



Social Media Policy

This document outlines our policies related to the use of social media. As new technology develops and the internet changes, we will update this policy accordingly.

Friending

I do not accept friend requests from current or recent former clients on any social networking site. I believe that adding clients as friends on these sites and compromise client confidentiality and client's respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship.

Fanning/ Liking

The Refuge Center for Counseling keeps a Facebook Page to inform people of events and topics of concern in the Mental Health Field. However, I do not accept clients as Fans on my personal Facebook page. I believe having clients as Facebook Fans creates a greater likelihood of compromise client confidentiality and I feel it is best to be explicit to all who may view my list of Fans/Likes to know that they will not find client names on that list. **Note:** Anyone can view and Fan/Like The Refuge Center for Counseling Facebook page. However, The Refuge Center for Counseling Facebook page does not accept Friend Requests to protect the confidentiality of clients. Please note that The Refuge Center for Counseling Facebook page is viewed by the public and anything you should 'comment' or 'like' will have your name listed on the Facebook page. You are always free to view The Refuge Center for Counseling Facebook page without liking or commenting.

Interacting

Clients are not to use messaging on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn to contact me. These sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. Do not use wall posts, @ replies, or other means of engaging with me in public online if we have an already established client/ therapist relationship. Engaging with me this way could compromise confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of the client's legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in their chart. If clients need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone or direct email. 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, Facebook, or other search engines. Extremely rare exceptions *maybe* made during times of crisis. If I have reason to suspect that a client is in danger and I have not been able to connect with a client via our usual means (coming to appointments, phone, or email) there *might* be an instance in which using a search engine becomes necessary as part of ensuring client safety. These are unusual situations and if I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it and discuss it with my client when we next meet.

Email

Email is not completely secure or confidential. For those who 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 these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the Internet service provider. Emails I receive from clients and former clients along with any responses that are related to treatment and diagnosis may be printed out and kept in respective treatment records. The Refuge Center for Counseling does have a newsletter that goes out regularly and I often send out other information re: upcoming events, groups, etc. that may be of interest to my current and former clients in addition to the community at-large. Clients will be given a chance to opt-in to receive these emails. Anyone on this email list can always opt-out of receiving this information. Current and former client email information is always kept secure and not shared with any third parties.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to review my Social Media Policy. If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures or regarding our potential interaction on the internet, please bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them.

Client(s) Signature(s): _____ Date: _____