



**Minimizing Complaints  
by Adopting Appropriate  
Business and Professional  
Practices**

James Rye

# Minimizing Risk

---

The nature of our work  
and the nature of our client  
group

means we can never  
eliminate all risk

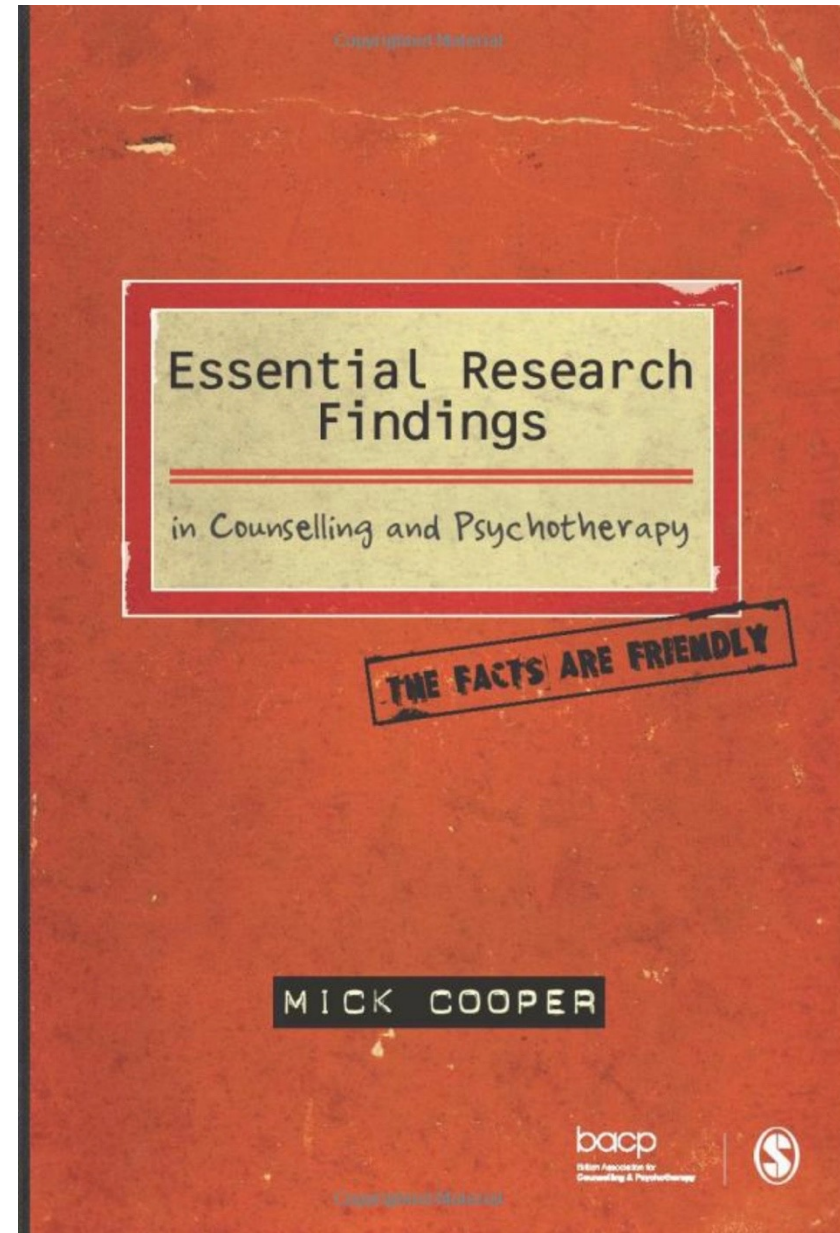




# Mick Cooper

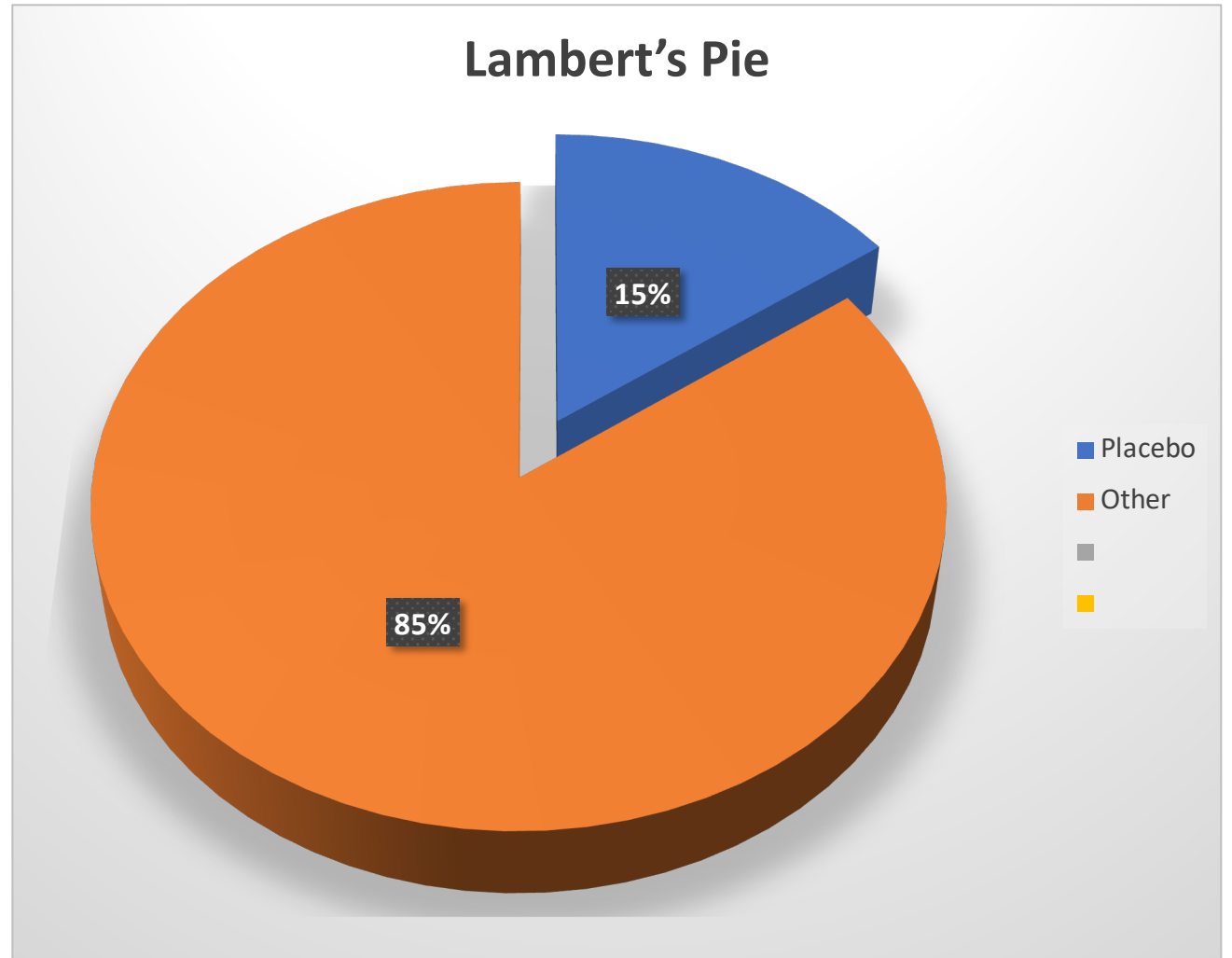
---

Essential Research Findings  
In Counselling and Psychotherapy



# Factors Influencing Therapy Outcome

Placebo 15%

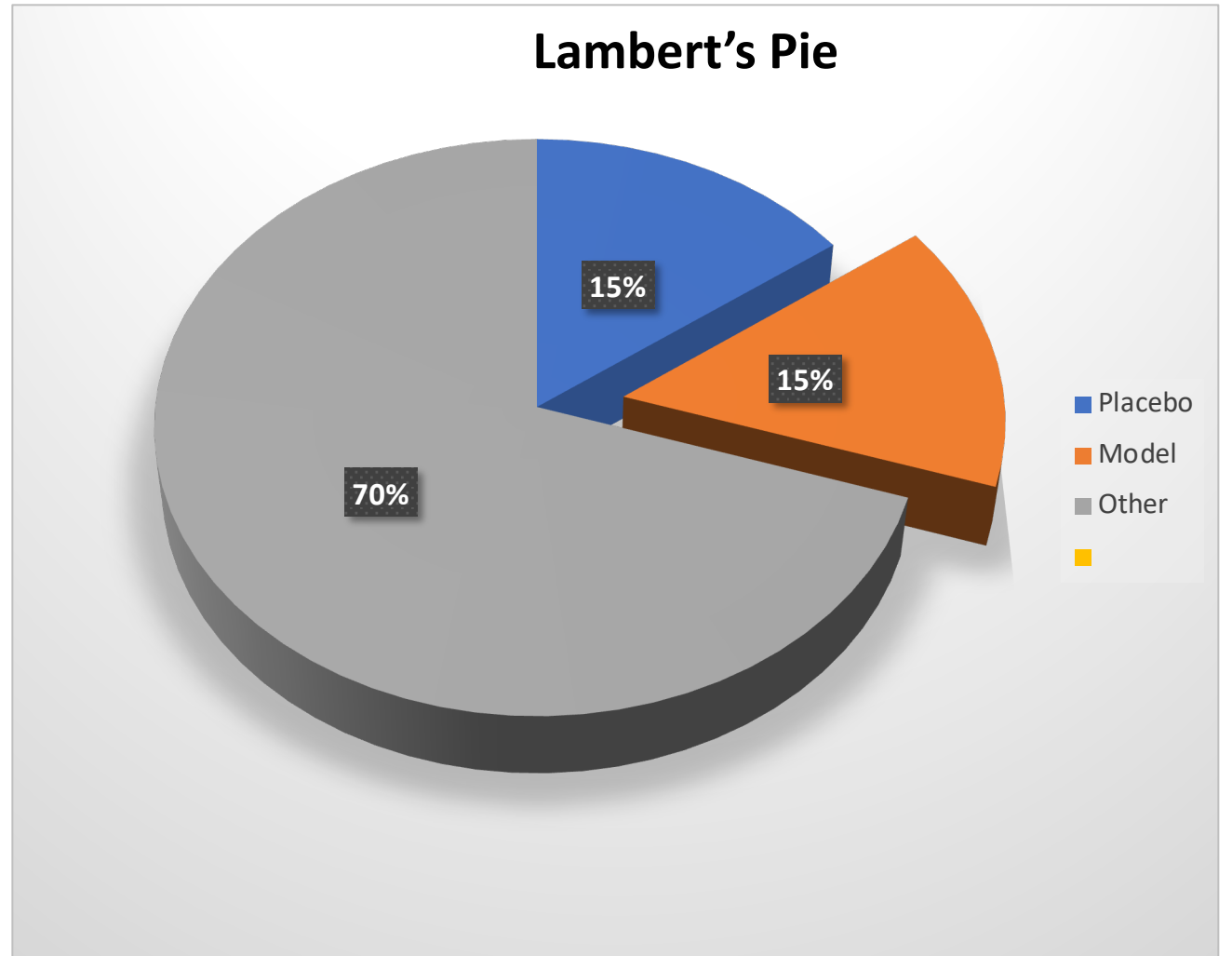




# Factors Influencing Therapy Outcome

Placebo 15%

Model 15%

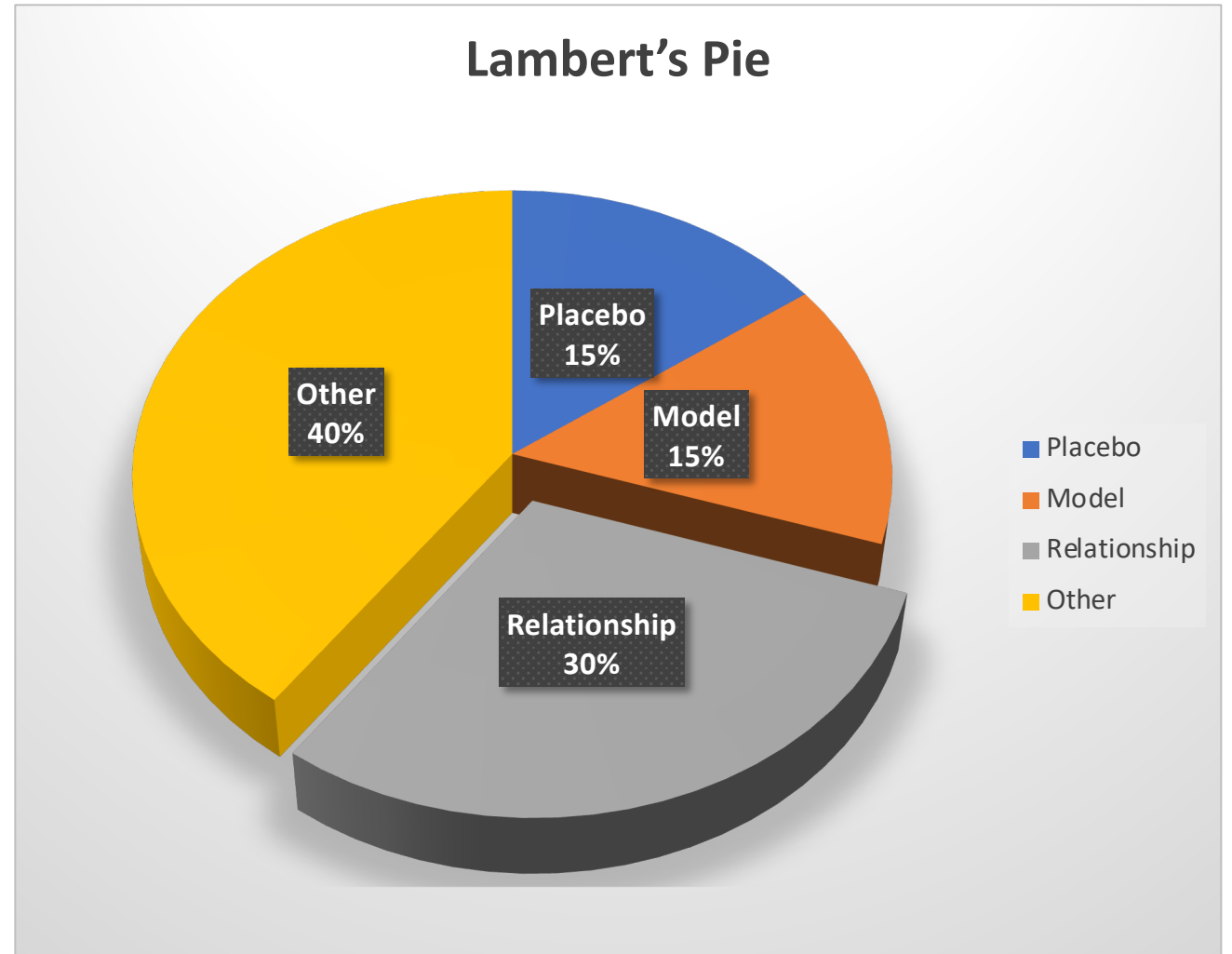


# Factors Influencing Therapy Outcome

Placebo 15%

Model 15%

Relationship 30%



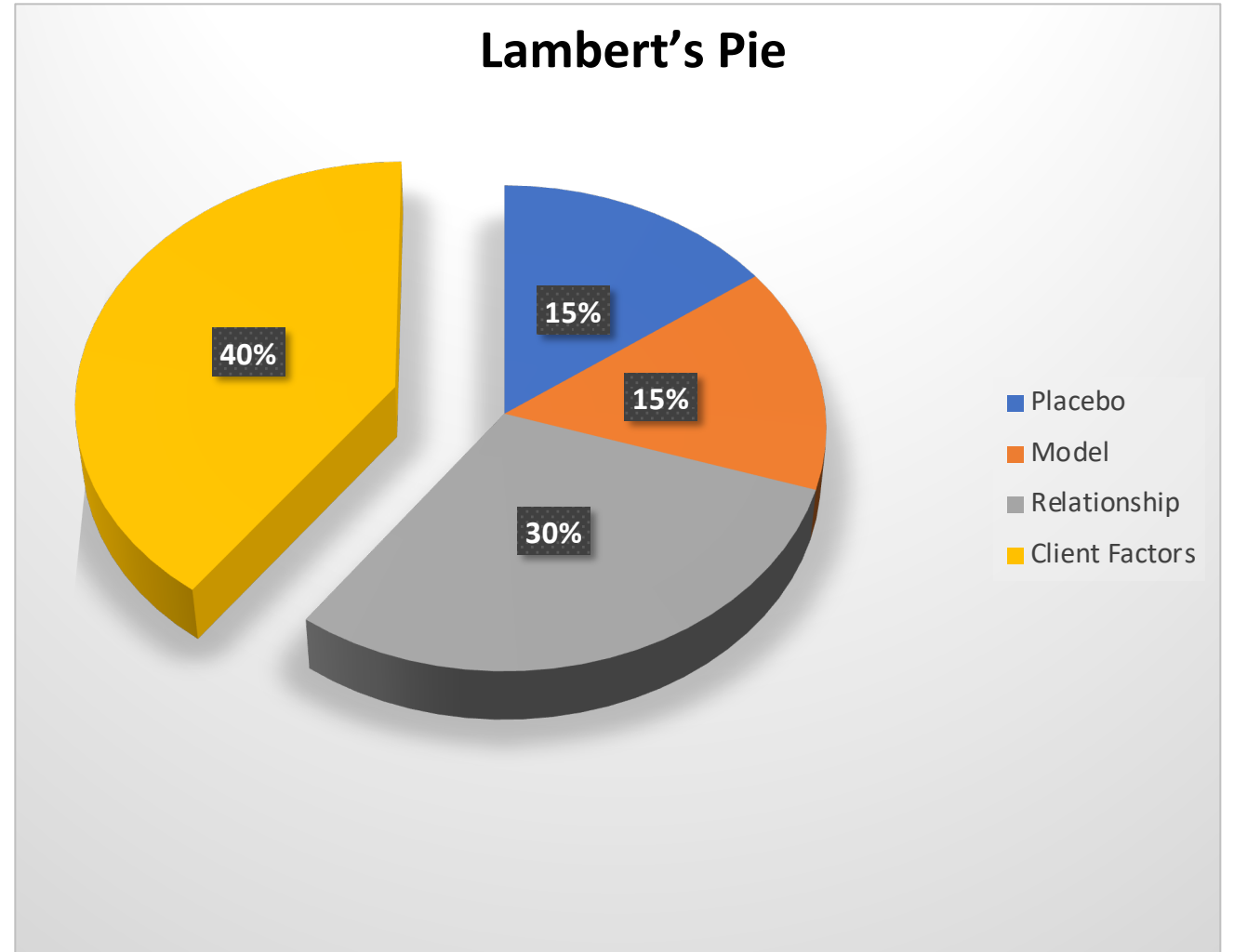
# Factors Influencing Therapy Outcome

Placebo 15%

Model 15%

Relationship 30%

Client Factors 40%





## What Increases Private Practice Risk?



- Not entire clarity and protection over titles

## What Increases Private Practice Risk?



- Not entire clarity and protection over titles
