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General Data Protection Regulations

Breaking the Silence (a Meridian Centre project) takes privacy and security very seriously. We implement state of the art security and encryption protocols to assure that data integrity and privacy is maintained. As a result, we comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR).

**PRIVACY POLICY**

This Privacy Policy will inform you if, when and to whom we disclose your information; it will explain your Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”) rights relating to this information and what choices you have in how we use that information.

There is **always a privacy risk** when sharing information and/or communicating online. Your privacy and the security of information about you are very important to us. Our privacy and security guidelines apply to all Breaking the Silence employees as well as those who provide technical support and we take these privacy safeguards very seriously.

This Privacy Policy lets you know how your personal information is being collected, stored, and shared and this is line with EU/UK General Data Protection Regulations, in order to mitigate privacy risks.

**CHANGES TO TERMS**

The Terms may be changed from time to time. The most up-to-date Terms will always be the ones that are posted here. Changes to the Terms of Service will be effective immediately upon our posting them here on our website.

If we decide to make any changes which affect how we use your personal information we will place clear notifications on the front page of our website for a minimum of a month prior to those changes being implemented. This is to allow you time to review them here. If you then continue to use the Service after that time we will take it that you have agree to those changes.

**Doxy.me**

Breaking the Silence makes use of Doxy.me, telecommunications technology that provides real-time health care to patients at a distance. We can deliver therapy sessions using video-conferencing, audio communication, and/or text-messaging using mobile phones, tablets, and desktop computers. No download is required.

Doxy.me take privacy and security very seriously. They implement state of the art security and encryption protocols to assure that data integrity and privacy is maintained. As a result, Doxy.me complies with HIPAA, GDPR, PHIPA/PIPEDA, & HITECH requirements.

Doxy.me has a ‘Business Associate Agreement’ under the US legal framework HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and is thus HIPAA compliant. Although this is a US law, it guarantees that Doxy.me shares liability for the loss of your data and any lapse in privacy. They are confident they can protect us against intrusion, by providing the following industry standards:

• 128 bit end to end encryption

• Minimum data held

• This data is treated as confidential

• Data is never sold to third parties

Measure have been taken to protect your data but these cannot fully guarantee complete privacy. It is important you understand the risk and consent to sharing your data over Doxy.me in accordance with the industry standards outlines above.

Breaking the Silence cannot guarantee protection from intruders, hackers or interceptors. You use the Service and submit information to Breaking the Silence at your own risk.

I UNDERSTAND IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY TO READ, UNDERSTAND (with the support of Breaking the Silence (a Meridian Centre project)) AND CONSENT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF DOXY.ME

**What Personal and Special Category Data we Collect**

To use our service, we collect personally identifying data from you, known as ‘Personal Data’. Personal data includes your name, address, date of birth, Doctors information. We collect this to protect you in the event of you revealing you are in danger. We also retain this information to protect the reputation of our service and the well-being and safety of our staff. In providing this Personal Data you are consenting to us keeping and storing it in line with this Privacy Policy.

When you are in conversation with us you may be upset or in a difficult situation. You may choose to tell us things that are deeply personal to you, that you may never have told another person. This could mean that you may tell us things which involve the following topics:

race;

ethnic origin;

political opinions;

religious or philosophical beliefs;

trade union membership;

health;

sex life;

or sexual orientation.

This list isn’t exhaustive, and you can choose to talk with us about anything you would like or need to. However, under the GDPR, the types of information listed above are classed as special category data. That means that we require your specific consent in order to discuss any of these topics with you. This is because we will store this information within the confidential record of our conversation with you.

In providing this Special Category Data you are consenting to us keeping and storing it in line with this Privacy Policy.

**LOCATION DATA**

We do not routinely gather data about your location. If you message us, we do not automatically know where you are. There are occasions when we may ask you to give us your location. You are not under any obligation to give it to us. We will only ever ask for it if we feel that we need it to help you. You can find more information about this in the section of this policy titled “CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE TO THIRD PARTIES.”

**How we use your personal and sensitive data**

We collect Personal Data to protect you in the event of you revealing you are in danger. We also retain this information to protect the reputation of our service and the well-being and safety of our staff.

Special category data is often sensitive, and so is cleared of all personal data (so that you can never be identified) and use the anonymised data to conduct an analysis of the trends that are occurring within our conversations. We use this anonymised data for internal purposes too, such as auditing, data analysis and research to improve the service we provide.

