



## Electronic Communication Policy

In order to maintain clarity regarding our use of electronic modes of communication during your treatment, I have prepared the following policy. This is because the use of various types of electronic communications is common in our society, and many individuals believe this is the preferred method of communication with others, whether their relationships are social or professional. Many of these common modes of communication, however, put your privacy at risk and can be inconsistent with the law and with the standards of my profession. Consequently, this policy has been prepared to assure the security and confidentiality of your treatment and to assure that it is consistent with ethics and the law.

If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to discuss this with me.

### Email Communications

For our business we use an encrypted email system that is more secure than free systems such as Yahoo, but no email is completely secure. Thus, I use email communication only with your permission. At times my staff or I may wish to draw your attention to information or resources online via email, or communicate about administrative purposes, such as billing or insurance matters.

Please do not use email for setting and changing appointments, unless you are a client who only has appointments once a month or less, and you are emailing about an appointment that is more than a month in the future. This is because during the time lag between our email messages, an appointment time that I had offered might become unavailable. In sum, in-person and over the phone are really the best for setting, cancelling or rescheduling appointments.

Please do not email me about clinical matters because email is not a secure way to contact me. If you do send me email of a counseling nature, I will print it out and discuss it with you at your next appointment. I will not engage in therapeutic discussions with you via email. If you need to discuss a clinical matter with me, please feel free to call me so we can discuss it on the phone or wait so we can discuss it during your therapy session. The telephone or face-to-face context simply is much more secure as a mode of communication.

### Text Messaging

Because text messaging is a very insecure and impersonal mode of communication, I do not text message to nor do I respond to text messages from anyone in treatment with me. So, please do not text message me unless we have made other arrangements.



## Social Media

I do not communicate with, or contact, any of my clients through social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook. In addition, if I discover that I have accidentally established an online relationship with you, I will cancel that relationship. This is because these types of casual social contacts can create significant security risks for you.

I participate infrequently on various social networks, but not in my professional capacity. If you have an online presence, there is a possibility that you may encounter me by accident. If that occurs, please discuss it with me during our time together. I believe that any communications with clients online have a high potential to compromise the professional relationship. In addition, please do not try to contact me in this way. I will not respond and will terminate any online contact no matter how accidental.

## Websites

I have a website that you are free to visit. I use it for professional reasons to provide information to others about me and my practice. You are welcome to read the information that I have on my website and, if you have questions about it, we should discuss this during your therapy sessions.

## Web Searches and Online Reviews

I will not use web searches to gather information about you without your permission. I believe that this violates your privacy rights; however, I understand that you might choose to gather information about me in this way. In this day and age there is an incredible amount of information available about individuals on the internet, much of which may actually be known to that person and some of which may be inaccurate or unknown. If you encounter any information about me through web searches, or in any other fashion for that matter, please discuss this with me during our time together so that we can deal with it and its potential impact on your treatment.

Recently it has become fashionable for clients to review their health care provider on various websites. Unfortunately, mental health professionals cannot respond to such comments and related errors because of confidentiality restrictions. If you encounter such reviews of me or any professional with whom you are working, please share it with me so we can discuss it and its potential impact on your therapy. Please do not rate my work with you while we are in treatment together on any of these websites. This is because it has a significant potential to damage our ability to work together.