- Not a sufficiently regulated training/entry procedure

## What Increases Private Practice Risk?



- Not entire clarity and protection over titles
- Not a sufficiently regulated training/entry procedure
- No existing procedures and structures in place



## What Increases Private Practice Risk?



- Not entire clarity and protection over titles
- Not a sufficiently regulated training/entry procedure
- No existing procedures and structures in place
- Little support (no group history or experience to draw on)

# The General Irony

---

- Responsibility
- Boundaries
- Clarity





# The Road Map

- 
- Advertising
  - Assessment
  - Contracts/GDPR
  - At A Distance
  - “Wills”







Advertising

# Advertising



- Why should I trust you to sell me this product?
- How strong is your experience?
- What is your expertise?

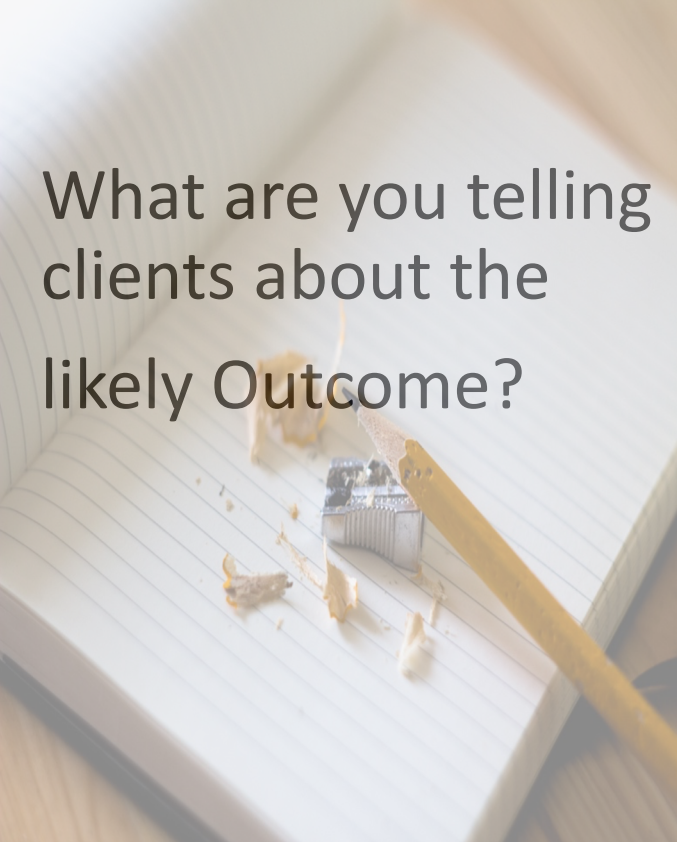
# Advertising



- How will therapy be delivered?
- What kind of things are likely to happen?
- Will there be homework?



# Advertising



What are you telling clients about the likely Outcome?