**COLLECTION AND USE OF DATA THAT IS NEITHER PERSONAL NOR SENSITIVE**

We also collect data that is neither personal nor special category; that is, data that cannot be directly used to identify or contact you. We may collect, use, transfer, and disclose this type of data for any purpose, including but not limited to improving services, disclosing to third parties to generate support and funding for Breaking the Silence, to maintain the free service, or as required by law.

Below are examples of data that is neither personal nor sensitive, that we collect and how we may use it:

• We may use aggregated, anonymised information such as age, gender, language, and the time of our conversation to better understand user behaviour and improve our service.

• We also may collect information regarding usage of Breaking the Silence text service, such as the conversation volume, average length of conversation, and other data. This information is aggregated and helps us conduct internal research, so we can improve the quality of our service.

**Secure Storage**

We make every effort to keep all information confidential. Breaking the Silence (a Meridian Centre project) will anonymise your data , storing it in a secure and locked filing cabinet at the Meridian Centre, in a locked office. Your personal information is stored securely and confidentially. To join the therapy service we require your Personal Data. We collect this to protect you in the event of you revealing you are in danger. We also retain this information to protect the reputation of our service and the well-being and safety of our staff. This information is stored along with your Sensitive Data at the Meridian Centre, in a lockable cabinet, in a locked office.

We take notes during sessions and regularly ask for feedback and psychoanalytical data. This will be stored the same way. Only the head of service at Breaking the Silence (a Meridian Centre project) and the Data Controller have access to these files.

We require a phone number and/or email address for administration purposes, e.g. to contact you between sessions in order to cancel or amend an appointment. For online clients, an alternative mode of communication will be agreed. Where this is a mobile number, Breaking the Silence (a Meridian Centre project) will anonymise your number, storing it on this contract in a secure and locked filing cabinet at the Meridian Centre, in a locked office. Likewise your email address will be stored the same way. Only the head of service at Breaking the Silence (a Meridian Centre project) and the Data Controller have access.

Only the Trustees and the Head of Service have access. The information will be stored for 7 years from the point of you leaving our service at which stage it will be deleted.

When using your number, it will be keyed into a lockable phone requiring 2 step verification, including the use of facial recognition software. Your number will not be stored on the device. You will be called from a withheld number to further protect you against breaches of you

**Confidentiality and its legal exceptions**

Breaking the Silence respects and seeks to preserve the confidentiality of people who use our service. The information disclosed during the course of counselling is confidential. However there are legal exceptions (detailed below).

We will always endeavour to get your consent before we contact a third party but there are situations, described below, where we will pass on information without consent. If we deem that the situation is safe for you, we will work with you in making decisions about involving a third party. We will only share information with people or entities when the law allows us to do so.

We will always think carefully about whether we need to break confidentiality. This is especially important if you are a young person, aged under 18. We will choose to break confidentiality and engage with a third party in the following circumstances:

* You ask us to;
* We believe that your life or someone else’s life is in imminent danger;
* You are a young person, aged under 18, who is being hurt, abused or neglected;
* You tell us that you are endangering the safety of another person.

We are also unable to provide confidentiality in the following circumstances:

* You tell us something that contains specific information about a terrorist suspect or terrorist activity that will take place or has taken place in the world. This information will immediately be disclosed to the police;
* Breaking the Silence is forced through legal action to disclose specific confidential information; this can include legal action taken under the Data Protection Act and during criminal investigations.

**POLICE, SOCIAL AND MEDICAL SERVICES**

If one of our therapists identifies imminent risk of harm to yourself or someone else (you have the desire, plan, means, timeframe) or suspects emotional/physical abuse or neglect, they may let you know they’re concerned about your safety. If they have concerns about your safety or you share information about the abuse of a child or young person, they may contact the police, medical, or social services.

**OUTSIDE SIGNPOSTS**

Sometimes, we may signpost you to another service. We will give you information to help you contact them, but we will NOT give them your contact information. It is up to you if you want to follow our signpost to their service. If you would like to receive support from other services, please note that different rules may apply to their use or disclosure of Personal and Special Category Data. We do not control the privacy policies of other services.

**THIRD PARTY SERVICES**

If you contact us through a third-party service your information may be shared between us and that third party. For example, in the exceptional circumstances described above, we and the third party may exchange your location information to contact local police, medical or social services in an emergency. We are not responsible for and make no representations regarding the policies of business practices of any Third-Party Services.

