



TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED SERVICES ONLINE THERAPY

AGREEMENT AND INFORMED CONSENT

Unless we, (**teletherapy client print your name**) _____ and Jo Ann Travis Evans, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, explicitly agree otherwise, our technology assisted online therapy exchange is confidential. Any personal information you choose to share with me will be held in the strictest confidence. Just as for my face-to-face clients, I will not release your information to anyone without your prior approval, or I am required to do so by law. In Texas, we are not required to notify authorities if we become convinced a client is about to physically harm someone. We do, however, have a duty to inform the authorities if there is suspicion or evidence of self-abuse, abuse of others, abuse of children, the elderly (over 65), or people with disabilities.

You understand that our technology assisted online therapy occurs in the state of Texas, (USA), and is governed by the laws of that state. In a manner of speaking, you use this modality (technology assisted online therapy) to visit me in my Texas office; where we meet to do our work. Helping you build the life you want is what our exchange is all about. We should not continue any process that is counter-productive in that respect. I, as your therapist, determine on an on-going basis whether the condition being assessed and/or treated is appropriate for technology assisted online therapy. Either of us is free to terminate our relationship at any time and for any reason. If you decide to terminate, I believe it would be to your benefit to drop me a short note stating the reasons for your leaving. In the unlikely event I become convinced our technology assisted online therapy is not in your best interests (see below), I will explain that to you and suggest some alternative options better suited to your needs.

Records are maintained electronically, including but not limited to, encryption by WeCounsel Solutions and are stored for minimally 6 years by me, as your therapist. Records of technology assisted online therapy may also be handwritten by me and kept in a filed document under lock and key at my office.

LIMITATIONS OF TECHNOLOGY ASSISTED ONLINE THERAPY SERVICES

While technology assisted online therapy is a great way to get help with many of life's problems, overwhelming or potentially dangerous challenges are best met with face-to-face professional support. You understand that technology assisted online therapy is neither a universal substitute, nor the same as face-to-face psychotherapy treatment. You as the e-client understand that phone, email, and technology assisted sessions have limitations compared to in-person sessions, among those being the lack of "personal" face-to-face interactions and the lack of visual and audio cues in the therapy process. You should be aware that misunderstandings are possible with technology assisted online therapy since nonverbal cues are relatively lacking. You understand that technology assisted online therapy is not appropriate if you are experiencing a crisis or having suicidal or homicidal thoughts. If a life-threatening crisis should occur, you agree to contact a crisis hotline, call 9-1-1, or go to a hospital emergency room. You accept the distinctions made using technology assisted online therapy vs. face-to-face psychotherapy. In particular, you accept that technology assisted online therapy **does not provide emergency services**.

Although the Internet provides the appearance of anonymity and privacy in counseling, privacy is more of an issue online than in person. You understand only the persons who have signed this agreement (teletherapy client and therapist) may be in the technology assisted online therapy sessions.

You are responsible for information security on your computer. You are responsible for securing your own computer hardware, Internet access points, and chat software, phone, email, and passwords. The therapist has a right to his or her privacy and may wish to restrict the use of any copies or recordings you, the e-client, makes of their communications. You must seek the permission of the therapist before recording any portion of the session. If you decide to keep copies of our emails or communication on your computer, it is up to you to keep that information secure. Unfortunately, I cannot guarantee the security of our emails as they travel between our computers. The technology assisted online therapy program we use, WeCounsel Solutions, claims the program is encrypted, and they assert confidential, however I cannot guarantee the security of the program. It is possible, though unlikely, to intercept emails in transit. If you are concerned about that possibility, please consider the option to encrypt our emails.

Our technology assisted online therapy is a means by which you, the teletherapy client, can receive services of counseling, information and guidance from an experienced psychotherapist. It is perhaps most accurately perceived as a process creating, over time, a trusting and collaborative relationship.

Telecommunication: Technology assisted online therapy is the use of electronic transmissions to treat the needs of a teletherapy client. In this case, we offer both video and audio forms of communication via the Internet. This means the practice of mental health care delivery, diagnosis, consultation, treatment, transfer of medical data, and education using interactive audio, video, or data communications. The risks involved with technology assisted online therapy include the potential release of private information due to the complexities and abnormalities involved with the Internet. Viruses, Trojans, and other involuntary intrusions have the ability to grab and released information you may desire to keep private. Furthermore, there is the risk of being overheard by anyone near you if you do not place yourself in a private area and open to other's intrusion, therefore, **public Internet networks are not allowed unless approved by the therapist.** The advantages are that you may be treated from any location agreed upon by the therapist at a mutually agreeable time. In the case of technical failure, a back up plan would be, at the discretion of the therapist, to reconnect the online session immediately, or to place a phone call to the teletherapy client to reschedule the session.

It is YOUR responsibility to create an environment on your end of the technology assisted online therapy transmission that is not subject to unexpected or unauthorized intrusion of your personal information. It is MY responsibility for me, the therapist, to do the same.

Therapists, in the state of Texas, are accountable to and agree to abide by the ethical and legal guidelines prescribed by the state of Texas licensure and residence. By agreeing to solicit the therapist's services, the teletherapy client agrees to these terms. If you do not understand, or have any questions regarding this issue, please feel free to ask me about this issue.

There are no other explicit or implied commitments in our teletherapy relationship.

I, _____, (teletherapy client name) have read and understand the information provided above. I certify that I live within the State of Texas and am over the age of 18 years. I have discussed this document with my psychotherapist, and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Teletherapy Client Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Teletherapy Client Printed Name: _____