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Electronic Communication Policy

To maintain clarity regarding the use of electronic modes of communication during your treatment, I prepared the following policy. 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.

Text Messaging

I use text messaging **only** with your permission and **only** for administrative purposes unless we have made another agreement. That means that email exchanges and text messages with my office should be limited to things like setting and changing appointments, billing matters and other related issues. If you text me regarding these matters prior to us discussing use of texting, your permission for me to respond is implied. Please do not text me about clinical matters because text messaging is a very unsecure and impersonal mode of communication. My primary concern is your health, wellness, and privacy. Because of the unsecure nature of texting, clinical communication is likely to compromise these priorities. Therefore, I do not text message about clinical issues nor do I respond to text messages from anyone in treatment with me regarding clinical matters. Please talk with me if you have additional questions about this aspect of the policy.

Email Communications

Because I do not regularly check email when I am with clients or on evenings or weekends, and because it is an unsecure and easily misunderstood mode of communication, ***I do not email nor do I respond to email from anyone in treatment with me.*** For the same reasons, ***I do not respond to emails from individuals interested in starting treatment with me.*** I realize this may be different from other people's use of email. Please talk with me if you have any questions.

Social Media

At this time, I do not have a personal social media presence. Any social media in which I am currently involved is professional in nature, restricted to professionals, and not available to the community at large.

As I may in the future establish a personal social media presence the following policy applies. 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.

If I participate on any social networks it will not be in my professional capacity. If you have an online presence, I realize 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.

Americans with Disabilities Act

I realize we all have different abilities. The above policies might be more complicated for those whose abilities limit their use of verbal communication. If this is true for you, please talk with me. If you are not yet in treatment with me and are unable to communicate verbally, please ask a trusted friend, ally, or medical professional for assistance in making the initial call. Understand that I respect and wish to support all members of the community. I will make every reasonable effort to assist you in obtaining care, with me or another member of the community if more appropriate.

Websites

I have a website that you are free to access. I use it for professional reasons to provide information to others about me and my practice. Some of the forms I ask clients to complete are posted on my webpage. Clients may be encouraged to download and complete these forms. You are welcome to access and review the information that I have on my website and, if you have questions, we should discuss this during your therapy sessions.

Web Searches

I do not routinely use web searches to gather information about you without your permission. Exceptions may include instances where there are health or safety issues. Such situations are very rare. I believe such searches violate your privacy rights but in some cases, safety issues override privacy issues.

I understand that you might choose to gather information about me in this way. In this day and age an incredible amount of information is 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. If you are considering rating my work with you, please talk with me so I can understand and address the impact that any posted material may have on our work. Please be aware that certain types of posts on these websites can result in significant potential damage. Such posts may affect our ability to work together and my ability to work with others in need of care.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this document and agree to abide by its terms during our professional relationship.

Client (Guardian) Signature

Date

Clinician Signature

Date

- Client/Guardian declined copy of this document
- Client/Guardian received copy of this document