



# Progression Counseling Group

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## Social Media Policy

This document outlines our office policies related to use of Social Media. Please read it to understand how we conduct business on the Internet (email) and with mobile phone texting of SMS messages as mental health professionals and how you can expect us to respond to various interactions that may occur between us on the Internet and with mobile phone texting messages.

If you have any questions about anything within this document, we encourage you to bring them up when in session. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when we need to update this policy. If we do so, we will notify you in writing of any policy changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

### Friending

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

Our reasoning is that we believe 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 my personal curiosity. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without our explicit arrangement towards a specific 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 us, please bring them into your sessions where you and your clinician can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

### Interacting

Please do not use messaging on Social Networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn to contact your clinician or other staff at the practice. These sites are not secure and we may not read these messages in a timely fashion. Engaging with staff this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal psychotherapy record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

If staff or your clinician see you in public, please know, they may not acknowledge you. This is, of course, not because they don't like you, but instead, to protect your confidentiality. If you choose to acknowledge us, of course we will briefly say hello, or waive, before moving on.

### Use of Search Engines

It is NOT a regular part of our practice to search for clients on Google, Facebook or other search engines. What you want us to know, you can tell us and/or show your clinician during our sessions. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If your clinician has a reason to suspect that you are in danger and you have not been in touch with them 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 we ever resort to such means, we will fully document it and discuss it with you when we next meet.

### Business Review Sites

You may find our counseling 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 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 our listing on any of these sites, please know that our listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as our client. It is unethical for us to solicit testimonials from clients. We urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as we take my commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with us about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that we may never see it. Some of the information on these sites are outdated and/or incorrect.

If we are working together, we 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 meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with me wherever and with whomever you like. Confidentiality means that we cannot tell people that you are our client and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. But, you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish who your therapist is, or how you feel about the treatment we provided to you, in any form of your choosing.

### Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to review our 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 our attention so that we can discuss them.

I have reviewed this policy and agree I will follow this Social Media Policy.

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Client signature

Date