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When we decide, eagerly or apprehensively, to pursue our healing and growth, it is very important to seize the moment. In an ideal world, we all should have an easy access to affordable care and a wide variety of modalities. Currently, however, affordable care in general, and alternative / complementary modalities such as art therapy in particular, are not widely available. To do my small part in making therapy more accessible, I have a policy of doing my best to not turn anyone away for lack of funds. At the same time, I do not waive my fee entirely. If you are unable to pay my full fee (\$160/50 minute hour) and need to negotiate for a lower fee, please read this document thoroughly in considering what you can pay. Please Consider from whom you ask for a discount for what in what situations: Please ask yourself: When have I asked for discount? For what items or services? From whom? Did I consider the impact on the service provider for agreeing to charge me less? Do I have a conscious or unconscious assumption, for example, that "therapists whose job is to care about people" should offer discounts and sliding scale?

For a negotiated fee scale to work, each one of us has to honestly self-assess and then be willing to stretch. The questions to consider: how much can I truly afford? What is the value of this work for me? Do you automatically think – "oh, I don't have any money" and set up to pay the lower end? Stop for a second. Feeling broke and being broke are two different things. You should not pay the lowest end if:

- You regularly buy coffee at coffee shops.
- You go out to movies or other social events at least two or three times a month.
- You buy yourself new clothes because you like how they look rather than you have no more warm sweaters.
- You regularly pay for things like getting facials or manicures or massages and they are not part of chronic pain management or other life survival issues.
- You have ways to get extra income when you need it – by calling your parents, for example
- You know you can afford to pay this without needing to think twice about it, even if it feels like a lot of money.

I am a self-employed, single mother who makes a living by providing sessions and training in creative arts and narrative therapies. In particular, I am interested in serving those who have been impacted by social, collective and historical traumas (e.g., racism, sexism, homophobia and heterosexism, American Indian genocide and displacement, colonialism, slavery, etc.) and those who want to be effective allies. However, I ask you to understand that it is not a casual decision on my part to maintain this policy and practice. In some ways, by offering this policy, I am preventing my clients from examining why some resources are accessible only to some people, and taking steps, individually or collectively, to correct this inequity in our healthcare system.

Negotiated fees are NOT discounted fees or a sliding scale; you are ultimately responsible for the difference between my full fee and what you are able to pay now. Once we agree on a negotiated fee, I ask you to do the following:

1. Please keep track of the difference between what you pay and what the full fee would have been;
2. Near or far down the road, when you have more resources, please offer me the difference so that I can continue my practice with the same policy. Alternately, please contribute the amount to an individual, an organization or a program that seeks to end racism.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to our collaboration for your healing, growth and empowerment.

* I would like to sincerely thank [Thea Lee](#) for her generosity in sharing her negotiated fee statement with me and for being an important part of my own learning around this issue. I also want to Acknowledge [Susan Raffo and Heather Hackman](#) from whom I have borrowed some language here.