

INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEPSYCHOLOGY

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This Informed Consent for Telepsychology contains important information focusing on doing psychotherapy using the phone or the Internet. Please read this carefully, and let me 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 psychotherapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as videoconferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that we can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if either of us move to a different location, take 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 attention to technology and privacy aspects to be effective. Although there are benefits of telepsychology, there are some differences between in-person psychotherapy and telepsychology, as well as some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Because telepsychology sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. On my end I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. But to maintain confidentiality, you will need to find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted. It is also up to you to protect the privacy of our session on your cell phone or other device.
- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues can 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. Although we will use technology and take precautions that minimize these risks, it is important to be cognizant of them when engaging in telepsychology.
- Efficacy. Research indicates that in some instances telepsychology is as effective as in-person psychotherapy, but many therapists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Electronic Communications

We will use Zoom for our telepsychology sessions. The version of the Zoom platform that we will be using is HIPAA compliant. If you are unable to use this platform, we can conduct the sessions by telephone. 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.

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 the Agreement for Service that you signed before we started still apply in telepsychology. Please let me know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

Appropriateness of Telepsychology

From time to time, we may schedule in-person sessions to "check-in" with one another. I will let you know if I decide that telepsychology is no longer the most appropriate form of treatment for you. We will discuss options of engaging

in in-person counseling or referrals to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services if distance is an issue.

Interruptions

If a videoconferencing session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, I will attempt to call you to complete our session via phone. My phone number is: 650-427-0197.

Fees and Insurance

The same fee rate applies to both telepsychology and in-person psychotherapy. However, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payer, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you will be solely responsible for the entire fee. If insurance coverage is of concern for you, please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in telepsychology sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered.

Records

The telepsychology sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless you previously agreed in writing to allow recording by executing a Consent for Videotaping. I will maintain a record of our session in the same way I maintain records of in-person sessions in accordance with my policies.

Informed Consent

This Informed Consent for Telepsychology is intended as a supplement to the Agreement for Service that you signed 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 the terms and conditions of this Informed Consent for Telepsychology.

Patient – Print Name

Patient -- Signature

Date