

RAWNA CHERI ROMERO, LMFT
2282 Union Street, San Francisco, CA 94123
909 Marina Village Parkway, #493, Alameda, CA 94501
(415) 533-9724

Social Media - Electronic Communication Policy

Since the use of electronic communication has become common, many individuals prefer it as their primary mode of communication, both in social or professional contexts or situations. Unfortunately, while potentially more convenient, electronic forms of communication, may lead to a loss of privacy. I have developed this policy to meet my ethical and legal obligation as a health care provider to protect your privacy as my client. If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to discuss this with me.

Email and Text Messaging

I will not use email or texting to communicate with you unless you give me permission. Unless we have made another agreement, email and text correspondence will be for administrative purposes only. Email and text messages are not secure, and therefore should be limited.

Please do not use text or email for emergencies, casual conversations or clinical matters. If you need to discuss a clinical matter with me, please feel free to call me so we can discuss it on the phone or wait so we can discuss it during your session. The telephone or face-to-face context simply is much more secure and effective as a mode of communication.

Cell-Phone Use

I use a cell phone as my work/office phone. You may call me at this number at any time. However, since I do not have a receptionist and I do not answer this phone if I am in session with another patient, you may have to leave me a message on my voicemail. I try to return calls in 24 hours or less. If you are in crisis or have an emergency, you may leave me a message, but you should also call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. I do not monitor my phone regularly after hours, on weekends, holidays, or vacation. If you need immediate care, it is best not to call my cell phone.

Social Media

I do not communicate with, or contact, any of my clients through social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook. In addition, if I discover that I have accidentally established an online relationship with you, I will cancel that relationship. This is because these types of casual social contacts can create significant security risks for you. I participate on various social networks, but not in my professional capacity. If you have an online presence, there is a possibility that you may encounter me by

accident. If that occurs, please discuss it with me during our time together. I believe that any communications with clients online have a high potential to compromise the professional relationship. In addition, please do not try to contact me in this way. I will not respond and will terminate any online contact no matter how accidental.

Websites

I have a website that you are free to access. I use it for professional reasons to provide information to others about me and my practice. You are welcome to access and review the information that I have on my website and, if you have questions about it, we should discuss this during your therapy sessions.

Web Searches

I will not use web searches to gather information about you without your permission. I believe that this violates your privacy rights; however, I understand that you might choose to gather information about me in this way. In this day and age, there is an incredible amount of information available about individuals on the internet, much of which may actually be known to that person and some of which may be inaccurate or unknown. If you encounter any information about me through web searches, or in any other fashion for that matter, please discuss this with me during our time together so that we can deal with it and its potential impact on your treatment.

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Health Grades, Yahoo Local, Bing, 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 my listing on any of these sites, please know that my listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as my client. The American Psychological Association's Ethics Code states under Principle 5.05 that it is unethical for psychologists to solicit testimonials: "Psychologists do not solicit testimonials from current therapy clients/patients or other persons who because of their particular circumstances are vulnerable to undue influence."

Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But due to confidentiality, I cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. I urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as I take my commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with me about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that I may never see it. If we are working together, I hope that you will bring your feelings and reactions to our work directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide we are not a good fit. None of this is meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with me wherever and with whomever you like. Confidentiality means that I cannot tell people that you are my client and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. But you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that I'm

your therapist or how you feel about the treatment I provided to you, in any forum of your choosing. If you do choose to write something on a business review site, I hope you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum. I urge you to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own privacy and protection.

By signing below, I agree that I have received and agree to this policy.

Patient Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature (if applicable)

Date