

Privacy Policy

Michael Rimmer Counselling

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1. Purpose of this Policy

This privacy policy explains how I, **Michael Rimmer**, collect, use, store, and protect your personal information in line with the **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

It applies to all counselling and supervision services offered both **online and in person**.

2. What Information I Collect

When you contact me, I may collect:

- Your name, contact details, and availability
 - Relevant background information you choose to share before or during sessions
 - Session notes (kept brief and factual)
 - Emails or messages you send to arrange appointments or discuss practical matters
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3. Why I Collect This Information

I collect and process personal data so that I can:

- Provide counselling or supervision safely and effectively
- Maintain appropriate records in line with professional and legal standards
- Contact you about appointments, cancellations, or service updates

The lawful basis for processing your data is **legitimate interest** (to provide a contracted professional service) and, where applicable, **consent**.

4. How Your Data Is Stored

- All digital notes and records are **securely encrypted** and password protected.
- Devices used for communication or record keeping are also protected with encryption and two-factor authentication.
- Any paper records (if used) are stored in a locked cabinet accessible only to me.

5. How Long Your Data Is Kept

Client records are retained for **seven (7) years** after your final session, as required by professional guidelines.

After this period, all records are **securely deleted or destroyed**.

6. Sharing of Information

Your personal data is **confidential** and will **not be shared** with anyone except in the following circumstances:

- **Legal obligation** (e.g. court order, terrorism, or money-laundering legislation)
- **Safeguarding concerns** (where there is risk of serious harm to you or another person)
- **Emergency situations** (e.g. sudden illness during a session where emergency services require details)

In supervision, I may discuss client work in a **non-identifiable** way, to maintain ethical practice, in line with the **BACP** and **NCS** ethical frameworks.

7. Your Rights

Under UK GDPR, you have the right to:

- Request a copy of the data I hold about you
- Ask for corrections to inaccurate information
- Request that I erase your data (where legally possible)
- Restrict or object to certain processing
- Lodge a complaint with the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)** if you are concerned about how your data is handled

ICO website: www.ico.org.uk

8. Communication by Email or Online Platforms

Emails are stored in secure, encrypted systems.

For online sessions, I use **secure video platforms** and will always explain any relevant privacy settings.

Please remember that while I take all reasonable precautions, no online communication can be 100% secure.

9. Updates to This Policy

This policy may be updated occasionally to reflect changes in legislation or professional practice.

The most recent version will always be available on my website or on request.

Contact:

If you have any questions or wish to exercise your data rights, please contact:

 mike@mrcounselling.uk