

## **Our Social Media Policy**

This document outlines the office policies related to use of Social Media. Please read it to understand how we conduct ourselves on the Internet as mental health professionals and how you can expect clinicians at the Family Center to respond to various interactions that may occur on the Internet.

If you have any questions about anything within this document, I encourage you to bring them up when you meet with your clinician. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when we need to update this policy. If we do so, we will notify you in writing of any policy changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

### **INTERACTING**

Please do not use SMS (mobile phone text messaging) or messaging on Social Networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn to contact any of our clinicians. These sites are not secure and these messages may not be read in a timely fashion. Do not use Wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with one of our clinicians in public online if we have an already established client/therapist relationship. Engaging with us this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also 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 need to contact one of us between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone. See the email section below for more information regarding email interactions.

## **EMAIL**

Please do not email us content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not completely secure or confidential. If you choose to communicate with us by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and our 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. You should also know that any emails we receive from you and any responses that we send to you become a part of your legal record.

## **FRIENDING**

We do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). We believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and your privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship with your clinician. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when you meet with your clinician and the two of you can talk more about it.

## **FOLLOWING**

Some of our clinicians post psychology news on Twitter. We have no expectation that you as a client will want to follow our Twitter streams. However, if you use an easily recognizable name on Twitter and we happen to notice that you've followed one of us there, your clinician may briefly discuss it and its potential impact on your working relationship.

Our primary concern is your privacy. If you share this concern, there are more private ways to follow on Twitter (such as using an RSS feed or a locked Twitter list), which would eliminate you having a public link to my content. You are welcome to use your own discretion in choosing whether to follow one of the clinicians at the Family Center.

Note that we will not follow you back. We only follow other health professionals on Twitter and do not follow current or former clients on blogs or Twitter. Our reasoning is that we 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 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 your working relationship with your clinician. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with one of us, please bring them into your sessions where you can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thank you for taking the time to review our 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 our attention so that we can discuss them.