



Social Media Policy for GRACE Counseling Services

Social Media and EMail Policy

This document outlines our policies related to the use of Social Media. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, we will update this policy accordingly.

FRIENDING

I do not accept friend requests from current or recent former clients on any social networking site. I believe that adding clients as friends on these sites can compromise client confidentiality and client's respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship.

FANNING/LIKING

GRACE Counseling Services keeps a Facebook Page to allow people to check out events, and topics of concern in the Mental Health Field. However, I do not accept clients as Fans on my personal Facebook page. I believe having clients as Facebook Fans creates a greater likelihood of compromised client confidentiality and I feel it is best to be explicit to all who may view my list of Fans/Likes to know that they will not find client names on that list. Note: Anyone can view and fan/like the GRACE Counseling Services Facebook page. However, GRACE Counseling Services Facebook page does not accept 'friend requests' to protect the confidentiality of clients. Please note that the GRACE Counseling Services Facebook page is a viewed by the public and anything you should 'comment' or 'like' will have your name listed on the Facebook page. You are always free to view GRACE Counseling Services Facebook page without liking or commenting.

INTERACTING

Clients are not to use messaging on Social Networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn to contact me. These sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. Do not use Wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with me in public online if we have an already established client/therapist relationship. Engaging with me this way could compromise confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of my client's legal medical record and will need to be

documented and archived in their chart. If clients need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone or direct email: (therapist email address). See the email section below for more information regarding email interactions.

USE OF SEARCH ENGINES

It is NOT a regular part of my practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook or other search engines. Extremely rare exceptions *may* be made during times of crisis. If I have a reason to suspect that a client is in danger and I have not been able to connect with a client via our usual means (coming to appointments, phone, or email) there *might* be an instance in which using a search engine becomes necessary as part of ensuring client safety. These are unusual situations and if I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it and discuss it with my client when we next meet.

GOOGLE READER

I do not follow current or former clients on Google Reader and I do not use Google Reader to share articles. If there are things clients want to share with me, I encourage clients to bring these items of interest into our sessions or email me directly.

EMAIL

Email is not completely secure or confidential. For those who choose to communicate with me by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and my 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. Emails I receive from clients and former clients along with any responses that are related to treatment and diagnosis may be printed out kept in respective treatment records. GRACE Counseling Services does have a newsletter that goes out regularly and I often send out other information re: upcoming events, groups, etc that may be of interest to my current and former clients in addition to the community at large. Clients will be given a chance to opt-- in to receive these e-- mails. Anyone on this email list can always opt out of receiving this information. Current and former client email information is always kept secure and not shared with any third parties.

CONCLUSION

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 bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them.

Client Signature

Date