 Social Media Policy

This document outlines my office policies related to the use of social media. Please read it to understand how I conduct myself on the internet as a mental health professional and how you can expect me to respond to various interactions that may occur between us on the Internet.

If you have any questions, please do bring them into our session so we can discuss. New technology is always changing, and I may periodically update this policy. If I do, I will notify all current patients of this change in writing and ensure you have copy of the updated policy.

**“Friending”:**

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, linkdin, etc.). I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our therapeutic privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions, please do bring them up when we meet and we can discuss further.

**Following:**

I do not follow current or former clients on blogs or Twitter. My reason for this is that I believe 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 our treatment or to satisfy my personal curiosity. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent towards a specific therapeutic purpose could potentially have a negative influence on our working relationship. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

**Interacting:**

Please do not SMS (mobile phone text message) or message me through social medial sites. These sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. Do not use wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with me in public online if we have already established a client/ therapist relationship. Engaging with me this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your patient chart. If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way is to do so via phone. My direct email is drflint@korupsychologicalservices.com. This is the second best contact method BUT ONLY FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES (i.e. changing an appointment time, etc.). Please see the email section below for more information regarding email interactions.

**Use of Search Engines:**

It is NOT a regular part of my practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook (or other search engines). Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If I have reason to suspect that you are in danger and you have not been in touch with me via our 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 I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it in your medical record and discuss it with you when we meet next.

**Business Review Sites:**

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing or other places which list businesses. Some of these sites include forums in which users rater 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 my listing on any of these sites, please know that my listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, or endorsement from you as my client. In fact, your response to these requests removes confidentiality of our work together by you identifying yourself as a patient in my practice.

The American Psychological Association’s Ethics Code states under Principle 5.05 that it is unethical for psychologists to solicit testimonials. “Psychologists do not solicit testimonials from current therapy client/s patients or other persons who because of their particular circumstances are vulnerable to undue influence.”

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

If we are working together, I hope that you will bring your feelings and reactions to our work directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide we are not a good fit. None of this is mean to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with me wherever and with whomever you would like. Confidentiality means that I cannot tell people that you are my client and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. You are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that I’m your therapist or how you feel about the treatment I provide to you, in any forum of your choosing.

If you do choose to write something on a business review site, I hope you keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information to the public. I urge you 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 I have done something harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with me, you can always contact the Board of Psychology which oversees licensing, and they will review the services I have provided.

**Location Based Services:**

If you use location-based services on your phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. I do not place my practice as a check in location on any social media platforms. 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 my office on a weekly basis. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally “checking in” from my office or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

**Email:**

I prefer to use email ONLY to arrange or modify appointments. Please do not email me content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not completely secure or confidential. If you choose to communicate with me by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and my Internet service providers. While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at those logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator of the Internet service provider. You should also know that any email I receive from you and any responses that I send to you will be printed out by me and kept in your client record.

**Thank you!**

Thank you for taking the time to review my social medial policy. If you have aby questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures, or regarding our potential interactions on the Internet, do bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them.