



banish the crows

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independent
counselling psychotherapy

24 March 2020

Dear client,

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC.

WHAT WE HAVE DECIDED TO DO FOLLOWING THE UK GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT ON 23 MARCH 2020.

Further to our letter to clients dated 17 March. Outlined below is Banish the Crows' response to the announcement made by the Prime Minister, yesterday.

We need to advise you of the temporary cessation of our *face-to-face* psychotherapeutic work and the interim closure of our office at St. James House in Longton.

Whilst Government has advised that people will only be allowed to leave their home for very limited purposes including "any medical need, to provide care or to help a vulnerable person" it lacks clarity about the provision of independently offered psychotherapies in the treatment of emotional, psychological, and mental wellbeing.

In doing our part to help safeguard our clients, our communities, and ourselves we have needed to take the difficult decision to *suspend* face-to-face consultations and meeting clients at our premises, until further direction is received from Government or the current 'lock down' situation is lifted.

This is a sad, difficult and worrying time for all of us, and we recognise the anxiety and concern being experienced and the impact of social isolation for many people, particularly those who live alone, are retired or do not work or whom are no longer able to work, for whatever reason.

How will this affect my therapy?

We recognise that you will be at an individual stage of therapy - our work might be in the formative stages of relating and building a trusting therapeutic relationship and complete cessation might be destabilising and unhelpful. For others the therapeutic alliance formed over many months (or years) of work might assist withstanding disruption in the work, although we understand that the opposite could also be true. As mentioned in our previous letter, we are keen to offer alternatives and whilst they may not be ideal solutions they might be sufficient to enable therapeutic 'holding' - permit contact and progression of your objectives in therapy.

What are the alternatives?

Alternatives to face-to-face meetings, such as telephone work or meeting 'online' (video calls) offer an interim source of support. These *are* choices that are available to *you* to make and we want to encourage your autonomy and taking control of decisions that affect you. There will be no pressure from us for you to continue therapy using such methods but realistically we do have to appreciate the limited means open to us (both) during such unprecedented times.



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Click [HERE](#) for specific **Guidance about Engaging in Telephone and Online Methods of Therapy**.

We will be in touch with you individually to confirm your intentions about continuing with scheduled appointments and should you wish to, *how* you might wish to meet with your therapist. If you decide to suspend the therapeutic relationship you can talk to your therapist about how you might wish to maintain or renew contact at a later date.

Aide Memoire:

1. We would once more remind you of the implications of your therapist being admitted to hospital with serious or fatal symptoms related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and this is explained in more detail our the letter dated 17 March.
2. Additionally, this letter explained terms and conditions affected by the cancellation of sessions, including those at very short-notice due to unforeseen circumstances and those varied by 'key worker' situations.

Click [HERE](#) to access our previous letter dated 17 March 2020.

Keep up to date with the latest advice:

We are actively monitoring the advice provided by the [Government](#) and [NHS](#) and we advise you to stay updated with the most current information.

We take our work with you very seriously and this is made doubly challenging when we are required to respond to a public health crisis, such as the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. We would encourage you to talk through any concerns or further questions that you might have about continuing therapy, with us. The last thing that we seek to do at this stage of your therapy is for progress to be to adversely affected, or to reinforce any isolation or existential anxiety being experienced by you.

We wish all to be well at a challenging time for all of us. Stay safe and in touch.

Sincerely,

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