

NewPaths,LLC
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Standards for Communication

If you have a life threatening emergency, and you are unable to reach me, please follow the emergency procedures, call 911, or go to the nearest emergency room where you will receive immediate attention.

This document outlines my policies related to communication with clients. Please read it to understand my views of the best way for us to communicate with each other, protect the privacy of the treatment, and focus on our work together. **Please initial after each section to indicate you have read and understand the policies and standards.**

Basic Principles

Psychotherapy is one of the most private endeavors in which anyone can engage. We will be looking at your personal thoughts and feelings in a way that is different from social, even intimate, relationships outside of therapy. The success of this work, supported by the Clinical Social Work Association Code of Ethics, depends in part on the privacy of what we discuss and awareness that our relationship is not part of our social or professional lives outside of our work together.

To protect the private nature of our work and keep it separate from our lives outside of our work, I encourage clients to not discuss or post any information about our work with anyone else. I will do the same, unless required by law or requested by you, though I do not automatically share information unless we agree that it is necessary. I will discuss any information I share with others about our work with you before doing so, and have you sign a written release of information. _____

Initial

Communication

Telephone: Ideally any communication between us occurs in person at our sessions. When it is necessary to communicate between sessions, I ask that you call me at my cell phone number above. Messages left on my *voice mail* are secure, accessible only by me with a password. You can normally expect a response within 24 hours. If there are occasions when I may be out of the office and checking my voice mail less frequently, I will leave special notice and instructions in the voice mail message.

If you give me a phone number, as a general contact number, or a call back number in a voice mail message, I will assume it is acceptable to leave a message at that number with basic information, such as an answer to a question or scheduling information, unless you advise me otherwise. _____

Initial

Text Messaging (SMS): Text messages may be used to communicate simple information such as scheduling. For emotional or cognitive issues, or in case of emergency, a voice message is required.

Initial

Paper: Generally I do not communicate by mail, however, if you signed the form allowing me to contact you regarding closing your case or missed appointments I will do so. _____
Initial

Email: Email is received by me and access is password protected, only viewed by me, however, **my email communication is not encrypted and in some instances may pose a privacy risk. If you choose to contact me by email you assume this risk.** You should normally expect I will respond at the next session. If you require a particularly prompt response, talk with me directly to make arrangements. I will assume that your email communication is safe and secure. I prefer using text or voice message to change or cancel an appointment. Email is not a good choice for addressing a crisis. _____
Initial

Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, etc.): As a matter of policy, I do not join a client’s Social Media Network, or include a client in Social Media Networks I may participate in. This helps maintain the privacy and personal boundaries of our therapeutic relationship.

If you do come across personal or professional information about me online or through others, I encourage you to bring it up in our discussions so that we may understand any meaning it has in our work. I will not seek information about you online or through others, and ask that you do the same.

Initial

My Website: You may find information about my psychotherapy practice at my website: www.NewPathsTherapy.com. I ask that you and I limit acquiring any other information about each other to what we discuss in my office. _____
Initial

In-person: There may be occasions when we unexpectedly “run into each other” outside of the office, such as at a store, or event, etc. I will typically ignore or not acknowledge knowing a client to protect your privacy. This may seem awkward, but it also avoids the awkwardness of deciding how to explain to someone how we know each other. _____
Initial

Thank you for respecting these policies. I welcome your thoughts and feelings about them.

Please sign to indicate you have read and understand the Standards of Communication.

Signature

Date

Print