

## **The Effects of Third Party Payments**

Third party payment for therapy can be financially beneficial, however, third party payments can reduce your ability to determine the direction of your therapy. Please consider the following:

### **Loss of Confidentiality**

If you ask a third party to pay for all or part of your therapy, they will have an interest in and a right to information about your work in therapy.

- Information about our meetings may be reviewed by employees of the insurance company and a separate managed care company.
- Some employees of those companies do not have the same training in confidentiality as professionals.
- Insurers put confidential information into computers.
- Industry mergers allow information to change hands.
- Information about your current insurance use may have an effect on future insurance availability and use.

### **Loss of Control of Treatment**

If you ask a third party to pay for all or part of your therapy, they will have an interest in and a right to determine the direction and duration of your therapy.

- Managed care companies make money by reducing treatment.
- Treatment decisions are based on formulas for average cases, not personalized need.
- Managed care treatment may limit the number of sessions.
- Managed care treatment may dictate what should be the focus of sessions.
- Managed care treatment may dictate how sessions should be run.

### **Effects of Psychiatric Diagnosis**

If you ask a third party to pay for all or part of your therapy, they will require a medical-model psychiatric diagnosis for treatment. This diagnosis is for a "mental illness." While most people's problems are not the result of or evidence of mental illness, in the medical model and realm of health insurance, you must be "ill" to receive a diagnosis and treatment.

- Health insurance benefits can only be used for treatment of an illness, requiring a medical-model diagnosis of your problem(s). This diagnosis may not provide the best focus of work for your efforts in overcoming your problem(s).
- Choosing to avoid using health insurance benefits means you do not have to have a psychiatric diagnosis.
- A psychiatric diagnosis may have to be divulged to potential future employers and future insurance plans. It may have an effect on your ability to qualify.