If you contact us through a Third-Party Service, you are subject to these Terms as well as the terms and policies of the Third-Party Service. We encourage you to review the terms and policies of any Third-Party Service you use to contact Breaking the Silence. If you do not wish to be subject to a Third-Party Service’s terms or policies, please do not contact Breaking the Silence through a Third-Party Service; instead you should contact us by calling or emailing Breaking the Silence.

**OTHER THIRD PARTIES; LEGAL PROCESSES**

In certain narrow circumstances, we may disclose Personal Data that we collect from you to additional third parties if we believe such disclosure is necessary:

* to comply with the law or in response to a court order, government request, or other legal process;
* to protect the interests, rights, safety, or property of Breaking the Silence, its affiliates, employees, including but not limited to our therapists.

**RETENTION OF INFORMATION**

We retain and store two different types of data after our conversation with you. Your Personal and Special Category Data, will be stored for up to 7 years after you last contact us. Once this time has passed we will permanently delete this data from our records. If you contact us again after this time, you will appear to be a new service user. We will not have any record of our previous conversations with you.

We anonymise the data that is extracted from our conversations with you. This anonymised data will be retained indefinitely. This data is independent of the text record and cannot be attributed to you. We keep this data as it helps us to improve our own services and it contributes to our data set.

**YOU SHOULD ALSO PROTECT YOURSELF**

Always be careful and responsible regarding your Personal and Sensitive Data.

If you have concerns about those around you intercepting or infringing upon your privacy, we recommend opening a private browser to ensure no record of your visit to Doxy.me is stored on your computer/laptop/tablet/phone. This also ensures no cookies or site data is retained on your device. Your activity might still be visible to your internet service provider, employer, school, university (activity does not include your audio-visual engagement with Breaking the Silence). If you use a non private browser, you may want to clear us from your history should you access our website from your computer/laptop/tablet/mobile phone and make sure we are not saved in your mobile telephone contact list.

**Right to Access**

You have the right to ask for a copy of your personal information, free of charge, in an electronic or paper format. You also have the right to ask us to amend or change any incorrect information about you.

**Right to be Forgotten**

You have the right to ask us to erase any information that we hold about you. This includes your personal information that is no longer relevant to original purposes, or if you wish to withdraw consent.

In all cases and when considering such requests, these rights are obligatory unless it’s information that we have a legal obligation to retain.

**Data Portability**

As the client, you have the right to receive your personal information which you previously provided, and also have the right to transfer that information to another party. For the purposes of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, the data “controller” is Imran Manzoor.

**YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR PERSONAL AND SENSITIVE DATA**

If you wish to exercise any of your rights, as listed below please write to our Data Controller at meridiancentre@hotmail.co.uk or the address below for :

a. Access to your personal information;

b. Objection to processing of your personal information;

c. Objection to automated decision-making;

d. Restriction of processing of your personal information;

e. Your personal data portability;

f. Rectification of your personal information; or

g. Erasure of your personal information.

If you make a request relating to any of the rights listed above, we will consider each request in accordance with all applicable data protection laws and regulations. No administration fee will be charged for considering and/or complying with such a request unless the request is deemed to be excessive in nature.

Upon successful verification of your identity you are entitled to obtain the following information about your own personal information:

a. The purposes of the collection, processing, use and storage of your personal data.

b. The categories of personal data stored about you.

c. The recipients or categories of recipients to whom your personal data has been or may be transmitted, along with the location of those recipients.

d. The envisaged period of storage for your personal data or the rationale for determining the storage period.

e. The use of any automated decision-making and/or profiling.

You may request that we delete your Personal and Sensitive Data, such as your name, physical address (if applicable), phone number, and texts/message transcripts, after which you will be prompted to confirm your request.

You can make any of the other above requests by emailing meridiancentre@hotmail.co.uk or by writing to:

Data Protection Officer

Meridian Centre

St Paul’s Road,

Bradford

BD8 7LS

We want to make sure that your personal information is accurate and up to date. You may ask us to correct or remove information you think is inaccurate.

**COMPLAINTS**

If you have any questions or concerns about this Privacy Policy and our privacy practices or if you wish to file a complaint, please contact our Care Team by emailing Iinfo@breaking-the-silence.org.uk

You have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) if you believe your data has been processed in a way that does not comply with the GDPR. You can do so by calling the ICO helpline on 0303 123 1113 or via their website.

Data Protection Officer

Contact the Meridian Centre Data Protection Officer by emailing meridiancentre@hotmail.co.uk or by writing to:

Data Protection Officer

Meridian Centre

St Paul’s Road,

Bradford

BD8 7LS