

Marilyn Cabay, PhD

## Telepsychology Consent

Given the potential health risks associated the COVID-19, I am offering telepsychology appointments as an alternative to face-to-face meetings to clients whose insurance permits it or are willing to pay privately. Telepsychology offers additional benefits or risks compared to regular psychotherapy. Please read the following information to determine if you consent to use telepsychology.

### Benefits and Risks of Telepsychology

Telepsychology refers to providing psychotherapy services remotely using telecommunications technologies, such as video conferencing or telephone. One of the benefits of telepsychology is that the client and clinician can engage in services without being in the same physical location. This can be helpful in ensuring continuity of care if the client or clinician moves to a different location, takes an extended vacation, or is otherwise unable to continue to meet in person. It is also more convenient and takes less time. Telepsychology, however, requires technical competence on both our parts to be helpful. Although there are benefits of telepsychology, there are some differences between in-person psychotherapy and telepsychology, as well as some risks. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality. Because telepsychology sessions take place outside of the therapist's private office, there is potential for other people to overhear sessions if you are not in a private place during the session. On my end I will take reasonable steps to ensure your privacy. I use updated encryption methods to help keep your information private, but there is a risk that our electronic communications may be compromised, unsecured, or accessed by others. It is important for you to take precautions as well. Make sure you find a private place for our session where you are alone and will not be interrupted.
- Issues related to technology. There are many ways that technology issues might impact telepsychology. For example, technology may stop working during a session, other people might be able to get access to our private conversation, or stored data could be accessed by unauthorized people or companies.
- Efficacy. Most research shows that telepsychology is about as effective as in-person psychotherapy. However, some therapists believe that something is lost by not being in the same room. For example, there is debate about a therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.
- Coverage. The same fee rates will apply for telepsychology as apply for in-person psychotherapy. Telepsychology is covered by some insurance companies. If your insurance does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you may be responsible for the cost of the session. As with face-to-face therapy, healthcare information may be shared with insurance for billing purposes.

**Electronic Communications**

I will be using Thera-Link, a HPPA compliant encrypted audio/video site. Thera-Link works on PC or Mac computers and iPhone/iPad Android phones and tablets. If you choose to use telepsychology you are solely responsible for any cost to you to obtain any necessary equipment, accessories, or software to take part in telepsychology. You will receive an email invitation from me to connect via Thera-Link. Once you have accepted, you will you would be asked to join a meeting with me at a scheduled time. You should arrange to be alone at that time for privacy and confidentiality.

In summary, please review the following before agreeing or not to consent for telepsychology:

1. I understand that my health care provider wishes me to engage in a telepsychology.
2. My health care provider has explained to me how the video conferencing technology will not be the same as a direct patient/health care provider visit due to the fact that I will not be in the same room as my health care provider.
3. I understand there are potential risks to this technology, including interruptions, unauthorized access and technical difficulties. I understand that my health care provider or I can discontinue the telepsychology if it is felt that videoconferencing connections are not adequate.
4. I understand that other previously agreed to conditions regarding my care continue to apply.

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By signing this form, I certify:

**Yes**, I consent to telepsychology with Marilyn Cabay, PhD. I have read or had this form read and/or had this form explained to me. I fully understand the risks and benefits and I have had an opportunity to ask questions and that any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

If **yes** \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of client or personal representative Date

OR

**No**, I refuse to participate in telepsychology with Marilyn Cabay, PhD.

If **no** \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of client or personal representative Date