Hope Therapy & Counselling Services

Ending Therapy Policy

Version: October 2026 | Client-Facing

How therapy ends is as important as how it begins. This policy explains how therapeutic endings are handled at Hope Therapy & Counselling Services, what you can expect, and what to do in different situations.

1. Planned Endings

A planned ending is the most beneficial way to conclude therapy. When you and your counsellor feel that your goals have been met, or that you are ready to end, you will typically work toward a planned final session. This gives you the opportunity to:

- Reflect on the progress you have made.
- Consolidate what you have learned and the changes you have experienced.
- Discuss how to maintain your progress after therapy ends.
- Say a proper goodbye to the therapeutic relationship.

We encourage all clients to plan their ending rather than simply stopping, as an unplanned ending can leave things feeling unresolved. Your counsellor will introduce the topic of ending at an appropriate point in your therapy.

2. Your Right to End Therapy at Any Time

You may end therapy at any time and for any reason. You do not have to give a reason. We ask that you let your counsellor know as soon as possible, so that any arranged sessions can be cancelled in line with our Cancellation Policy and your counsellor can offer an appropriate ending, if you are willing.

If you have paid for sessions in advance, you can also contact us at contact@hopefulminds.co.uk or 0333 043 1850 to arrange a refund. Please do not simply stop attending without notice — your counsellor will be concerned about you, and sessions that have been arranged may still be charged under our Cancellation Policy.

3. Taking a Break from Therapy

If you wish to pause therapy rather than end it entirely, please discuss this with your counsellor. It is possible to agree a break and return to therapy at a later date, subject to your counsellor's availability. We cannot guarantee that the same counsellor will be available when you return, though we will always do our best to accommodate your preference.

4. When a Counsellor Needs to End the Relationship

In some circumstances, a counsellor may determine that they are no longer able to continue working with a client. This might occur because:

- The client's needs have moved beyond the counsellor's area of competence or training.
- The therapeutic relationship has broken down irreparably.
- The counsellor has a professional or personal reason that makes continuation ethically inappropriate.
- The client's level of risk requires a higher level of clinical support than the counsellor is able to provide.

If a counsellor needs to end the therapeutic relationship, they are professionally obligated to:

- Handle the ending with care, sensitivity, and appropriate notice wherever possible.
- Discuss the reasons with you clearly and honestly.
- Support an appropriate ending rather than simply withdrawing.
- Where possible, support a referral to an alternative service or practitioner.

Hope Therapy & Counselling Services will provide administrative support in facilitating any necessary handover. Any pre-paid sessions that cannot be fulfilled will be refunded.

5. If Your Counsellor Becomes Unavailable

If your counsellor becomes unavailable due to illness, personal circumstances, a change in their practice, or any other reason, Hope Therapy & Counselling Services will contact you promptly and discuss options. Where possible, we will offer you a suitable alternative counsellor. If no suitable alternative is available or agreed, any pre-paid sessions will be refunded.

6. Trainee Counsellors — End of Placement

If you have been working with a trainee counsellor, their placement with Hope Therapy & Counselling Services will have a defined end date linked to their training programme. You will be informed of this well in advance so that a planned ending can be arranged. If you wish to continue therapy after a trainee's placement ends, we will support you in transitioning to a qualified counsellor.

7. Returning to Therapy

If you end therapy and wish to return at a later date, please contact us at contact@hopefulminds.co.uk. We will do our best to match you with the same counsellor if that is your preference and they are available. If they are not available, we will match you with a counsellor with equivalent experience and approach.

8. After Therapy Ends

Once therapy has ended, the professional relationship between you and your counsellor ends. Your counsellor will not maintain social contact with you or engage with you in any personal capacity. This is not a reflection of how your therapy went — it is an ethical requirement that protects both you and your counsellor.

Your data will be retained by Hope Therapy & Counselling Services and by your counsellor in accordance with our Data Protection & Privacy Policy.

9. Questions

If you have any questions about ending therapy, please speak with your counsellor or contact us at contact@hopefulminds.co.uk.

Contact us: contact@hopefulminds.co.uk | 0333 043 1850 | www.hopefulminds.co.uk

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