

ANDREW M. PROKOPIS, PsyD
PO Box 320711
West Roxbury, MA 02132
(707) 292-1910
andrewprokopis@hotmail.com

Social Media Policy

As part of my practice, I provide services for clients utilizing telecommunications, such as telephone, emails, and video conferencing. This may be done on a regular basis, interim basis, or as adjunct to face-to-face sessions. If you are interested in any of these options, please feel free to discuss them with me during one of your sessions. However, if you choose to use such forms of communication in relation to our work together, there are concerns and responsibilities that must first be addressed so that you have full informed consent. The items below address those various concerns. Please read them carefully.

Social Media Sites

While my present or potential clients might conduct online searches about my practice and/or me, I do not search my clients on Google, YouTube, Facebook, other search engines or online social networking sites. If clients ask me to conduct such searches or review their web sites or profiles and I consider that it might be helpful, I will consider it.

However, 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 insuring 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. Finally, if I come to feel that I am in danger for any reason by any statements or behaviors you have made, I will rely on search engines for further information about you.

I do not accept friend requests from current or former clients on my psychotherapy related profiles on social networking sites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter, due to the fact that these sites can compromise clients' confidentiality and privacy. For the same reason, I request that clients do not communicate with me via any interactive or social networking websites.

Emails, Cell Phones & Faxes

It is very important to be aware that computers and email and cell phone communication can be relatively easy to access by unauthorized people and hence can compromise the privacy and confidentiality of such communication.

ANDREW M. PROKOPIS, PsyD
PO Box 320711
West Roxbury, MA 02132
(707) 292-1910
andrewprokopis@hotmail.com

Emails, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers have unlimited and direct access to all emails that go through them. Additionally, at this time, my emails are not encrypted, and faxes can be sent erroneously to the wrong address. My computers are equipped with a firewall, a virus protection and a password, and I also back up all confidential information from my computers on to a secure external drive on a regular basis. These are stored securely off-site. Please notify me if you decide to avoid or limit, in any way, the use of any or all communication devices, such as email, cell-phone or faxes.

If you communicate confidential or highly private information via email, I will assume that you have made an informed decision, and will view it as your agreement to take the risk that such communication may be intercepted, and I will honor your desire to communicate on such matters via email. Please, be aware that emails are part of the medical records, and, please, do not use email for emergencies. Due to computer or network problems emails may not be deliverable, and I may not check my emails daily.

I prefer using email only to arrange or modify appointments. Please do not email me content related to your therapy sessions, as email, again, is not completely secure or confidential. If you do 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 legal record.

Online Review Sites

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, Psychology Today, LinkedIn, or other places that 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

ANDREW M. PROKOPIS, PsyD
PO Box 320711
West Roxbury, MA 02132
(707) 292-1910
andrewprokopis@hotmail.com

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.

Conclusion

If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone. Direct email at **andrewprokopis@hotmail.com** is second best for quick, administrative issues such as changing appointment times.

I am legally and ethically unable to provide psychological advice, diagnoses, or assessments via email to people who are not my clients. If you have concerns you wish to discuss, you may wish to consider contacting a therapist who lives in your area and scheduling an appointment to discuss these matters with them.

ANDREW M. PROKOPIS, PsyD
PO Box 320711
West Roxbury, MA 02132
(707) 292-1910
andrewprokopis@hotmail.com

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.

Please sign below indicating that you have read all of the above, that you have asked any clarifying questions you may have, and that you fully understand the concerns involved in using telecommunications in our work together.

After signing this sheet please detach it from the rest of the form and return this signed sheet to me either by mail or at our next session. You may keep the other sheets for your files.

Signature: _____ Date _____

Print Name: _____