



EVIDENCE-BASED
THERAPY

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SOCIAL MEDIA & ONLINE INTERACTION POLICY

This is an outline of the EBT3 Psychology office policies related to use of Social Media. Please read it to understand how we conduct ourselves on the Internet as mental health professionals and how you can expect us to respond to various interactions that may occur between us on the Internet.

If you have any questions about anything within this document, we encourage you to bring them up when you meet with your clinician. 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

EBT3 clinicians do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, 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 the therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when you meet with your clinician.

Facebook Page

We keep a Facebook Page for our professional practice to allow people to share blog posts, practice information, and updates with other Facebook users. You are welcome to view our Facebook Page and read or share articles posted there.

Facebook provides users with the option to “Like,” “Follow,” or otherwise interact with our page. EBT3 Psychology and your clinician will never request or expect you to do so. In fact, we prefer that current and former clients do not interact with our page in any way, as it creates a greater likelihood of compromised client confidentiality. “Liking,” “Following,” or otherwise interacting with the page does not provide any benefits to you over and above the benefits of simply viewing the page.

If you do decide to interact with our page in any way, we urge you to first consider your Facebook privacy settings and who may be able to view this activity. If you do not want others on Facebook to be aware of your connection with EBT3 Psychology, we strongly recommend that you do not interact with the page.

Following

EBT3 Psychology may publish a blog or post on Twitter. We have no expectation that you as a client will want to follow our blog or Twitter stream. However, if you use an easily recognizable name on Twitter and your clinician happens to notice that you've followed us there, your clinician may briefly discuss it and its potential impact on your working relationship.

Our primary concern is your privacy. If you share this concern, there are more private ways to follow us on Twitter (such as using an RSS feed or a locked Twitter list), which would eliminate your having a public link to our content. You are welcome to use your own discretion in choosing whether to follow us.

Note that we will not follow you back. We only follow other health professionals on Twitter and we do not follow current or former clients on blogs or Twitter. 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 your clinician's personal curiosity.



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In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without an explicit arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on your working relationship with your clinician.

If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with your clinician, 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 EBT3 Psychology or your clinician. These sites are not secure and these messages may not be read in a timely fashion.

Do not use Wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with us in public online if you have an already established client/therapist relationship with a clinician at EBT3 Psychology. Engaging with us this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

Please discuss with your clinician the best way to communicate between sessions.

Use of Search Engines

It is NOT a regular part of our practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook or other search engines. 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 the 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 your clinician ever resorts to such means, he or she will fully document it and discuss it with you when you next meet.

Business Review Sites

You may find our psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Google, Yahoo Local, Facebook, 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, ratings, or endorsement from you as our client.

Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. Due to confidentiality, however, we cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. We urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as we take our commitment of confidentiality to you.

You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with your clinician about your feelings about working together, there is a good possibility that your clinician will never see it.

If you are seeing a clinician at EBT3Psychology, we hope that you will bring your feelings and reactions directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide you and your clinician are not a good fit.

None of this is meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy at EBT3 Psychology wherever and with whomever you like. Confidentiality means that we cannot tell people that you are a client at EBT3 Psychology, and our Ethics Code prohibits us from requesting testimonials. You are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that you are a client of EBT3 Psychology or how you feel about the treatment that is provided to you, in any forum of your choosing.



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If you do choose to write something on a business review site, we hope you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum. We urge you to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own privacy and protection.

Location-Based Services

If you used location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. We do not place our practice as a check-in location on various sites such as Foursquare. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins at our office on a weekly basis.

Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally “checking in” from our office or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

Email

We prefer using email only to arrange or modify appointments. Please do not email your clinician content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not completely secure or confidential.

If you choose to communicate with your clinician by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and our 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.

You should also know that any emails your clinician receives from you and any responses that are sent to you become part of your legal record.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to review the EBT3 Psychology Social Media & Online Interaction Policy.

If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures or regarding our potential interactions online, please bring them to the attention of your clinician so that they can be discussed.