

# Craig Toonder, MFT

*Body-Mind Psychotherapy & Consultation in Personal Development*



## **Ketamine Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP) Informed Consent**

This informed consent document provides information that may be helpful in deciding whether to engage in Ketamine Assisted Psychotherapy (KAP). The information contained in this form pertains only to the therapeutic aspects of KAP; information about other general aspects of the psychotherapy I offer, such as office policies and procedures, fees for services, cancellation policy, and confidentiality are contained in a separate informed consent document.

### **WHAT IS KETAMINE?**

Ketamine is an anesthetic that was developed in 1963, FDA approved in 1970 as a Schedule III medication, and adopted by many hospitals and medical offices because of its proven safety, rapid onset and short duration of action. The use of ketamine in lower, sub-anesthetic doses to treat psychological issues is a newer, “off-label” use of the medicine. Studies have shown it is effective in treating treatment resistant depression, anxiety disorders, PTSD, substance abuse, and chronic pain.

### **ROUTES OF ADMINISTRATION**

Ketamine can be administered through an IV, an intramuscular injection, a nasal spray, or a sublingual (under the tongue ) tablets. The different routes of administration yield different experiences in onset, bioavailability (amount you feel) and duration of experience.

In my practice, clients will be referred to an outside physician where they will be evaluated for medical contraindication. If KAP is safe and appropriate, they will be prescribed sublingual tablets that they will self administer at the time of the ketamine sessions.

Please note that while your medical provider and I will work together to assist you, we are independent practitioners with exclusive responsibility for the separate aspects of your care that we each provide. My licensure and competence is in providing psychotherapy, including KAP, but not in prescribing or administering medications.

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## **HOW KETAMINE WORKS PSYCHOLOGICALLY**

The dissociation experienced with Ketamine can bring a feeling of detachment from one's body, environment, and usual sense of self, while also evoking a feeling of compassion. Ketamine also stimulates neural growth. Thus, ketamine can help people explore their thoughts, sensations, behaviors, and narratives in a novel, detached way, which can lead to perspective shifts and relief from negative feelings, sensations and obsessive thoughts. Additionally, ketamine stimulates the development of new neural pathways which helps solidify new ways of seeing and perceiving one's self and the world.

## **DOSAGE**

Different doses provide different experiences. A low "psycholytic" dose often helps clients connect with deeper or more unconscious aspects of their wounding and allows clients to process these issues more effectively. A higher "psychedelic" dose can allow clients to experience transpersonal states beyond their wounding, receive information about both their wounds and their true nature, leading to changes beyond the consciousness of the ego.

It is not possible to predict how sensitive each individual will be to the medicine. Therefore, a general guideline is, "starting low and going slow."

Your medical provider will give you a dose range that we will be able to work within depending on your sensitivity and treatment goals.

Ketamine can create experiences of nausea and induce vomiting. Sometimes these symptoms are psychological. Sometimes they are chemical. Your medical provider will talk with you about anti-nausea medicine in the event that this is a concern.

## **BENEFICIAL EFFECTS**

You may experience important changes in personality, mood and cognition immediately after a treatment, and/or in the days and weeks that follow. Some people do not experience benefits from the medicine. Others may not experience immediate results but find changes in personality, mood and cognition weeks or months after the sessions.

Additionally, some experiences during or after sessions may be temporarily disturbing to you. It is therefore important that you have support, socially and/or with a psychotherapist to work with both pleasant and unpleasant experiences during and after the treatment. It is also important that you have support integrating the insights and changes you experienced as a result of the ketamine sessions.

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## **THE SESSIONS**

Our initial sessions will focus on understanding your goals for treatment, a sharing of relevant history and further clarification of the process.

Ketamine sessions will be scheduled for 3 hours. The first half hour involves checking in, setting intentions and 15 minutes for absorbing the sublingual tablets. The “peak experience” lasts about 45-60 minutes. The post peak experience processing phase is a potent time both continuing to explore new experiences as well as beginning the integration phase of the work.

Integration sessions are an important part of solidifying insights and changes into daily life. Additionally, consultation session between me and your personal therapist maybe an important part of your integration process.

## **DAY OF KAP SESSION**

Be well-hydrated leading up to your KAP journey. On the day of your ketamine administration, it is important to abstain from eating or drinking 4 hours prior to your treatment, so as to avoid nausea or vomiting. It is also best to abstain from recreational drugs and alcohol a few days prior to the session.