- A diagnosis?
- A fix? - “Explore together ...”, “Working together towards an agreed outcome ...”, “Reaching an understanding ...”
- What would “success” look like and how likely is it?

# Advertising

---

Are we doing enough with words to clearly and honestly explain as much as we can about what we are expecting the client to buy into?







Assessment



Assessment

---

An element of  
Gatekeeping ...





We don't have to ...

- save EVERYONE
- do EVERYTHING
- do the WHOLE JOURNEY



—

# The Shop/Restaurant

---





## The Shop/Restaurant

---

- Pretend







## The Shop/Restaurant

---

- Pretend
- Learn





## The Shop/Restaurant

---

- Pretend
- Learn
- Re-direct





# Assessment



- Client self-reflection - an emotional life

# Assessment



- Client self-reflection - an emotional life
- Client responsibility - not just others or organic factors

# Assessment



- Client self-reflection - an emotional life
- Client responsibility - not just others or organic factors
- Client motivation - to do some work

# Assessment



- Client self-reflection - an emotional life
- Client responsibility - not just others or organic factors
- Client motivation - to do some work
- Client stability - able to focus, able to tolerate possible further distress



# Assessment



- Client self-reflection - an emotional life
- Client responsibility - not just others or organic factors
- Client motivation - to do some work
- Client stability - able to focus, able to tolerate possible further distress
- Client rapport - able to engage with the therapist

# Assessment



- Client Group
- Topic
- Level

# Assessment



- Not necessarily one session
- Not necessarily all over
- Clear expectations and boundaries





Emergency Ambulance



London Ambulance Service NHS





# Contracts



---

## Contracts

---

- Legal enforcement
- Disenfranchising
- Trickery
- Interfering





---

## Contracts (Mutual Agreement)

---

- Clarification
- Problem Avoidance
- Helping



# Client Details

---

- Name
- Phone/Email
- Address
- GP
- ?Other?

