



INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEPSYCHOLOGY

This Informed Consent for Telepsychology contains important information focusing on doing psychotherapy using the phone or the Internet. Please read this carefully and let us know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Benefits and Risks of Telepsychology

Telepsychology refers to providing services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or clinician moves to a different location, takes an extended vacation, or is otherwise unable to continue to meet in person. It is also more convenient and takes less time. Telepsychology, however, requires technical competence on both our parts to be helpful. Although there are benefits of telepsychology, there are some differences between in-person services and telepsychology, as well as some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Because telepsychology sessions take place outside of the office, there is potential for other people to overhear if you are not in a private place. On my end I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. But it is important for you to make sure you find a private place where you will not be interrupted. It is also important for you to protect the privacy of our conversation on your cell phone or other device. You should participate only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation.
- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues might impact telepsychology. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. Usually, I will not engage in telepsychology with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in telepsychology, we will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our work.
- Efficacy. Most research shows that telepsychology is about as effective as in-person meetings for therapy. However, some believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about our ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Electronic Communications

We will decide together which kind of service to use. You may have to have certain computer or cell phone systems to use telepsychology services. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in telepsychology.

For communication between sessions, I only use email communication. You may call the office if you have questions of an administrative manner, such as making or changing an appointment or paying for your session. You should be aware that I cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information communicated by email. Also, I am not always available to check my email or texts, and often cannot respond immediately, so these methods **should not** be used if there is an emergency.

Confidentiality

I have a legal and ethical responsibility to make my best efforts to protect all communications that are a part of our telepsychology. However, the nature of electronic communications technologies is such that I cannot guarantee that our communications will be kept confidential or that other people may not gain access to our communications. I will try to use updated encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems to help keep your information private, but there is a risk that our electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others. You should also take reasonable steps to ensure the security of our communications (for example, only using secure networks for telepsychology sessions and having passwords to protect the device you use for telepsychology).

The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that I outlined in our Informed Consent “Information for Clients” still apply in telepsychology. Please let us know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

Emergencies and Technology

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting telepsychology than in in-person. To address some of these difficulties, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in therapy services. I will ask you to identify an emergency contact person who is near your location and who I will contact in the event of a crisis or emergency to assist in addressing the situation. I will ask that you indicate below who your emergency contact person is if needed during such a crisis or emergency.

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, **and you are having an emergency**, do not call me back; instead, call 911, or go to your nearest emergency room. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and you are **not** having an emergency, disconnect from the session and we will wait two (2) minutes and then re-contact you via the telepsychology platform on which we agreed to conduct therapy. If you do not receive a call back within two (2) minutes, **then call or email your clinician**.

If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

Fees

The same fee rates will apply for telepsychology as apply for in-person services. However, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you might not get reimbursed for the session. Please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in telepsychology sessions in order to determine what your benefits provide for.

Records

The telepsychology sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. Your clinician will take notes of your session in the same way they maintain records of in-person sessions in accordance with my policies.

Informed Consent

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent that we agreed to at the outset of our clinical work together and does not amend any of the terms of that agreement.

Your signature below indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.

Client / Parent if client is under 14

Date

Clinician

Date

Please supply the following information:

Patient's Name	Address when in session	Phone #
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Emergency Contact	Address	Phone #
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