

Lone Working Policy – The Healing Space

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the procedures in place to reduce risks associated with lone working in my practice. It applies to all situations in which I, Gemma Brown (Psychotherapist and sole practitioner), may be working alone with clients or outside standard office arrangements. Its purpose is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of both myself and those I work with.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Walk and Talk therapy sessions
 - Ecotherapy sessions
 - Home visits (if offered)
 - Working alone in the office outside of normal hours
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3. Risk Assessment

Before any lone working activity, I will carry out a risk assessment considering:

- **Location** – safety of the route/site, accessibility, lighting, and proximity to help.
- **Client** – individual suitability and potential risk factors (e.g., history of aggression, physical limitations).
- **Environment** – weather, terrain, wildlife, and other relevant conditions.

- **Communication** – strength of mobile signal or other means of contact.
 - **Time of day** – prioritising daylight hours; additional precautions taken if not possible.
 - **Emergency procedures** – clarity on what to do if unexpected risks arise.
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4. Walk and Talk / Ecotherapy Procedures

- **Route planning** – routes will be pre-planned for safety and accessibility; clients will be informed in advance; alternatives identified.
 - **Client suitability** – assessed prior to beginning; not all clients will be appropriate for this type of therapy.
 - **Check-in system** – I will confirm completion of each session with a designated contact.
 - **Personal safety** – I will carry a charged mobile phone, consider carrying a personal safety alarm, and have emergency contacts to hand.
 - **Weather and clothing** – sessions will be postponed if weather is unsafe; appropriate footwear and clothing will be worn.
 - **Equipment** – a basic first aid kit will be carried as needed.
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5. General Lone Working Procedures

- **Communication** – someone will be informed of my whereabouts, session time, and expected return.
- **Mobile phone** – kept charged and on my person at all times.

- **Office safety** – when working alone in the office, doors will be locked, alarms activated, and security checks made.
 - **Awareness** – I will remain alert to my surroundings and follow personal safety practices.
 - **Emergency procedures** – I will know how to contact emergency services quickly if required.
 - **Training** – I will maintain CPD in lone working, safeguarding, and risk assessment.
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6. Record Keeping

- Written records will be maintained for risk assessments, incidents, and policy reviews.
 - All records will be stored securely in line with *UK GDPR* and *Data Protection Act 2018*.
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7. Responsibilities

As a sole practitioner, I am personally responsible for adhering to this policy and ensuring my own safety, as well as for risk-managing sessions with clients. I will discuss lone working risks in clinical supervision when appropriate.

8. Incident Reporting

- Any incidents or near misses relating to lone working will be documented promptly.

- A written record will be kept, and reflective learning will be reviewed to improve future practice.
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9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, guidance, or practice needs change.

10. Availability

This policy will be made available to clients, parents/carers, and relevant parties on request.