



**Caitriona King MA PhD MICP**

**Accredited Psychoanalytical Psychotherapist**

**Tel: 086 8114757**

**[www.timeandspace.ie](http://www.timeandspace.ie)**

### **COVID-19: Resumption of Face to Face sessions**

With the lifting of some restrictions on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2020, Psychotherapy can be seen as “an essential service,” under the “Human Health and Social Work Activities” of the Dept. of Health Guidelines. However, guidelines for returning to work are rigorous and demand careful planning for both the therapist and the client, in order to try and keep our premises, therapist and clients, safe.

The three core components in the Government guidelines on COVID-19 are to sanitise hands, practice cough and sneeze hygiene and maintain social distancing. Therefore, the following applies (subject to ongoing review):

1. Information on mask wearing appears to suggest that it can help minimise spreading of the virus, particularly when sharing the same space for an extended period of conversation (like a 1 hour session). It is an advisory that masks or visors be worn. As this is contradictory to the concept of face to face therapy, this will probably be the most difficult challenge. For their own assurance, clients must provide their own mask or visor and remove it from the premises, each visit. The same applies to tissues, water bottles, coffee cups or anything else used by the client in the session. A larger room is essential to maintain the 2m distance. We are fortunate in Santry, that both consulting rooms are large enough to maintain a 2m distance. This will be measured and marked.
2. Windows must be kept open in each therapy room for the duration of each session since well-ventilated spaces are safer.
3. A 15 minute interval between clients must be scheduled, in order to allow time for airborne droplets to settle. Sessions must be kept to time.
4. It is advised that waiting facilities not be used, including for people accompanying clients to appointments.
5. All wipeable surfaces must be wiped between sessions (chair surfaces, tables, tissue boxes, door handles etc). It is safer for clients to bring their own tissues. For fabric upholstery, couch paper must be used and disposed of at the end of each session.
6. As before ‘Lockdown,’ washing your hands before entering and after leaving the consulting room, is requested.

**Please note: On line sessions will continue to be available indefinitely**