

Informed Consent for Telepsychology

This informed consent for Telehealth 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.

Telepsychology and Risks

Telepsychology refers to providing psychotherapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be safe, convenient and is efficient. Telepsychology, however, requires technical competence on both our parts and has some unique shortcomings or risks.

- Risks to confidentiality. Because telepsychology sessions take place outside 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 responsible steps to ensure your privacy. But it is important for you to make sure you find a private place for our sessions where you will not be interrupted. 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 telepsychology. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to access our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Crisis management and intervention. Usually, I will not engage in telepsychology with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in telepsychology, we will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis 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 therapists and clients may feel it is less than ideal and miss the in-office, face to face experience.

Electronic Communications

We will decide together which kinds of telepsychology service to use. I am offering Psychology Today's Sessions, a secure and HIPPA Compliant platform, as well as FaceTime and the telephone. 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. The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that were outlined in our Service Agreement still apply in telepsychology. Please let me know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

Emergencies and Technology

Assessing and evaluating threats and other emergencies can be more difficult when conducting telepsychology than in traditional in-person therapy. I will ask you to identify an emergency contact person who is near your location and who I will contact, in the event of a crisis or emergency, to assist in addressing the situation. I will ask that you name that person along with their contact information at the bottom of this form. This gives permission and allows me to contact this person as needed during such a crisis or emergency.

- If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, and you are having an emergency, do not call me back; instead, call 911. Call me back after you have called or obtained emergency services.
- If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, try to re-connect through the same platform and/or send a text message stating you are having difficulty and we will identify a new option for continuing the session.

Fees

The same fee rates will apply for telepsychology as apply for in-person psychotherapy. However, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. **If your insurance does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you will be solely responsible for the entire fee of the session. Please contact your insurance company prior to our engaging in telepsychology sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered.**

Records

I will maintain a record of our tele-session in the same way I maintain records of in-person sessions in accordance with my policies.

Informed Consent

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent that we agreed to at the onset 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.

Client

Date

Therapist

Date

Emergency Contact

Name of Emergency Contact

Phone Number