## **CONTRAINDICATIONS & CONSIDERATIONS:**

As your KAP therapist, I am not a medical provider and cannot medically assess your appropriateness for treatment. However, I will note some of the general contraindications for KAP:

- Those who are pregnant or nursing are not eligible because of undetermined potential effects on the fetus or nursing child.
- Those with a primary psychotic or dissociative disorder or who are currently in a manic or mixed episode, having hallucinations or untreated mania are not eligible for treatment with ketamine.
- If you are currently taking ANY medications, please discuss this with your ketamine prescriber. Information on ketamine’s interaction with other medicines will be assessed by your doctor related to your eligibility for KAP.
- Medications: If you are taking Lamotrigine (Lamictal) or anxiety medications such as benzodiazepines, pregabalin, or gabapentin, as well as stimulants such as ritalin or adderall, discuss these with your medical provider as they can be contraindications for treatment and may need to be paused before treatment.

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- Medical Conditions: Unstable angina (chest pain/heart disease), uncontrolled hyperthyroidism, uncontrolled hypertension, increased intracranial pressure, glaucoma, or evidence of liver disease. Those with a history of cystitis or other bladder issues may need further evaluation. Ketamine (especially long term use) can cause cystitis.
- For those with a history of heart conditions or arrhythmia an EKG and more detailed medical clearance may be required. Untreated/uncontrolled hypertension is a contraindication to ketamine use, as it can cause a rise in blood pressure. The increase is typically comparable to normal increases in blood pressure that occur with heavy exercise.
- Ketamine is generally safe, but there have been reports of some decrease in immune function in patients receiving surgical doses of ketamine, which are much higher than KAP doses.
- Please note, there have also been reports of some decrease in immune function in patients receiving surgical doses of ketamine, these are much higher than KAP doses.

You are ultimately responsible to ensure that treatment between these two providers is coordinated, and it is my hope you are transparent with all involved. Information on ketamine's interaction with other medicines is not always predictable; any possible interactions will be assessed to help determine your eligibility for ketamine treatment.

## **POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECTS AND RISKS OF KETAMINE**

Ketamine is generally safe, but there are possible side effects. The most common physical side effects are short-term increases in blood pressure, pulse, or heart rate. Other possible side effects include dizziness, lightheadedness, sedation, impaired balance and coordination, slurred speech, mental confusion, excitability, diminished ability to see or hear accurately, headache, anxiety, nausea, vomiting, and diminished awareness of physical functions. These effects are transient and resolve as the medication ends.

Repeated, high-dose, chronic use of ketamine has caused urinary tract symptoms and even permanent bladder dysfunction in some individuals. These adverse effects are much less likely in medically supervised ketamine treatment populations, but might include more frequent, painful, or difficult urination. Please inform your providers immediately if you notice any of these side effects.

Ketamine can worsen certain psychotic symptoms in people with schizophrenia or other serious mental disorders, and may also worsen underlying psychological problems in people with severe personality disorders and dissociative disorders.

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## **POTENTIAL FOR KETAMINE ABUSE AND PHYSICAL DEPENDENCE**

Ketamine belongs to the same group of chemicals as phencyclidine (Sernyl, PCP, “Angel dust”). This group of chemical compounds are classified as hallucinogens (also known as psychedelics). Ketamine is a controlled substance and is subject to rules under the Controlled Substance Act of 1970. Medical evidence regarding the drug abuse and dependence suggests that ketamine’s abuse potential is equivalent to that of phencyclidine and other hallucinogenic substances. While Phencyclidine and other hallucinogenic compounds do not meet criteria for chemical dependence, since they do not cause tolerance and withdrawal symptoms. However, cravings have been reported by individuals with the history of heavy use of psychedelic drugs. In addition, ketamine can have effects on mood, cognition, and perception (imagery) that may make some people want to use it repeatedly.

## **EMERGENCY PROTOCOL**

You acknowledge and agree that, if a medical emergency occurs during your remote or in-office KAP session, I will call 911. You further acknowledge and agree that, if you are receiving KAP services remotely or self-guided, your chaperone also may reach out for emergency medical assistance through 911 in the event of a medical emergency.

## **YOUR DECISION**

Withdrawal from KAP is always an option. You may decide to withdraw from treatment at any time.

## **YOUR AGREEMENT**

Please read this consent form thoroughly and carefully, and feel free to ask questions about any of the information in it. Once you indicate that you have understood the benefits and risks of this treatment, you will be asked to sign this form. By signing this document, you indicate that you have understood the information provided and that you give your consent to KAP.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_