapy that is not helpful for you. Be prepared to have a self-care plan in place for strong emotional or physiological reactions to therapy. Be open and talk with your pastoral counselor about your concerns, reactions, and feelings regarding the process of therapy. Should you find yourself thinking about harming yourself or others, contact emergency services immediately.

"I have read this document and agree to receive pastoral counseling accordingly."

Client
Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Chaplain
Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____