THIS

IS WHO

I AM

# Expectations About Contact

- 
- Length and frequency of meetings



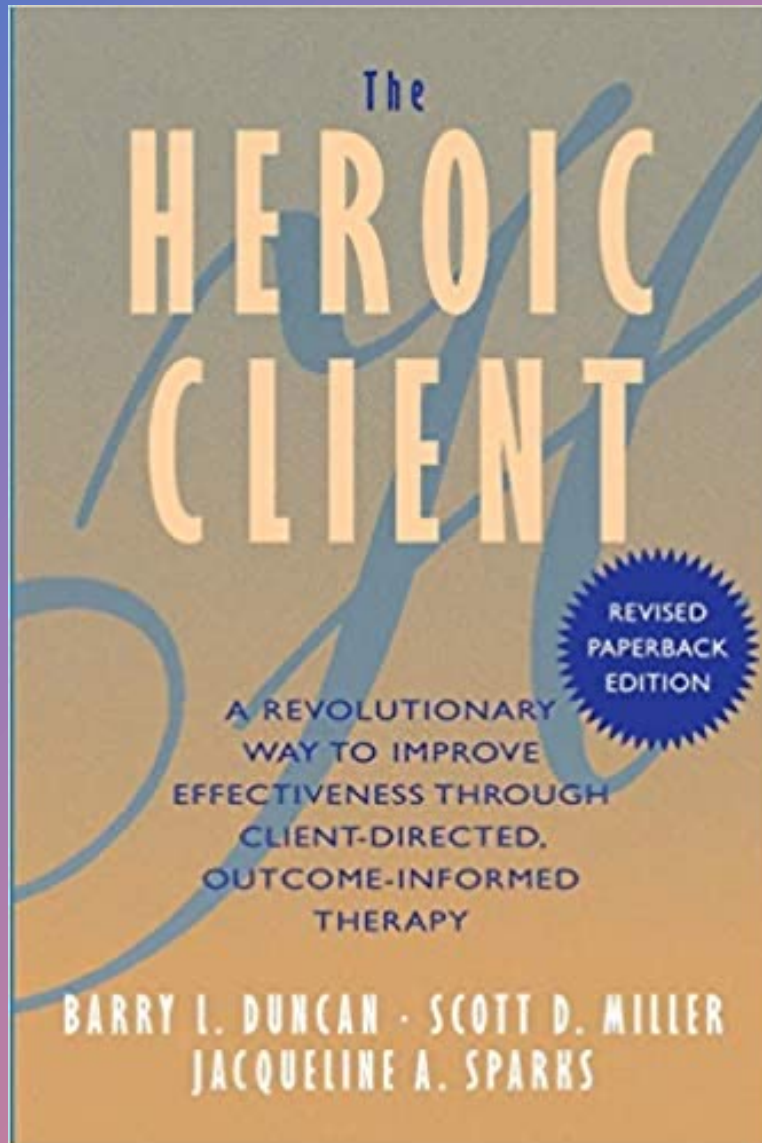


# Expectations About Contact

- 
- Length and frequency of meetings
  - Reviews







## The Heroic Client

- Barry Duncan
- Scott Miller
- Jacqueline Sparks

# Expectations About Contact

- 
- Length and frequency of meetings
  - Reviews
  - Starting and endings





# Expectations About Contact

- 
- Length and frequency of meetings
  - Reviews
  - Starting and endings
  - Arriving late





# Expectations About Contact

---

- Length and frequency of meetings
- Reviews
- Starting and endings
- Arriving late
- Interruptions





# Expectations About Contact

---

- Length and frequency of meetings
- Reviews
- Starting and endings
- Arriving late
- Interruptions
- Contact outside of sessions





# Expectations About Contact

---

- Length and frequency of meetings
- Reviews
- Starting and endings
- Arriving late
- Interruptions
- Contact outside of sessions
- Non-contact





# Confidentiality

---

- Confidential, but ...
- X
- Y
- Z





# Processes

## Sometimes

- 
- ... clarification of issues





# Processes

## Sometimes

- 
- ... clarification of issues
  - ... help in understanding





# Processes

## Sometimes

- 
- ... clarification of issues
  - ... help in understanding
  - ... looking for internal resources to bring about any desired change





# Processes

## Sometimes

- 
- ... clarification of issues
  - ... help in understanding
  - ... looking for internal resources to bring about any desired change
  - ... considering links between past and present





# Processes

## Sometimes

- 
- ... clarification of issues
  - ... help in understanding
  - ... looking for internal resources to bring about any desired change
  - ... considering links between past and present
  - ... considering links between thought, feeling, and behaviour





# Money

- How much?





# Money

- How much?
- When?





# Money

- 
- How much?
  - When?
  - How?





# Money

---

- How much?
- When?
- How?
- What if ...?

