

## Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure

### Complaints directed to Kim Hill of Art of Wellbeing and Art of Stress Recovery

#### **1. My Aim**

As a psychotherapist, life coach and trauma informed somatic EMDR practitioner, I am committed to operating in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect.

One of the ways in which I can continue to improve my service is by listening and responding to the views of my clients, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting any mistakes right.

Therefore, I aim to ensure that:

- Making a compliment or complaint is as easy as possible
- I welcome compliments, feedback and suggestions
- I treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with my service which calls for an immediate response
- I deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- I respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where I have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc.
- I learn from complaints, use them to improve my service, and review annually my complaints policy and procedures

I recognise that concerns may be raised informally.

My aims are to:

- Resolve informal concerns quickly

- Keep matters low-key

This policy ensures that I welcome compliments and provide guidelines for dealing with complaints from members of the public about my services.

## **2. Definitions**

A compliment is an expression of satisfaction about the standard of service I provide.

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction; however, it may be expressed. This would include complaints expressed face to face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method. I acknowledge that an “expression of dissatisfaction” can be considered a complaint, even when the word “complain” or “complaint” is not used.

## **3. Compliments**

I am always glad to hear from people who are satisfied with the services I offer. All compliments are recorded and acknowledged.

## **4. Complaints for Counselling and Neuroplastic Conditions (SIRPA)**

My Complaints Procedure, outlined below, is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Kim Hill maintain confidentiality.

However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own facts). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

### **The Complaints Procedure for Counselling**

I will keep written records at each stage of the procedure whether for Counselling or for Mind-body, neuroplastic conditions.

## **Stage 1 – Informal Complaints**

In the first instance, I will establish the seriousness of the complaint. If a complaint can be resolved informally between the client and myself, then this approach will be adopted. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

## **Stage 2**

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should be advised that a formal complaint may be made to The National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society, and the following procedure should be explained to them.

### **Complaints directed to NCPS- National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society**

- a) Kim Hill holds accreditation with NCPS – The National Counselling and Psychotherapy Society. To contact the Professional Conduct Officer at NCPS: email address is: [conduct@ncps.com](mailto:conduct@ncps.com). Telephone number: 01903 213683.
- b) Postal address: National Counselling & Psychotherapy Society, 19 Grafton Road, Worthing BN11 1QT
- c) NCPS as a professional association, and holder of an Accredited Register for counsellors and psychotherapists, the NCPS is committed to promoting and providing high standards in the practice of counselling, psychotherapy and associated therapies.
- d) We understand that the people using the services of counsellors and psychotherapists, who are members of the NCPS, may have a range of different issues and a range of experiences of working with our members.
- e) We encourage constructive feedback about these experiences, and we invite people, especially including our members' clients, to tell us about their experiences.
- f) We believe in listening to the voices of both clients and of therapists and in the sharing of these viewpoints and opinions. We believe that each group has much to learn, both from the positive experiences of therapy as well as from times when things have not worked out as planned or hoped.
- g) We are aware that the professional therapeutic relationship in some forms of counselling and therapy necessarily involves the exploration of difficulties and lapses within the relationship itself. We therefore seek to avoid an unnecessarily 'legalistic' approach to dealing with complaints.

- h) We are also aware that therapists can overstep therapeutic boundaries and breach our Code of Ethics, and this needs to be addressed proportionately, fairly, and transparently and in a way that protects the public.
- i) Ideally every effort should be made to resolve the issue with the member before raising a formal complaint, but only if the circumstances are appropriate and you feel comfortable in doing so.
- j) We are also aware of the stress caused by any party involved in a complaints process. In addition, processes which become formal can be time consuming and last many months due to the need to follow proper evidential procedures.
- k) Where possible, therefore, we will see whether an informal resolution of your complaint or concern is appropriate. This could include informally discussing your concern or complaint with the member, or a referral to mediation.
- l) In addition, we employ in many complaints something called 'Consensual Disposal'. This happens when one of our Panels looks at the evidence and offers the member the chance to admit they have breached our Code of Ethics and accept appropriate sanctions. It should be stressed that this is not a 'plea bargain'. The member is only offered those sanctions which the Panel believes would have been imposed at a formal complaints hearing. Consensual Disposal is offered purely to allow both parties to reach an appropriate ending to the proceedings in the least stressful way possible. "Consensual Disposal" can include "Voluntary Removal" where a member is offered the chance to admit they have breached the Code of Ethics and be removed from their membership of the Society.
- m) Of course, there is still the possibility for certain complaints that a full, formal process is required and for this we use an Independent Complaints Panel. More details about that can be found below.
- n) You don't have to understand our Code of Ethics or procedures to make a complaint or raise a concern. Our Professional Conduct Officers are here to listen to you and discuss with you what kind of steps are likely to happen. If appropriate, you will be given choices, such as trying an informal resolution or mediation.
- o) Let's set out the steps in our process. Of course, your complaint may not follow all of these steps.
- p) For work using the SIRPA (mindbody) approach for treating chronic mindbody symptoms and pain, a complaint can be made directly to SIRPA Ltd - [admin@sirpa.org](mailto:admin@sirpa.org)

## Complaints directed to SIRPA -(neuroplastic conditions)

1. Our aim as an organisation, SIRPA is committed to providing high-quality training and support to health professionals working to help clients to heal from chronic pain and other persistent conditions/symptoms. We endeavour to operate in an open and accountable way that builds trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of SIRPA-Trained Professionals and their clients and by responding positively to complaints and rectifying anything we feel could be improved upon.

