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Individuals, Couples,
and Group Psychotherapy

Informed Consent for Remote Electronic (Virtual/Online/Telepsychology) Sessions During the Coronavirus Outbreak

During the Coronavirus pandemic public health officials have recommended social distancing as a way to mitigate the spread and effects of the pandemic. Dr. Greenfield has stopped in-person sessions and is offering remote electronic (online and/or telephone) sessions instead. In order to engage in remote electronic psychotherapy sessions, please read and sign this Informed Consent.

Dr. Greenfield is offering the following 3 formats for remote sessions. Despite best efforts, there are risks of breach with virtually any electronic communication, which you must accept in order to participate in electronic (voice-and-video or voice-only) sessions.

3 Options:

1. Doxy.me

Doxy.me offers secure, encrypted, "HIPAA-compliant" voice-and-video communication for computer and smartphone. It is simple to use: You click on an email link that I send you at the time of the session. This is the format I recommend trying first. (For more information, its website is doxy.me.)

2. Signal Messenger

Several clients (perhaps especially on older iphones?) have not been able to get doxy.me to work on their phones (specifically, to access the phone camera). Signal Messenger is an alternative app for voice-and-video (or voice-only) communication via cellphone. Though it has not been identified as "HIPAA-compliant," it is a free, private/encrypted method for secure communication. (For more information, its website is signal.org.) To use this format, download the Signal Messenger app: Its logo consists of a blue background, with a white bubble in it. Feel free to call me if you need help with this.

3. Standard phone call or Facetime (most familiar, but NOT recommended)

Standard communication via cellphone is not encrypted, and entails risk of interception such that an unknown third party could listen in on the conversation. (Signal Messenger (option 2) is virtually identical in functionality, and is secure/encrypted.) If you choose to receive a non-encrypted call on your cell phone, by signing this consent, you agree to accept the risk of it being intercepted.

- a. Because voice-only sessions do not have an in-person component, information from facial expressions and body language is not available during a telephone session. As a result, Dr. Greenfield may need to ask you more detailed questions at times in sessions.

The first 2 options above seem to have minimum risk of breach of privacy, and the first presents itself as meeting the HIPAA standard. However, I am not a tech expert, and I cannot guarantee the security of any electronic communication. By signing below, you agree to accept this risk.

With Any of the Options Above:

1. As with in-person sessions, no information will be shared without your written permission, with the exceptions provided by legal statute (e.g., imminent risk of harm to self or other).
2. For your remote session, please situate yourself in a place that is as private as possible, so that no one can overhear it. (If not, you will feel inhibited in a way that will detract from the session.) Someone overhearing is another risk of remote sessions that you must accept, by signing below.
3. My clinical record-keeping for remote sessions is the same as for in-person sessions, with notes recorded in your chart by date and time. As with in-person sessions, I make no recording of the session.
4. Billing for electronic sessions will be comparable to that for in-person sessions, except that:
 - a. For out of pocket payments – for those paying altogether out of pocket, and for payment of deductibles and copays for those using insurance – please send a check to my office (6409 Odana Rd., #23, Madison, WI, 53719) – ideally before or on the day of the session (thank you!).
 - b. Most insurance companies have agreed to pay for remote/“telehealth” mental health/psychotherapy services, as I am offering to provide.
 - i. As always, you are ultimately responsible for charges for sessions. For those wanting additional assurance regarding insurance reimbursement, I suggest calling your insurance company’s 800 number to get (pre-)authorization, and if possible document the time and date, and name and phone number of the person who provides it.
5. Dr. Greenfield will request your location for each electronic session. In cases where there is active suicidal ideation or indications that you are experiencing delusions or hallucinations, Dr. Greenfield will need to make a full assessment to ensure your safety. If the result of that assessment is that it is uncertain that you will be safe, Dr. Greenfield may need to request a wellness check from the local police department.
6. Electronic sessions are being offered at this time due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic. As the public health situation improves, it is anticipated that sessions will return to normal in-person sessions at Dr. Greenfield’s office.

7. These telephone sessions are only available to residents of Wisconsin.

Gerald Greenfield, Ph.D.

(Patient Name)

(Date of Birth)

(Patient Signature)

(Today's Date)

(If two patients:)

(Additional Patient Name)

(Date of Birth)

(Additional Patient Signature)

(Today's Date)