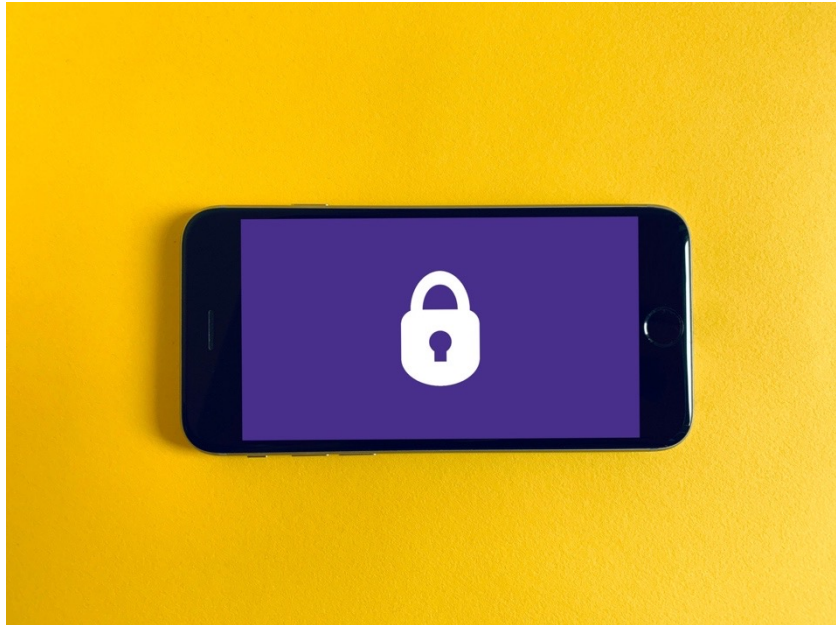




GDPR

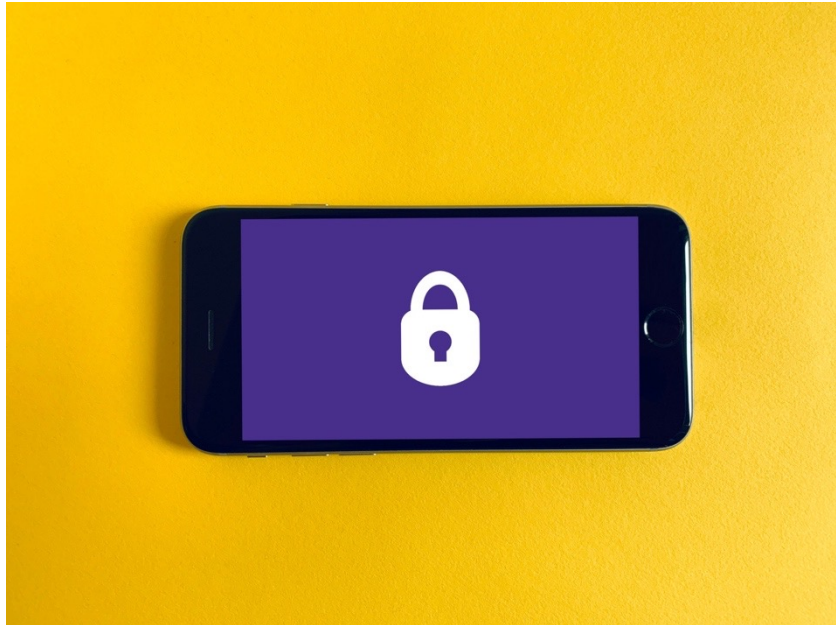


GDPR



Who?

# GDPR

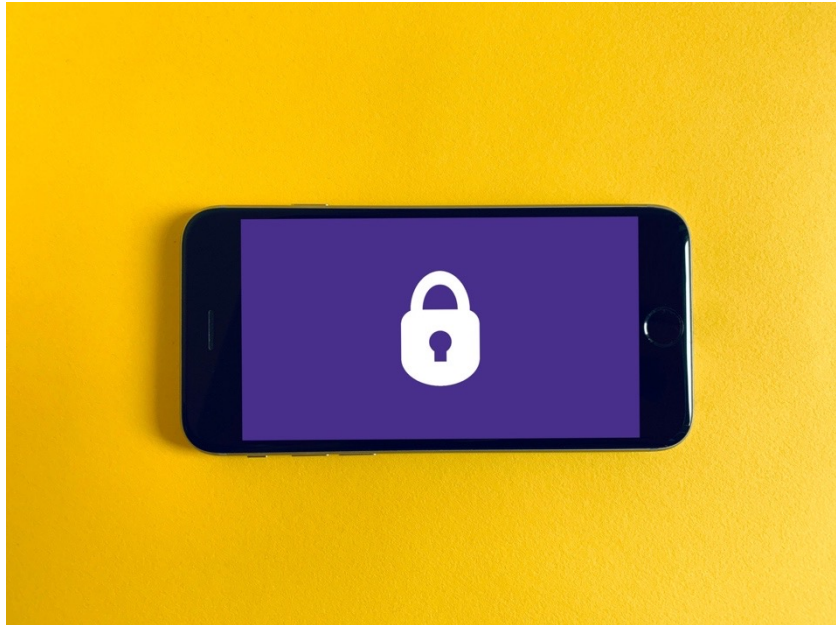


Who?

What?



# GDPR

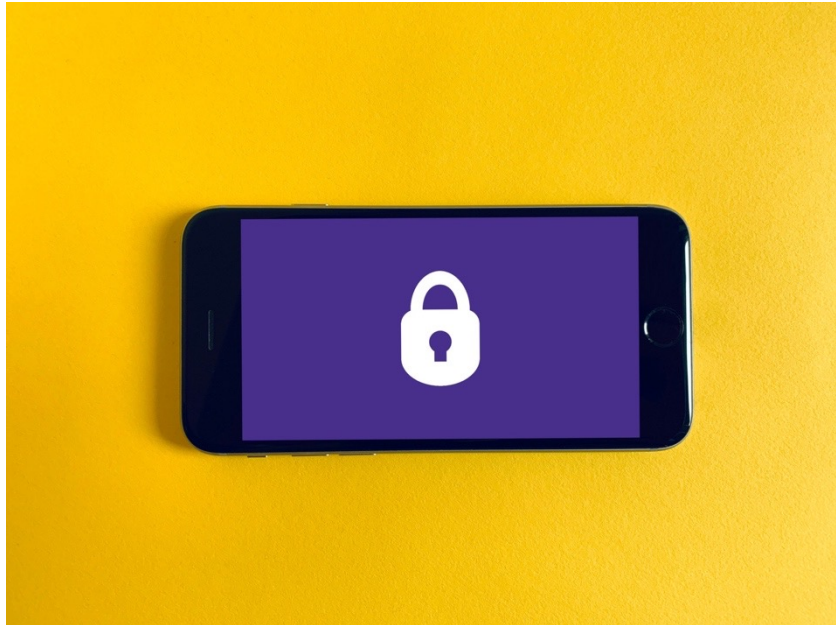


Who?

What?

Why?

# GDPR



Who?

