

Elemental Counseling Rates and Sliding Scale, 2021

Rates based on income from most recent tax return

1-3 Family Members	4+ Family Members	45 minutes*	60 minutes	90 minutes
0-\$35,000	0-\$45,000	\$50	\$75	\$100
\$35,000-\$60,000	\$45,000-\$70,000	\$70	\$100	\$140
\$60,000-\$85,000	\$70,000-\$95,000	\$90	\$120	\$160
\$85,000-\$110,000	\$95,000-\$120,000	\$110	\$140	\$180
\$110,000+	\$120,000+	\$130	\$160	\$220

*I offer 45 minute sessions mostly for adolescents, who sometimes process and focus better in shorter chunks. If you are an adult interested in this option, let's talk. Ecotherapy, my primary modality, is far more naturally suited to longer sessions and I find adult sessions to be most effective with 60 minutes. But if 45 minutes is what makes it possible to come to therapy, we'll experiment with how we can make it most effective. (And if I find I can't make 45 minute sessions effective for adults, I will stop offering them.)

I do not ask for income verification. Please assess on your own where you fit and enter the rate you can pay when asked during the intake process. If your financial circumstances change significantly during our work together, please let me know and we will re-establish a rate. I recognize that income alone is not a full financial picture and financial reality is always complicated. If you feel your circumstances place you in a different bracket in either direction, please do take that into account. The examples below may help if the above grid does not adequately represent your circumstances.

Consider paying less on the scale if you:

- Are supporting children or have other dependents
- Have significant debt
- Have ongoing medical expenses not covered by insurance
- Receive public assistance
- Have immigration-related expenses
- Care for an elder with limited financial support
- Are an unpaid community organizer

Consider paying more on the scale if you:

- Own the home you live in
- Have investments, retirement accounts, or inherited money
- Travel recreationally
- Have access to family money and resources in times of need
- Work part time by choice or could do so if you wanted to

- Have a relatively high degree of earning power due to level of education (or gender and racial privilege, class background, etc.) Even if you are not currently exercising your earning power, recognize this as a choice.

I know that most of you could choose to see a therapist who takes your insurance. I take your investment in therapy (and in yourself) very seriously and will do everything in my power to make sure your investment pays out significantly with meaningful personal growth and change. If at any point I feel that your goals for therapy cannot be supported by my practice (either because I do not have the appropriate training/skills for your concerns, or because your goals may require more frequent sessions than you can afford out of pocket), I will do my best to refer you to appropriate community resources and/or an insurance based provider.

Why a sliding scale?

- There is tremendous inequity in our country, and the income gap keeps getting wider and wider. A sliding scale is one way to acknowledge that we did not all come into the world with access to the same resources and opportunities. It also recognizes that our culture financially values some professions far more than others in ways that often does not represent the true value of those professions.
- By asking people who can pay more to do so, I can offer therapy to people with fewer resources while sustaining my own livelihood.

Why not insurance?

- Insurance requires a diagnosis and defined course of treatment. Based on this information, insurance companies can dictate the number and length of sessions as well as acceptable types of 'treatment'. These mandates have a lot to do with financial expediency and less to do with meaningful support. Working outside the insurance model allows us to be flexible and responsive to your actual needs and what would truly best support you.
- The insurance model is based on the principle that clients are 'mentally ill' and need a "diagnosis" so they can receive 'treatment'. I believe that being human is hard, and that we live in a culture that makes being human even harder. It makes sense we all need a little extra support.

Why is counseling so expensive, even at the lowest end of the sliding scale?

- As a self-employed therapist, my session rates need to cover my training, health insurance, vacation time and sick time, rent, licensing, supervision, continuing education, and lots more. My rates are set as low as possible to support the financial well-being of my business and my own work-life balance. Attending to these dynamics allows me to be as effective and caring in my work as possible.
- I am committed to offering free content via my website and other avenues. I carry at least one pro bono slot. I am always open to and seeking collaboration and creative partnerships that make support more available and affordable (e.g. offering programming through libraries, hospitals, etc., that is low/no cost to the participants.)

Whoa, that's a lot of information.

- Yep. I tried to reduce it but the financial landscape in this country is complicated and deeply unjust. My attempt to grapple with that in my own small way is not easily communicable in a handful of words or a table. If any part of this document brings up questions, concerns, or reflections, I am more than happy to explore those with you.