

# COYLE & MATTERN, LLC

[www.noanxietytoday.com](http://www.noanxietytoday.com)

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## Teletherapy Explanation

This Informed Consent for Teletherapy 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 Teletherapy

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

- Risks to confidentiality. Because teletherapy sessions take place outside of my 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 it is important for you to make sure you find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted. It is also important for you to protect the privacy of our session on your cell phone or other device. You should participate in therapy 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 teletherapy. 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 teletherapy with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in teletherapy, we will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our teletherapy work.

- Efficacy. Most research shows that teletherapy is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy generally, there is no specific research that shows teletherapy is just as effective as in-person therapy for the type of therapy you will be receiving. Some 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 communication**

I reserve the right to choose the electronic platform for services. I will use reasonable caution in choosing the platform, mindful of our obligation of privacy and confidentiality to our clients. You may have to have certain computer or cell phone systems to use teletherapy services. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in teletherapy.

**Confidentiality**

I have a legal and ethical responsibility to make my best effort to protect all communications that are a part of my teletherapy. 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 teletherapy sessions and having passwords to protect the device you use for teletherapy). The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that I outlined in the Consent for Treatment still apply in teletherapy. Please let me know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

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Signature

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Date