

Bardenstein Family Center

Social Media/ Telepsychology Policy

This document outlines my office policy related to the use of social media and technology. Please review and bring up any questions that you may have when we meet. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, I may need to update this policy. If I do so, I will notify you in writing of any changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy. Once you understand and agree with the terms, please indicate your consent by signing below.

Friending

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former patients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). Such requests can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship.

Following

I neither follow my patients on social media nor review their online social content. I believe that casual viewing of such content outside of the therapy hour is unlikely to benefit your treatment. In addition, viewing your online activity 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 your therapist, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

Interacting

The best way to contact me for administrative issues, such as making or changing appointment times, is by phone (216-229-4200) or email, I use Virtru, a HIPAA compliant encryption for gmail, should you send any personal or identifying information. Please alert me if you need to send any information, documents, or reports prior to doing so, and I will respond with the Virtru software, so that you can communicate securely and confidentially. You will not need to download any software or pay for such service.

Please do not email me any content related to your therapy sessions, as non-encrypted email is not secure or confidential. If you choose to communicate with me by email, please 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 provider. You should also know that any emails that I receive from you -- and any responses that I send to you -- become a part of your legal record and stored in your clinical file. Typically, I respond to communications and routine messages within 24 hours.

Telepsychology

If you consent to psychological services provided by technology (including, but not limited to: video, phone, text and email), you need to be familiar with the technology. The benefits include greater convenience in service delivery, but the risks include: breaches of confidentiality, theft of personal information, and disruption of service due to technical difficulties. We will need to regularly reassess the appropriateness of my continuing to deliver services through the use of technology. It is your responsibility to contact providers in your area for a face-to-face meeting, if a need for direct services arises. We will need to agree, in advance, how to communicate in another way, should an emergency arise or service is disrupted

Business Review Sites

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing or other places. 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 patient. It is unethical (American Psychological Association Ethics code: Principle 5.05) to solicit such testimonials.

You have a right to express yourself on any site that you wish, but, due to confidentiality, I cannot respond to any review. I urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as I take my commitment of confidentiality to you. If you are using these sites to communicate with me about your feelings regarding our work, I am unlikely to see such communication.

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 these services. If you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may figure out that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins at my office on a weekly basis. 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.

Consent:

Please Check

I authorize and consent to email communication for administrative purposes. (Please check)

I authorize and consent to email communication for brief updates.*

I authorize and consent to texts for administrative purposes.

I authorize encrypted communication on my phone/laptop/computer to protect personal information.

(* I understand that the therapist will use encrypted communication when communicating with me via email. I understand the risks if I choose not to use encrypted communication for my email correspondence with my therapist.)

I have reviewed the social media/technology policy and have had the opportunity to review questions and understand the risks.

Name/Date: _____

Patient

Name/Date: _____

Legal Guardian

Name/Date: _____

Provider

