

Social Media Policy

This document describes how I conduct myself as a psychologist on the Internet, email, texting, instant messaging, and social networking, and how you can expect me to respond to various electronic interactions that may occur between us. If you have any questions about anything within this document, I encourage you to bring them up at any time. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, I may update this policy.

FRIENDING & FOLLOWING

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, etc.), because these are not private or secure, and I think it can compromise our confidentiality and privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our professional relationship. Anyone who may view a list of my friends or contacts anywhere online should expect that they will not find client names on that list. I do participate in social networking sites as an individual, but this is unrelated to my professional practice. My primary concern is your privacy.

I do not follow current or former clients on blogs or Twitter. My reasoning is that I believe casual viewing of clients' online content outside of the therapy hour can create confusion in regard to whether it's being done as a part of your treatment or to satisfy my personal curiosity. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without our explicit arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on our working relationship. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please mention them in our sessions.

INTERACTING

Please do not use messaging on social networking sites to contact me unless you fully assume the risk that these sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. Engaging with me in public online could compromise your confidentiality. Potentially, it also may create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

If you want to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone. Direct email or SMS/text messaging are second best for quick, administrative issues such as changing appointment times. Remember, however, that none of these electronic services is truly confidential.

I prefer using email only to arrange or modify appointments. Please do not email me content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not 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 administrators of the Internet service providers. You should also know that any emails I receive from you and any responses that I send to you become a part of your legal medical record.

BUSINESS REVIEW SITES

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Angie's List, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which list businesses. Some of these sites include forums in which 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 American Psychological Association's Ethics Code states under Principle 5.05 that it is unethical for psychologists to solicit testimonials: "Psychologists do not solicit testimonials from current therapy clients/patients or other persons who because of their particular circumstances are vulnerable to undue influence."

Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality, I cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. Please take your own privacy as seriously as I take my commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with me about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that I may never see it.

If you do choose to write something on a business review site, I hope you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum. I urge you to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own privacy and protection.

If we are working together, I hope that you will bring your feelings and reactions to our work directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide we are not a good fit. None of this is meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with me wherever and with whomever you like. Confidentiality means that 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 to you, in any forum of your choosing.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. Please feel free to ask questions or raise other concerns.