Private Practice Social Media Policy

This document outlines my office policies related to the use of Social Media. Please read it to understand how I conduct myself on the Internet as a mental health professional and how you can expect me to respond to various interactions that may occur between us on the Internet or other electronic media. If you have any questions about anything within this document, I encourage you to talk to me about it when we meet. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when I need to update this policy. If I do so, I will notify you of any policy changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

Friending

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former patients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc). I believe that adding patients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. If you have questions about this, please talk to me about it when we meet.

Following

I have a Twitter and Practise Facebook account. I use these accounts mainly to keep up to date with trends that interest me. I am not active on Twitter and have no expectation that you as a patient will want to follow me. However, if you use an easily recognizable name on Twitter and I happen to notice that you've followed me, we may briefly discuss it and its potential impact on our working relationship.

My primary concern is your privacy. I will not follow you back. I only follow other health professionals on Twitter and I do not follow current or former patients on blogs or Twitter. My reasoning is that I believe casual viewing of patients' 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 my personal curiosity. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without our explicit arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on our working relationship. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

Interacting

Please do not use WhatsApp or 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 patient/therapist relationship. Engaging with me 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 file.

If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone or SMS. Direct email to info@johannkrynauw.co.za is second best for quick, administrative issues such as changing appointment times or going onto my website directly on my online booking system. See the email section below for more information regarding email interactions.

Adding Skills/Endorsement

I keep a LinkedIn profile page for professional reasons. You are welcome to view the page, but I do not accept patients as contacts on this service. I believe having patients as connections creates a greater likelihood of compromised patient confidentiality and I feel it is best to be explicit to all who may view the list of contacts on my profile page to know that they will not find patient names on that contact list. In addition, the HPCSA's Ethics Code prohibits my soliciting testimonials (endorsements on LinkedIn) from clients or anyone else for that matter. I feel that the Endorsement function on the LinkedIn service is a promotional function and therefore equivalent to testimonials. This function comes too close to an implied request for a public endorsement of my practice.

Use of Search Engines

It is NOT a regular part of my practice to search for patients 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 you are in danger and you have not been in touch with me via our 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 I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it and discuss it with you when we next meet.

Articles on the Internet

I do not follow current or former patients' articles on the net. If there are things you want to share with me that you feel are relevant to your treatment whether they are news items or things you have created, I encourage you to bring these items of interest into our sessions.

Email and SMS

I prefer using email and SMS only to arrange or modify appointments. Please do not email me content related to your therapy sessions, as email is not completely secure or confidential. If you 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. You should also know that any emails I receive from you and any responses that I send to you become a part of your therapeutic file.

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

This policy derived based on the guidelines of the national government POPI ACT of 2013:

http://www.justice.gov.za/inforeg/docs/InfoRegSA-POPIA-act2013-004.pdf