Therefore, we aim to ensure that:

- SIRPA-Trained Professionals and their clients have clear guidance on our complaints policies and procedures
- We welcome compliments, feedback and suggestions
- We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response
- We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially
- We respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken etc.
- We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures

**We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally. Our aims are to:**

- Resolve informal concerns quickly
- Keep matters low-key
- Enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred

This policy ensures that we welcome compliments and provide guidelines for dealing with complaints from clients and stakeholders about our services and SIRPA-Trained Professionals. SIRPA – [www.sirpa.org](http://www.sirpa.org)

**Definitions** A compliment is an expression of satisfaction about the standard of service we provide.

A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction; however, it may be expressed. This would include complaints expressed face to face, via a phone call, in writing, via email or any other method.

All SIRPA-Trained Professionals should have sufficient knowledge to be able to identify an “expression of dissatisfaction” even when the word “complain” or “complaint” is not used.

## **Compliments**

We are always glad to hear from people who are satisfied with the services we offer. All compliments are recorded, acknowledged, and a copy is sent to the relevant person to provide feedback.

## **SIRPA's Complaints Procedure**

As outlined below, it is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently, and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Confidentiality except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and SIRPA maintain confidentiality.

However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own facts).

Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

## **Complaints about SIRPA-Trained Professionals**

Wherever possible, complaints about a SIRPA-Trained Professional should be raised directly with that professional, in line with their individual complaints' policy.

If a client does not feel comfortable raising a complaint directly with their SIRPA Trained Professional, then it can be raised directly with SIRPA by **emailing** [admin@sirpa.org](mailto:admin@sirpa.org).

If a client is unhappy with the response of their SIRPA-Trained Professional, the complaint can be escalated to SIRPA and we can work with the individual and the SIRPA – [www.sirpa.org](http://www.sirpa.org) professional to try and resolve the issue as

## **The SIRPA Complaints Procedure**

Written records must be made by SIRPA at each stage of the procedure.

**Stage 1** In the first instance, SIRPA must establish the seriousness of the complaint. An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

**Stage 2** If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the complainant should be advised that a formal complaint may be made and the following procedure should be explained to them.

- a) A formal complaint can be made either verbally or in writing. If in writing the attached form should be used.

- b) If verbal, a statement should be taken by Georgie Oldfield MCSP, SIRPA's Founding Director or, where this is not possible, one of SIRPA's Membership Board.
- c) In all cases, the complaint must be passed on to Georgie Oldfield MCSP. In the event of a complaint about Georgie Oldfield MCSP, the complaint should be passed to a member of SIRPA's Membership Board.
- d) Georgie Oldfield MCSP must acknowledge the complaint in writing within ten working days of receiving it.
- e) Georgie Oldfield MCSP or one of the Membership Board will investigate the complaint.
- f) Any conclusions reached should be discussed within the Membership Board.
- g) The person making the complaint will receive a response based on the investigation within four weeks of the complaint being received. If this is not possible then a letter must be sent explaining why.

### Stage 3 SIRPA – [www.sirpa.org](http://www.sirpa.org)

- a) If the complainant is not satisfied with the above decision, they have the right to respond with why that is the case and SIRPA will re-evaluate the decision.
- b) SIRPA's Founding Director and Membership Board will examine the complaint and may wish to carry out further interviews, examine files / notes. They will respond within four weeks in writing. Their decision will be final.

### **Responsibilities**

Where SIRPA receives a formal complaint, SIRPA's responsibility will be to:

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing.
- Respond within a stated period of time;
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint; and
- Take action where appropriate.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- Bring their complaint, in writing, to SIRPA's attention normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- Allow SIRPA a reasonable time to deal with the matter, and
- Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond SIRPA's control.

Where Kim Hill receives a formal complaint, her responsibility will be to:

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing within 10 working days;
- Respond within a stated period of time;
- Investigate and deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint; and
- Take action where appropriate within eight weeks of complaint being received.

A complainant's responsibility is to:

- Bring their complaint, in writing, to Art of Wellbeing and Art of Stress Recovery's attention
- The situation will have happened normally within 8 weeks of the issue arising;
- Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
- Allow Kim Hill, Art of wellbeing and Art of Stress recovery a reasonable time to deal with the matter (eight weeks).
- Recognise that some circumstances may be beyond Art of Wellbeing and Art of Stress Recovery's control.

## **COMPLAINTS FORM**

You may use this form to make a suggestion or to make a complaint about Art of Wellbeing Art or Stress Recovery

We would like you to return this form as soon as possible.

**Your Name** .....

**Address** .....

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**Telephone** .....

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**Date of incident**

**Approximate time of incident**

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**Suggestion / Complaint**

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**What action would you like to be taken?**

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**What times are convenient for you to have an appointment to discuss this?**