



Working remotely

Online, email and telephone
therapy guidance

Arboretum Counselling

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Introduction to Online/Telephone Therapy

Online/Telephone therapy refers to therapy conducted via the internet or telephone. Some people may prefer to use video conferencing so that we can see each other as we speak, and some may prefer to use just audio or email only.

Working remotely requires additional competencies which I have trained in by completing 80 hours of Continuing Professional Development tuition.

Benefits and Challenges

Some things you may enjoy about therapy online/via telephone are:

- You can create a comfortable and private space in your own home from which to attend therapy.
- You may find it easy to talk, focus and express yourself.
- You may enjoy wearing comfortable clothes, bringing a cup of tea and avoiding a commute after a therapy session.
- We may be able to be more flexible about scheduling.
- Research shows that online/telephone therapy is as effective as in-person therapy.
- Email allows you to really think about what you are writing to me, and also allows me time to think and respond in the most constructive and supportive way possible.

Some of the challenges we may face could be to do with internet connection. I will share some instructions below to help get you set up.

Another challenge could be that we do not see the whole of each other. Setting up our devices for eye contact by having the technology in landscape with the camera in the top middle and positioned at chest height is ideal, but our cameras generally limit the view to the top half of our bodies. We will have to use more verbal explanations as a result.

Guidance

Schedule your appointments to manage privacy needs and I will be as accommodating as possible. I encourage you to treat the online session as you would an in-person session and implement as many of the same boundaries as possible.

Find a comfortable space with privacy. This could be a comfortable armchair, your office desk, garden, parked car or the living room floor. I suggest sitting on something where your back is supported and encourage you to get up and move if you start to feel uncomfortable.

You may wish to put a note on the door of the room requesting that other people not disturb you except in an emergency.

I encourage you to use headphones or earphones. This keeps the content of our sessions private, improves sound quality and also minimises distractions. Please ensure that you secure your computer and emails against unauthorised viewing by third parties. It is recommended that you only use a private computer and not a work or public computer. Please ensure you keep your anti-viral protection up-to-date and I will undertake to do the same.

Please close other applications and browser windows on your device, and put your phone on silent or turn it off. If you have chosen to engage in telephone counselling please ensure that



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your mobile is fully charged and that you have a charger ready to plug in should you need this. However, if you have chosen to engage via video link please ensure that you have access to Wi-Fi, along with the other requirements as above, a fully charged device.

You are welcome to bring water or a cup of tea or coffee with you to the session. Please avoid alcohol and drugs prior to and during the session and please do not smoke or vape during the session. Your pet is welcome to join you; however, it is important to be aware that this could be distracting for either or both of us!

Give yourself time after the session to process the session before re-joining your family, working or making other calls.

Technical Instructions

I will email or text you a reminder of our appointment the day before our session. If using a programme such as Zoom, I will also send link for you to join the session at the scheduled time.

Video Conferencing Platforms

I prefer to use a secure video conferencing platform called Zoom, where our calls cannot be intercepted or recorded. I will also work on Skype, Microsoft Teams or WhatsApp video and will use whichever tool you prefer.

Bandwidth Requirements

The call quality on Zoom and is usually very good. It can be improved by you using an Ethernet connection as opposed to Wi-Fi, however, Wi-Fi or 4G will usually work well too. Our first session may involve trying a few of these options. Usually, if your internet is good enough to stream YouTube or Netflix, it is good enough for video conferencing. I recommend closing all other browser windows and programmes running in the background to make the call quality as good as possible.

Troubleshooting

In the event that it is not possible to connect using a video conferencing platform, I suggest trying to reconnect three times and then communicating via telephone in order to decide whether to reschedule or try a different method of communication.

If you have any other questions...

... please do not hesitate to contact me via email or keep a note of them for us to discuss when we next meet. I look forward to our work together and hope you enjoy working online/via telephone as much as I do.

Katrina Healey-Davis

Accredited Counsellor

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