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Social Media Policy

Social Media is a fantastic tool to help people get informed and be engaged. I use social media for my practice, and, in an effort to be completely transparent with you, I have created a social media policy so you understand how I use social media in my practice and how it could impact you and our relationship. If you have any questions about my policy, I encourage you to bring them up when we meet.

The basis for this policy is to truly protect our relationship and your confidentiality in session. Let’s talk about confidentiality for a moment. You are the person who can decide what you want to keep confidential. I must keep my relationship with you completely confidential except in cases where you might harm yourself or others (see informed consent for details). Thus, if you post on my page, you are opening up the possibility of people inferring our relationship or asking you about your connection to me. You get to decide what you tell people. You have the choice as to what you reveal about yourself online. I will not reveal my connection to you. The following explains how I handle different social media options:

**FRIENDING**

To respect your privacy and confidentiality, I do not accept friend requests on my personal Facebook page from current or former clients on any social networking site.

**FANNING**

You may “like” my Facebook business page. However, the information on my Facebook page is often also on my website. If you “like” my page, you are choosing to reveal that you are connected to me in some way. My business page exists to be a forum for information and inspiration. I will not engage in conversations with you on that page. However, if you find it helpful, then that is great!

**FOLLOWING**

I sometimes publish content on my website, and I may post on Youtube, Facebook or Instagram. I have no expectation that clients will want to follow my blog or vlog. You are welcome to use your own discretion in choosing whether to follow me. Please note that I will not follow you back to respect your privacy. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together during the therapy hour.

**INTERACTING**

Please do not use messaging on Social Networking sites such as Facebook or LinkedIn to contact me. If there were an emergency, I would not be able to respond in a timely manner. I do not check these accounts regularly. The best way to interact with me is by email or phone. If you post on my wall, these exchanges may possibly become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

**USE OF SEARCH ENGINES**

You may have a Facebook page, and Instagram or Twitter accounts. I do not “google” my clients or look up information on them for any reason. I think it is important that I know you as you are in my office. If I do come across your information online, I will move on and avoid reading content.

**BUSINESS REVIEW SITES**

Some business review sites include forums where users rate their providers and add reviews. Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business has added itself to the site. If you should find my listing on any of these sites, please know that my listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as my client. The *California Association of Marriage and Family Therapist's Ethics Code* states that it is unethical for MFTs to solicit testimonials. If you do post a review, I cannot respond on any of these sites, whether it is positive or negative. I urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as I take my commitment to your confidentiality. Confidentiality means I cannot tell people that you are my client, and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. But you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that I’m your therapist or how you feel about the treatment I provided you, in any forum you choose.

**EMAIL**

I prefer using email only to arrange or modify appointments, provide forms and resources. Please do not email me content related to your therapy sessions, as email may not be completely secure or confidential. If you choose to communicate with me by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and my Internet service providers. While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the Internet Service Provider.

**LOCATION BASED SERVICES**

If you used location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the

privacy issues related to using these services. I do not place my practice as a check-in location

on various sites such as Foursquare, Gowalla, Loopt, etc. However, if you have GPS tracking

enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due

to regular weekly check-ins at my office. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally “checking in” from my office, or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

**TEXT**

Sometimes clients text me to request an appointment time or to let me know if they are running late to an appointment. I will, at times, send resources via text if provided client consent. Please consider that text isn’t always secure if you choose to send any personal information.

**CONCLUSION**

Thank you for taking the time to review my Social Media Policy. If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures, or regarding our potential interactions on the Internet, do bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them.

Your signature indicates that you have read all proceeding pages of this agreement for services carefully and understand its contents.

Name: Date:

Signature: