

Social Media Policy

This document outlines the office policies related to use of Social Media. Please read it to understand how your therapist conducts herself on the Internet as a mental health professional and how you can expect her to respond to various interactions on the Internet.

If you have any questions about anything within this document, you are encouraged to bring them up when you meet with your therapist. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when your therapist needs to update this policy. If so, you will be notified in writing of any policy changes and you will receive a copy of the updated policy.

FRIENDING

Your therapist does not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc). Adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when you meet with your therapist and you can talk more about it.

FANNING

Your therapist keeps a Facebook Page to allow people to share blog posts and practice updates with other Facebook users. All of the information shared on this page is available on your therapist's website.

You are welcome to view the Facebook Page and read or share articles posted there, but your therapist does not accept clients as Fans of this Page. Having clients as Facebook Fans creates a greater likelihood of compromised client confidentiality and it is best to be explicit to all who may view the list of Fans to know that they will not find client names on that list. In addition, the American Counseling Association's Ethics Code prohibits the soliciting of testimonials from clients. The term "Fan" comes too close to an implied request for a public endorsement of this practice.

Note that you should be able to subscribe to the page via RSS without becoming a Fan and without creating a visible, public link to the Page. You are more than welcome to do this.

FOLLOWING

Your therapist publishes a blog on her website and psychology news on Twitter. There is no expectation that you, as a client will want to follow the blog or Twitter stream. However, if you use an easily recognizable name on Twitter and your therapist happens to notice that you've followed her there, your therapist may briefly discuss it and its potential impact on your working relationship. The primary concern is your privacy. If you share this concern, there are more private ways to follow your therapist on Twitter (such as using an RSS feed or a locked Twitter list), which would eliminate your having a public link to the content. You are welcome to use your own discretion in choosing whether to follow your therapist.

Note that your therapist will not follow you back. Your therapist only follows other health professionals on Twitter and not current or former clients on blogs or Twitter. The reasoning is that casual viewing of clients' online content outside of the therapy hour can create confusion in regard to whether it's being done as a part of your treatment or to satisfy personal curiosity. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without an explicit arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on the working relationship. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with your therapist, please bring them into your sessions where you can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

INTERACTING

Please do not use SMS (mobile phone text messaging) or messaging on Social Networking sites such as Facebook or LinkedIn to contact your therapist. These sites are not secure and your messages may not be read in a timely fashion. Do not use Wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with your therapist in public online if you have an already established client/therapist relationship. Engaging with your therapist in this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

If you need to contact your therapist between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone. Direct email at crystal@crsytaleglenn.com is second best for quick, administrative issues such as changing appointment times. See the email section below for more information regarding email interactions.

USE OF SEARCH ENGINES

It is NOT a regular part of this practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook or other search engines. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If your therapist has a reason to suspect that you are in danger and you have not been in touch with her via your usual means (coming to appointments, phone, or email) there might be an instance in which using a search engine (to find you, find someone close to you, or to check on your recent status updates) becomes necessary as part of ensuring your welfare. These are unusual situations and if your therapist ever resorts to such means, she will fully document it and discuss it with you when you next meet.

GOOGLE READER

Your therapist does not follow current or former clients on Google Reader, and she does not use Google Reader to share articles. If there are things you want to share with your therapist that you feel are relevant to your treatment whether they are news items or things you have created, you are encouraged you to bring these items of interest into your sessions.

BUSINESS REVIEW SITES

You may find your therapist on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which list businesses. Some of these sites include forums in which users rate their providers and add reviews. Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business has added itself to the site. If you should find your therapist's listing on any of these sites, please know that the listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as her client.

The American Counseling Association's Ethics Code states under Section C.3.b that it is unethical for counselors to solicit testimonials: "Counselors who use testimonials do not solicit them from current clients nor former clients nor any other persons who may be vulnerable to undue influence."

Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality, your therapist cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. Your therapist urges you to take your own privacy as seriously as your therapist takes her commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with your therapist about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that she may never see it.

If you are working together, your therapist hopes that you will bring your feelings and reactions to the therapy work directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide your therapist is not a good fit. None of this is meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with your therapist wherever and with whomever you like. Confidentiality means that your therapist cannot tell people that you are her client and her Ethics Code prohibits her from requesting testimonials. But you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish about your counselor or how you feel about the treatment provided to you, in any forum of your choosing.

If you do choose to write something on a business review site, your therapist hopes you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum. Your therapist urge syou to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own privacy and protection.

If you feel your therapist has done something harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with her, you can always contact the Board of Behavioral Sciences, which oversees licensing, and they will review the services your therapist has provided.

Board of Behavioral Sciences
1625 N Market Blvd., Suite S-200
Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 574-7830
http://www.bbs.ca.gov/consumer/file_complaint.shtml

LOCATION-BASED SERVICES

If you used location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. Your therapist does not place this practice as a check-in location on various sites such as Foursquare, Gowalla, Loopt, etc. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins at your therapist's office on a weekly basis. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally "checking in" from this office or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

EMAIL

Your therapist prefers using email only to arrange or modify appointments. Please do not email your therapist content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not completely secure or confidential. If you choose to communicate with your therapist by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and her Internet service providers. While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the Internet service provider. You should also know that any emails your therapist receives from you and any responses that your therapist sends to you become a part of your legal record.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to review your therapist's Social Media Policy. If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures or regarding our potential interactions on the Internet, do bring them to your therapist's attention so that it can be discussed.

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