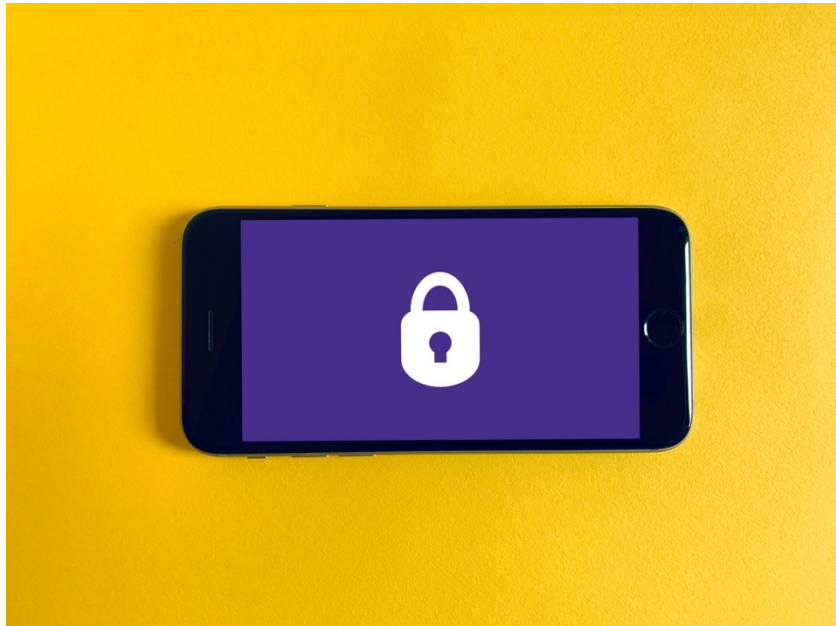
What?

Why?

How?



# GDPR



Who?

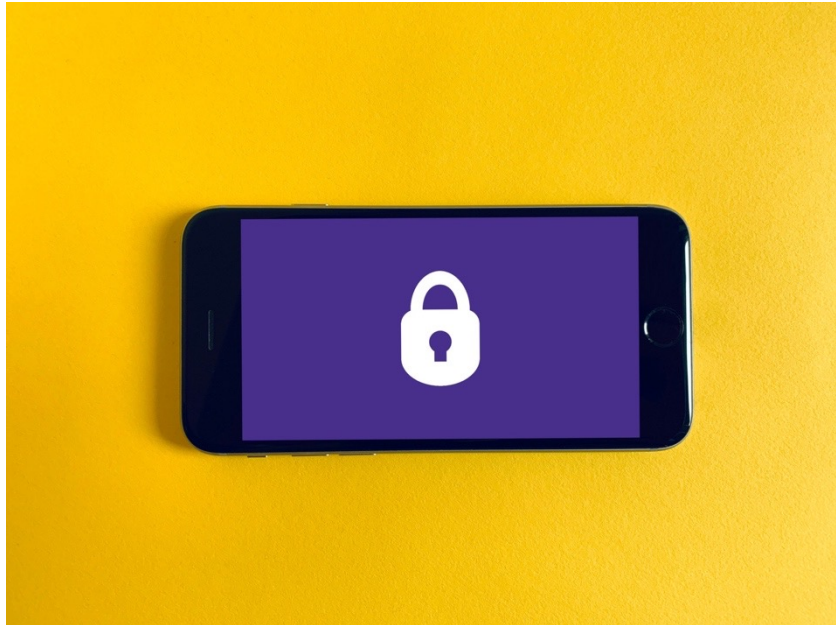
What?

Why?

How?

For How  
Long?

# GDPR



Who?

What?

Why?

How?

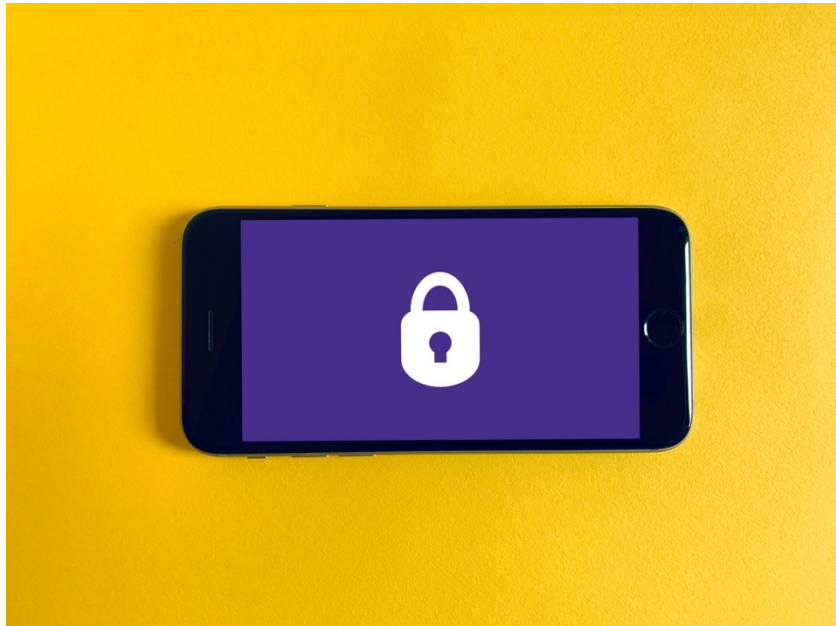
For How Long?

Client's Rights?

- Check
- Be Removed
- Be Informed



# GDPR



Who?

What?

Why?

How?

For How Long?

Client's Rights?

- Check
- Be Removed
- Be Informed

Acceptance

# GDPR

## Your information

- I, XXXX, am the Data Controller for your information. I am collecting your name, contact, and GP details for the purpose of being able to contact you during our work together and, if necessary, to exercise an agreed level of professional care for you.
- I also keep brief session notes (see below). You have the right to access the information I hold on you, the right for that information to be removed, and the right to be informed if a data breach has occurred.



# GDPR

## Record Keeping

- At the end of every session I will make brief typed notes of the discussion as an aide memoire for myself. These notes do not form part of any NHS Record.
- Records will be kept securely for 36 months and will then be securely destroyed. Occasionally a referral agency may require me to destroy relevant records earlier.
- Your records are stored in a password protected and encrypted electronic format in a cloud storage system.

# Explicit Consent



- Have you read and understood this agreement?
- Do you consent to me collecting, using, and storing your data in this way?
- Name (please print):
- Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: .....





