



INFORMED CONSENT FOR TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED COUNSELING

The purpose of this Informed Consent for Technology Assisted Counseling is to inform you, the client, about the process of online counseling services, the counselor and the potential risks and benefits of these services.

Privacy Concerns with Teletherapy

- Although the internet provides the appearance of anonymity and privacy in counseling, privacy is more of an issue online than in person. The client is responsible for understanding the potential risks of confidentiality being breached through unencrypted email, lack of password protection or leaving information on a public access computer in a library or internet café.
- Confidentiality could be breached in transit by hackers or internet service providers or at either end by others with access to the client's account or computer. Clients accessing the internet from public locations such as a library, computer lab, or cafe should consider the visibility of their screen to people around them. Position yourself to avoid others seeing your screen. Using cell phones can be risky in that signals are scrambled but rarely encrypted.
- The counselor has a right to his or her privacy and may restrict the use of any copies or recordings the client makes of their communications.
- The client is responsible for securing their own computer hardware, internet access points, chat software, email and passwords that are encrypted, secure, and HIPPA compliant when possible. If encryption is not made available to client, client should be aware that they are risking unauthorized monitoring of transmissions and/or records of Internet counseling sessions.
- I make every effort to keep all information confidential. Likewise, if we are working online together, I ask that you determine who has access to your computer and electronic information from your location. This would include family members, co-workers, supervisors and friends and whether or not confidentiality from your work or personal computer may be compromised due to such programs as a keylogger.
- I encourage you to only communicate through a computer that you know is safe i.e. wherein confidentiality can be ensured. Be sure to fully exit all online counseling sessions and emails.

Lack of Non-Verbal Cues

Be aware that misunderstandings are possible with teletherapy, since non-verbal cues are relatively lacking. Even with video chat software, misunderstandings may occur since bandwidth is always limited and images lack detail. Counselors are observers of human behavior and gather much information from body language, vocal inflection, eye contact and other nonverbal cues. If you have never engaged in online counseling before, have patience with the process and clarify information if you think your counselor has not understood you well. Be patient if your counselor asks periodically for clarification as well.

Back Up Procedures

If for some reason our video conference connection via Zoom fails, we can resort to Facetime or a phone call. In case of crisis, it is your responsibility to know your local emergency services and resources (county crisis line, friends in the area, doctor, etc). If our teletherapy session fails during an emergency, please reach out to these accumulated resources or call 911 (or equivalent emergency responders in your area).

Fee for Service and Cancellation Policy

All payments will be processed through Square (a smart phone app) at the end of each session. Since scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24-hour notice is required for re-scheduling or canceling an appointment. Please know that the cancellation policy is enforced without exception. That way it is fair for everyone, and it is not at all personal when the fee is charged.

Client's printed name: _____

Client's signature: _____ Date: _____