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Teletherapy Informed Consent Form 2020

This Informed Consent for Telepsychology contains important information focusing on doing psychotherapy using the phone or the Internet. Please read carefully and let us know if you have any questions. When you sign this document, it will represent an agreement between us.

Telepsychology refers to providing psychotherapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful ensuring continuity of care if the patient or clinician moves to a different location, takes an extended vacation or is otherwise unable to continue to meet in person. It is also more convenient and takes less time. Telepsychology, however, requires technical competence on both our parts to be helpful.

Benefits and Risks of Telepsychology

Risks to confidentiality: Telepsychology sessions take place outside of the therapist's office; there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. On our end, we will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. But it is important for you to make sure you find a private place for our session on your cell phone or other device. You should participate in therapy only while in a room or area where other people are not present and cannot overhear the conversation.

Issues related to technology: There are many ways that technology issues might impact telepsychology. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.

Crisis management and intervention: Usually, we will not engage in telepsychology with clients who are currently in a crisis situation requiring high levels of support and intervention. Before engaging in telepsychology, we will develop an emergency response plan to address potential crisis situations that may arise during the course of our telepsychology work.

Efficacy: Most research shows that telepsychology is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some psychologists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is a debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

Electronic Communications

We will decide together which kind of telepsychology service to use. You may have to have certain computer or cell phone systems to use telepsychology services. You are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in telepsychology.

Before beginning telepsychology services, we have discussed and agreed to the following guidelines:

- There are potential benefits and risks of teletherapy, and such risks to confidentiality if others overhear conversations not held in a private space.
- There are potential technology failures that can occur (poor connections or other technology interruptions beyond our control).
- Psychologist and patient agree to honor confidentiality for telepsychology and agree not to record the session without written permission from the other person(s).
- Telepsychology normally requires both parties to use a webcam or HIPAA compliant web platform such as (Doxy.me) or smart phone during a session. However, "hard line" telephones are permitted.
- Psychologist and patient both agree to locate in a private, quiet area free from distractions.
- Psychologist and patient agree to use secure internet connection when possible rather than Wi-Fi.
- Psychologist and patient will do our best to be on time for appointment and give advance notice by phone regarding cancellation, rescheduling or if either party is going to be late to the session.
- Patient will provide a backup number in the event of a technical issues, to facilitate restarting or rescheduling.
- Your psychologist will decide that telepsychology is no longer the most appropriate form of treatment for you. We will discuss options of either a higher level of care or resumption of in-person sessions or a referral to another professional in your location who can provide appropriate services.
- Patient will provide physical address and an emergency contact in case of crisis. If our session is interrupted for any reason, such as technology failure, and if you are having an emergency, do not call us back; instead call 911, or go to your nearest emergency room. Call us back after you have called or obtained emergency services.
- If there is a technological failure and we are unable to resume the connection, you will only be charged the prorated amount of actual session time.

Informed Consent

This agreement is intended as a supplement to the general informed consent that we agreed to at the outset of our clinical work together and does not amend any of the terms of that agreement. Your signature below indicates agreement with its terms and conditions.

Patient _____ Date _____

Psychologist _____ Date _____