

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

This document outlines our office policies regarding the use of email, texts, social media and other forms of electronic communications. Please read this carefully in order to understand how we use these media in our practice, how we conduct ourselves on the internet, and how you can expect us to respond to various interactions that may occur on the internet and with other forms of electronic communications.

It is our intention to use available technology to more effectively and efficiently provide services in a manner that protects your confidentiality. If you have any questions about any of this content, it is important to bring up your concerns when we meet.

### **GENERAL**

All forms of electronic communications, including but not limited to, telephone, fax, email, texts and various social media, are by nature not secure. Any information about you transmitted in any of these forms **can be accessed by the public and cannot be fully deleted once posted or broadcast**. Because of this we will never require you to communicate with us using these technologies. While we make every reasonable effort to protect our communications and your personal health information, given the nature of electronic or internet based communications, we are not responsible for what happens to that information.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA SITES, LIKING AND FRIENDING**

We maintain professional Facebook pages for the purpose of disseminating helpful information to anyone who is interested. (Michael C. Graham, MC, PLLC and Sandy Graham, MS, PLLC). Anyone can *like* these pages. **Be aware, however, that your participation on this site will compromise your privacy at least to the extent that you might be identified as a client of ours and possibly to a much greater extent.** We do not control and do not guarantee your anonymity should you choose to *like* or follow these pages. We cannot guarantee that your health information will be protected if you choose to interact with these pages.

We also each maintain a presence on LinkedIn. We do not knowingly accept friend requests from clients on this site. If you request a connection on LinkedIn, and we recognize you, we will decline the invitation. If we do not recognize you, or you become otherwise included in our connection list and we later discover the connection, we will terminate the connection. It is important to realize that your presence on that site could, and probably will, compromise the confidentiality of your personal health care information. We use that site for professional networking only and will not post any client information there.

Each of us may have a personal presence on Facebook or other social media sites. We do not accept friend requests or messages from clients through these sites and ask that you do not follow or view our sites as it might compromise the confidentiality of your personal healthcare information and could complicate our therapeutic relationship. As is required by our professional ethical standards, if we discover that you have inadvertently been friended or are following those sites, you will be blocked.

Please also know that we will not follow you on any social media. We do not follow current or former clients. In addition, we will not view your online activities without your consent. If there are things from your online activities that you wish to share with us, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together.

If you need to contact us between sessions, please do not use social media sites. We do not review these sites regularly and they are not secure. With your permission, as indicated below, you may contact us by email, phone or text any time.

**BUSINESS REVIEW SITES**

You may find our counseling practices listed on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing and other such sites. Some of these sites include forums in which users rate their providers and possibly add reviews. Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business wishes to be added to the site. If you should find our listing on any of these sites please know that such listings are NOT a request for testimonials, ratings, or endorsements from you as my client. It is generally unethical for counselors to solicit testimonials. You certainly have the right to express yourself on any site you wish. However, due to confidentiality considerations, we cannot respond to any review on any of these sites. We urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as we take our commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that, if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with us about your feelings about our work, there is every probability Iwe will never see it.

**TEXTING**

We will use text as a communications tool with clients provided you give permission by signature as indicated below. Bear in mind that text messages are not secure and/or may be viewed by anyone. Accordingly, be aware that use of text messages to communicate content related to your therapy is not secure and the counselors are not responsible for any consequences arising from the use of text messages.

**EMAIL**

We prefer to use email only to arrange or modify appointments. Please be aware that, if you email us content related to your therapy sessions it is not secure and may be viewed by anyone. Be aware that any information communicated by email will probably be retained in the logs of your internet provider and these logs are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrators of the service providers. You should also know that any emails we receive from you and any responses we send may become part of your medical record.

<input type="checkbox"/>  <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> Initial	I prefer to receive communications by email, text, phone calls and voice messages. I understand the inherent risk and the unencrypted nature of these forms of communications. I understand the counselors are not responsible for any consequences arising from the use of these forms of communication now or at any time in the future. I also understand that use of these forms of communication technology could compromise the security of my personal health care information as related to services received from my counselor.
<input type="checkbox"/>  <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> Initial	I prefer that electronic or internet base form of communications not be used regarding any aspect of my involvement with the counselors. I understand that this means counselors will only communicate with me in person or directly by telephone. No voice messages, texts, emails or other types of electronic communications will be used by the counselor. If I use such methods to communicate with the counselor, the counselor will only reply in person or by direct phone calls.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Client Name (18 or older)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date