



Sage Integrative Health

Sitting Guidelines for Ketamine Assisted Therapy

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***Please note that the forms provided in this program are meant to be resources and not templates. They are not legally binding documents. We suggest that you create a set of consent forms, information packets, and safety protocols in collaboration with prescribers you work with, ensure that they meet the requirements of your state's licensing boards, and have them reviewed by an in-state lawyer before distributing such materials to clients.**

Before Self - Administration:

1. Check in about how client is doing, and address any concerns or questions they have
2. Confirm that client has not eaten for at least 4 hours, or had liquids for 2 hours
3. Follow medical safety protocols re: blood pressure monitoring for those with high blood pressure
4. Ask if there is any content they would like to make sure you inquire about during the session
5. Remind clients of the arc of the ketamine effects
6. Check in about touch, reminding them that supportive touch and focused bodywork are available, and that touch will never be sexual in nature
7. Let them know that you will be there to keep them safe, support them in their experience, take notes, offer supportive touch, and help them work with and integrate whatever arises
8. Let them know that they may want to focus their attention inward at the beginning of the session, but they can interact with you whenever they'd like
9. Make sure client has gone to the bathroom before administration of the lozenge
10. Review their intentions (if they are so inclined, this is a good time for an invocation or ritual)

Ketamine Administration:

1. Let client know that they will hold the Ketamine lozenge under their tongue for a total of 15 minutes, without swallowing, to get the full therapeutic effects. Watch the time, and let them know when 10 and then 15 minutes have passed. Generally it's hard for the client to speak during this time, so limit conversation to essential questions with yes or no responses.
2. This could be a good time to start the music, or to lead the client through a guided meditation or progressive relaxation.
3. 15 minutes after administration of Ketamine, the client can swallow their saliva (it's ok to swallow small amounts prior to the 15 minute mark if necessary).
4. Give the client a few moments to settle after the 15 minute administration period, and then gently check in and see how they are feeling, what are they noticing.

General Approach to Sitting:

1. It's generally best to take a non-directive approach to sitting with clients. This means following the client's lead in terms of how much contact (verbal and physical) to have and what to focus on.
2. It can be helpful to sit closer to client than you might in a typical therapy session, so that you are available for physical contact if desired, and to show them that you are right there with them.
3. While clients are going inward, it's important to stay present in the space. It can be helpful to sit in a meditative state, noticing what feelings, sensations, images, and reveries arise within you.
4. Low dose sessions (<100mg sublingual, <50mg bioavailable): This dosage range tends to be more "psychoactive." Clients are available for more processing, with usual defenses softened.
5. Moderate - high dose sessions (>100mg sublingual, >50mg bioavailable): Clients may need more reassurance, and possibly a hand to hold during onset of the ketamine. There is typically a period of about 30-45 minutes where the client will likely be more internal (*not always so stay on your toes!*). After this period, at about 1 hour post-ingestion, is a good time to invite more therapeutic processing as appropriate.
6. Encourage client to stay with and feel into any difficult emotions or physical sensations that arise (without pressure or agenda). If they become overwhelmed, support them through a breathing exercise or other anxiety reduction technique.
7. It can be helpful to bring client's attention to their body, inquiring about what they notice in their physical or emotional experience.
8. People often have experiences of ego dissolution and/or regression (losing control of their body and speech, feelings of oneness, near death experience, etc). It can be helpful to hold this in mind, and attend to client as if they were a young child needing gentle attentiveness and loving care.
9. If client needs to go to the bathroom, remind them to get up slowly, stay close to them as they stand up, and walk them to the bathroom.
10. In integrating the content of the ketamine experience, it's helpful to hold the images and experiences that arise as if they were a dream, helping client to think symbolically and follow their associations to make meaning of what arose.
11. Take good notes throughout the session, making sure to write down important insights and experiences that the client reports. This document can be helpful in writing session notes and to inform integration sessions. The client might appreciate a copy of your notes to help them with their integration process.