



## **Greta Pankratz, MSW, LCSW**

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### **Substance Abuse Policy**

Using alcohol and other drugs (other than those prescribed) increases the danger to one's health, even puts one at risk of death. Therapy, done well, tends to cause symptoms to get worse before better. If a person is inclined to using alcohol and/or drugs to cope with emotional pain, therapy might be the cause for increasing desire for substances. As therapy begins to explore the deeper emotional hurts, trauma, triggers and stressors; people tend to feel hurts they've never allowed themselves to fully feel. Using substances to dull this emotional pain renders therapy ineffective. Feeling the hurts is an essential step in the emotional growth.

This therapist will treat a person while they are using substances only if the person clearly understands the risks involved and agrees to getting outside help (of any form) targeted at their substance use. This therapist also reserves the right to refuse therapy for a person deemed too emotionally fragile to handle the possibility of symptoms worsening.

I understand that:

Therapy may cause me to feel pain I've never felt and make my depression, anxiety and other emotional pain worse.

Therapy may cause my cravings for my substance of choice to increase.

My use of substances during therapy could be deadly.

Therapy will be ineffective if I use substances to cope with my emotional pain.

I agree to seek help for my substance use from an outside source while in therapy.

I understand that this therapist will not be doing drug testing, or checking up to ensure you are upholding your end of this agreement.

I understand that I will not be given therapy if I am noticeably intoxicated and I will be responsible for the full cost of treatment out of pocket.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_