---

## Good Contracting

---

- Occasion
- Time
- Checking



Online/Phone



A person wearing a tan, textured sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, using a laptop. Their left hand is on the laptop trackpad, and their right hand is on the keyboard. They are wearing several gold bangles on their left wrist. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

## Online/Phone Issues

### Security

- Electronic
- Physical
- Emotional



A person wearing a tan, textured sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, using a laptop. Their left hand is on the keyboard, and their right hand is on the trackpad. They are wearing several gold bangles on their left wrist. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

## Online/Phone Issues

- “Paperwork”



A person wearing a tan, textured sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, using a laptop. Their left hand is on the keyboard, and their right hand is on the trackpad. They are wearing several gold bangles on their left wrist. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

## Online/Phone Issues

- “Paperwork”
- Payment



A person wearing a tan, textured sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, using a laptop. Their left hand is on the keyboard, and their right hand is on the trackpad. They are wearing several gold bangles on their left wrist. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting. Overlaid on the right side of the image is a white semi-transparent box containing text.

## Online/Phone Issues

- “Paperwork”
- Payment
- Broken Contact



A person wearing a tan, textured sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, using a laptop. Their left hand is on the laptop trackpad, and their right hand is on the keyboard. They are wearing several gold bangles on their left wrist. The background is a blurred office setting.

## Online/Phone Issues

- “Paperwork”
- Payment
- Broken Contact
- Counselling Issues
  - Increased checking



A person wearing a tan, textured sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, using a laptop. Their left hand is on the laptop trackpad, and their right hand is near the keyboard. They are wearing several gold bangles on their left wrist. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting.

# Online/Phone Issues

- “Paperwork”
- Payment
- Broken Contact
- Counselling Issues
  - Increased checking
  - Attachments /Abandonment



A person wearing a tan, textured sweater is sitting at a wooden desk, using a laptop. Their left hand is on the laptop trackpad, and their right hand is on the keyboard. They are wearing several gold bangles on their left wrist. The background is a blurred office setting.

## Online/Phone Issues

- “Paperwork”
- Payment
- Broken Contact
- Counselling Issues
  - Increased checking
  - Attachments /Abandonment
  - Disinhibition





Wills





---

## Wills

---

- Legal enforcement
- Disenfranchising
- Trickery
- Interfering



---

## Mutual Agreement

---

- Clarification
- Problem Avoidance
- Helping





Continuing Care  
Agreement

---

- Who?





# Continuing Care Agreement

---

- Who?
- Where?





Continuing Care  
Agreement

---

- Who?
- Where?
- What?





## Continuing Care Agreement

---

- Who?
- Where?
- What?
- How Long?

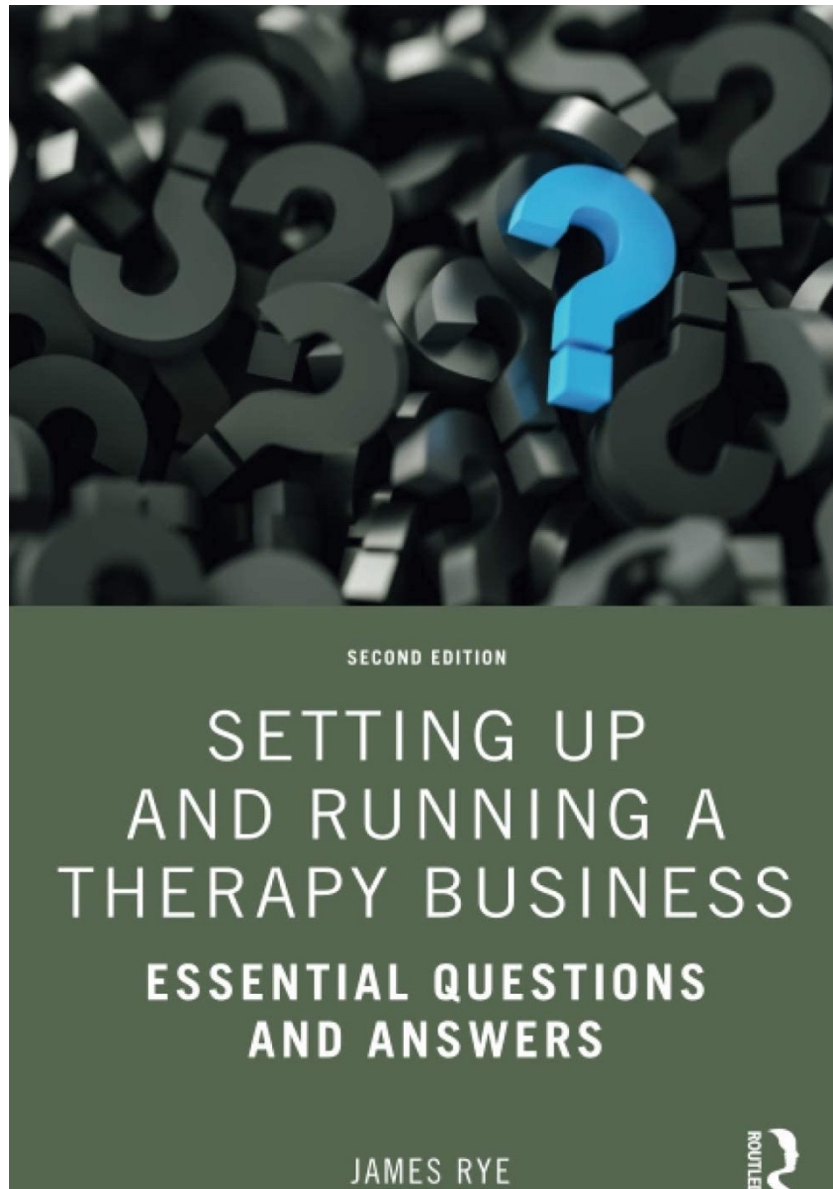




Continuing Care  
Agreement

---

- Who?
- Where?
- What?
- How Long?
- How Much?



- Images sourced from UnSplash.com
- Card Readers: e.g. Square, SumUp (i)Zettle, Paypal
- Free Online Booking/Reminders: 10to8.com
- **Second Edition** of James Rye's Book: <https://amzn.to/3i5tQ3b>
- Starting to Work Online: <https://bit.ly/3rqEYyL>