



Social Media Policy

This document outlines my office policies related to 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. If you have any questions about anything within this document, I encourage you to bring them up 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 in writing 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 clients on any social networking site such as Facebook. I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our working relationship. If you are a coaching client and would like to be connected on LinkedIn, I will consider this option on a case-by-case basis. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

Liking on Facebook

I keep a Facebook Page for my professional practice to allow people to share my blog posts and practice updates with other Facebook users. All of the information shared on this page is available on my website. You are welcome to view my Facebook Page and read or share articles posted there, but please remember that your Facebook identity will be revealed if you “like” my business page.

*Note that you should be able to subscribe to the page via RSS without becoming a Fan and without creating a visible, public link to my Page. You are more than welcome to do this.

Interacting

Please do not use messaging on Social Networking sites such as 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 or other means of engaging with me in public online if we have an already established client/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 chart.

If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone. Direct email at alinethebea@gmail.com is second best for quick, administrative issues such as changing appointment times. See the email section below for more information regarding email interactions.

Use of Search Engines

It is NOT a regular part of my practice to search for clients 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.

Business Review Sites

You may find my practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, 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.

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 sessions. This can be an important part of our work together. You are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that you are working with me or how you feel about the treatment I provided to you, in any forum of your choosing. If you are satisfied with my services and would like to provide a review for my website, please let me know and we can make arrangements.

If you feel I have done something harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with me, you can always contact the National Association of Social Workers, which oversees licensing, and they will review the services I have provided.

NEC Intake Subcommittee
National Association of Social Workers
750 First Street, NE, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20002
(800) 742-4089

Location-Based Services

If you used location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. I do not place my practice as a check-in location on various sites such as Foursquare, Gowalla, Loopt, etc. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a client due to regular check-ins at my office on a weekly basis. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally "checking in," from my office or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

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.