



## **Informed Consent for Telepsychology-Based Services**

Before we start telepsychology work together, it is important you are aware of the risks and benefits, procedures and guidelines to be followed to help our work be safe and effective for you.

### **Receiving services via telepsychology allows you to:**

- Receive services at times or in places where these services may not otherwise be available.
- Receive services in a fashion that may be more convenient and less prone to delays than in-person meetings.
- Receive services when you are unable to travel to the service provider's office.

### **Receiving services via telepsychology has the following risks:**

Telepsychology services can be impacted by technical failures, may introduce risks to your privacy, and may reduce your service provider's ability to directly intervene in crises or emergencies. Here is a non-exhaustive list of examples:

- Internet connections and cloud services could cease working or become too unstable to use.
- Cloud-based service personnel, IT assistants, and malicious actors ("hackers") may have the ability to access your private information that is transmitted or stored in the process of telepsychology-based service delivery. To minimize this risk, I use HIPAA compliant technologies including encrypted two way communication.
- Computer or smartphone hardware can have sudden failures or run out of power, or local power services can go out.

Interruptions in connectedness may disrupt services at important moments, and your provider may be unable to reach you quickly or use the most effective tools. Your provider may also be unable to help you in-person.

There may be additional benefits and risks to telepsychology services that arise from the lack of in-person contact or presence, the distance between you and your provider at the time of service, and the technological tools used to deliver services. Your provider will assess these potential benefits and risks, sometimes in collaboration with you, as your relationship progresses.

### **Assessing Telepsychology's Fit For You**

Although it is well validated by research, service delivery via telepsychology may not be a good fit for every person. Your provider will continuously assess if working via telepsychology is appropriate for your case. If it is not appropriate, your provider will help you find in-person providers with whom to continue services.

Please talk to your provider if you find the telepsychology interactions so difficult to use that it distracts from the services being provided. Raising your questions or concerns will not, by itself, result in termination of services. Bringing your concerns to your provider is often a part of the process.

You also have a right to stop receiving services by telepsychology at any time without prejudice. If your provider also provides services in-person and you are reasonably able to access the provider's in-person services, you will not be prevented from accessing those services if you choose to stop using telepsychology.

### **Your Telepsychology Environment**

You will be responsible for creating a safe and confidential space during sessions. You should use a space that is free of other people. It should also be difficult for people outside the space to see or hear your interactions with your provider during the session. If you are unsure of how to do this, please ask your provider for assistance.

## **Our Communication Plan**

Our work is done primarily during our scheduled sessions, which will generally occur during my normal Monday - Thursday business hours. Contact between sessions should be generally be limited to confirming or changing appointment times, asking questions about billing or other business related issues.

At our first session, we will develop a plan for backup communications in case of technology failures and a plan for responding to emergencies and mental health crises. In addition to those plans, your provider has the following policies regarding communications:

- The best way to contact your provider between sessions is to call 503.781.9085. You can also text non-clinically sensitive information to this same number. Your provider will respond to your messages within 24 business hours. Please note that your provider may not respond at all on weekends or holidays. Your provider may also respond sooner than stated in this policy. That does not mean they will always respond that quickly.
- Please note that all textual messages you exchange with your provider (e.g. emails and text messages) will become a part of your health record. Your provider will use reasonable care to ensure that those communications are secure and that they safeguard your privacy.

## **Our Safety and Emergency Plan**

As a recipient of telepsychology-based services, you will need to participate in ensuring your safety during mental health crises, medical emergencies, and sessions that you have with your provider. Your provider will require you to designate an emergency contact. You will need to provide permission for your provider to communicate with this person about your care during emergencies.

Your provider will also develop with you a plan for what to do during mental health crises and emergencies, and a plan for how to keep your space safe during sessions. It is important that you engage with your provider in the creation of these plans and that you follow them when you need to.

## Your Security and Privacy

Except where otherwise noted, your provider employs software and hardware tools that adhere to security best practices and applicable legal standards for the purposes of protecting your privacy and ensuring that records of your health care services are not lost or damaged.

You also have a role to play in maintaining your security. Please use reasonable security protocols to protect the privacy of your own health care information. For example: when communicating with your provider, use devices and service accounts that are protected by unique passwords that only you know. Also, use the secure tools that your provider has supplied for communications.

## Recordings

Please do not record video or audio sessions without your provider's consent. Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy, and should be done so with great care. Your provider will not record video or audio of your sessions.

## Signed Agreement for Telepsychology-Based Services

I have been informed of the risks, including but not limited to my confidentiality in treatment and transmitting my protected health information by unsecured means.

I understand that I am not required to sign this agreement in order to receive treatment.

I also understand that I may terminate this consent at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of client)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name)