



Informed Consent for Telepsychology (issued 03/25/2020)

This Informed Consent for Telepsychology contains important information regarding psychotherapy using the phone or the Internet. Please read this carefully, and ask me any questions you may have. Signing this document indicates an agreement between client and psychologist.

Benefits and Risks of Telepsychology

Telepsychology refers to psychotherapy services provided via telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One benefit of telepsychology is services can be provided without the client and psychologist being in the same place. This helps ensure continuity of care if the client or clinician moves to a different location, takes 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 technical competence on both our parts. Telepsychology has these benefits, but also some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Telepsychology sessions occur outside of the psychologists private office, and other people may overhear discussion if you are not in a private place. On my end I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. Please make sure you find a private place for our session where you will not be interrupted. You should participate in therapy only while in an area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation. You are asked also to protect the privacy of our session on your cell phone or other device.
- Issues related to technology. Technology may impact telepsychology. There may be internet or device problems. Communication via internet is less secure than face to face meetings, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. Usually, I will not provide telepsychology to clients who are currently in a crisis and need high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in telepsychology, we will develop an emergency response plan for situations that may arise during the course of our telepsychology work.
- Efficacy. Most research shows that telepsychology is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some psychologists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room and being able to fully observe non-verbal information.

Electronic Communications

We will decide together which kind of telepsychology service to use. You may need certain computer or cell phone systems to use telepsychology services. You are responsible for any cost of obtain necessary equipment, accessories, or software.

To communicate between sessions, I use email with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless we have made another agreement. Email exchanges with my office should be limited to administrative matters such as setting and changing appointments, billing, and related

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issues. I cannot guarantee the confidentiality of information communicated by email. Therefore, I will not discuss clinical information by email and ask that you do not either. I do not regularly check my email on weekends, nor do I respond immediately, so these methods should not be used if there is an emergency.

Treatment is most effective when clinical discussions occur at your scheduled session. For urgent issues feel free to reach me by phone. I will try to return your call within 24 hours except on weekends and holidays. If you are unable to reach me in an emergency, please, contact your family physician or the nearest emergency room and ask for the psychologist or psychiatrist on call. If I will be unavailable for an extended time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact in my absence if necessary.

Confidentiality

I have a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure communication as best as I can. However, given the nature and complexity of electronic communications technologies, I cannot guarantee that our communications will be kept confidential. I use updated encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems to help keep your information private, You should also take reasonable steps to ensure the security of our communications. These include 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 outlined in my Informed Consent for Therapy also apply in telepsychology. Please ask any any questions you have 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 telepsychology is no longer the best form of treatment for you. Options can include engaging in in-person counseling or referrals to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services.

Emergencies and Technology

Evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting telepsychology than in traditional in-person therapy. To address such difficulties, we will create an emergency plan before engaging in telepsychology services. You will be asked to provide an emergency contact person near your location who I will contact in the event of an emergency. I will ask that you sign a separate authorization form allowing me to contact your emergency contact person as needed in such situations.

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as an internet or device problem, and you are having an emergency, do not call me back. Call 911, or go to your nearest emergency room. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

If the session is interrupted and it is not an emergency situation,, disconnect from the session. In two minutes I will recontact you via the telepsychology platform on which we agreed to conduct therapy. If you do not receive a call back within two minutes, call me at 305-799-9970.

If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

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Fees

The same fee rates applies for telepsychology as in-person psychotherapy. The fee may be prorated for shorter durations, based on an hourly rate of \$200. Some insurance or managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you are responsible for the fee.

Records

The telepsychology sessions shall not be recorded in any way unless agreed to in writing by mutual consent. I will maintain a record of our session in the same way I maintain records of in person sessions in accordance with my policies. However, I may record a hypnotherapy segment of our session with your permission, so that you can use the recording in-between sessions.

Informed Consent

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent agreed upon 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 its terms and conditions.

Client

Date

Therapist

Date