

MY PRIVATE PRACTICE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This document describes my policies related to use of Social Media or other Internet/electronic/digital tools. 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 about anything you read here, I encourage you to bring them up when we meet.

As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when I need to update this policy. If I do so, I will notify you in writing of any policy changes and makes sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

Please Note: As a Psychologist, I am bound by confidentiality, which means that I cannot reveal that you are my client. You are welcome to share that I am your therapist with anyone you wish, using whatever form you choose. This policy is meant to clarify what my legal and ethical restrictions are, so you may understand the context for my behavior and communication choices.

CONTACTING ME VIA EMAIL AND TEXTS

If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone at (425) 298-6155. Texting this number or direct email at gale@eastsidementalwellness.com is second best for quick, administrative issues such as arranging or changing appointment times. Although email and mobile phone text messaging are convenient, they are unfortunately not completely secure or confidential. Emails and texts, in particular, are vulnerable due to the fact that servers or communication companies may have direct access to the messages travelling through them. Additionally, people with access to your computer, mobile phone, and/or other devices may also have access to your email and/or text messages. Therefore, I prefer using email and SMS only to arrange or modify appointments, and do not include content related to your therapy sessions.

If you communicate confidential or private information via unencrypted email or texts, I will assume that you have made an informed decision and will view it as your agreement to take the risk that such communication may be intercepted. Please do not use texts, email, voice mail, or faxes for emergencies, as computer or network problems may prevent timely delivery or receipt.

FRIENDING

I am unable to accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc). Adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy, and may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it. I keep a Facebook Business Page for my private practice to allow people to share my blog posts and practice updates with other Facebook users. You are

welcome to read this page and share posts. However, please be aware that if you click on the "Like" button, an update will be published to your News Feed and on your wall stating that you "Like" Eastside Mental Wellness, and will be visible to your connections on Facebook. Please do not use messaging, wall postings, @replies, etc. on Social Networking sites such as Twitter or Facebook to contact me. These sites are not secure, and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion.

FOLLOWING

I use Twitter and Facebook to distribute content about my practice and occasional blog posts. I have no expectation that you, as a client, will want to follow my blog or social media stream, however if you chose to follow me, I am not able follow you back. I only follow other health professionals or social justice organizations on social networks, and I do not follow current or former clients on blogs or social networks.

BUSINESS REVIEW SITES

You may find Eastside Mental Wellness on sites that list businesses such as Yelp, HealthGrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, or Google + Local. 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 my listing on any of these sites, please know that my listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as my client.

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 clients/patients or other persons who because of their particular circumstances are vulnerable to undue influence." Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality, I cannot respond to any review on any of these sites, whether it is positive or negative. Please 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, regardless of whether your feedback is positive or negative. As mentioned earlier, 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 I cannot tell people that you are my client and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. But you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that I'm your therapist or how you feel about the treatment I provided to you, in any forum of your choosing.

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 interactions on the Internet, please do bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them.

Acknowledgement of Review of Social Media Policy:

By signing the below, I am indicating that I have read this document, understand my rights as a client, and accept the responsibility as stated. I have been offered a printed copy of the Social Media Policy and all questions regarding these policies have been answered to my satisfaction.

Client Name (print)

Date

Signature

Gale Dhaliwal, Psychologist

Date:
