



Social Media Policy

Version 1

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This social media policy outlines the approach to maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and ethical practice when using social media and other online platforms. It is intended to provide clarity about how social media may be used in connection with the LS Therapies and how interactions with current and former clients will be managed.

Social media can be a valuable way of sharing information, promoting the counselling service and connecting with people. However, it can also create challenges around privacy, confidentiality and professional boundaries. This policy aims to ensure that social media is used thoughtfully, respectfully and in a way that protects both clients and the counsellor.

Keeping professional and personal life separate

Personal social media accounts will be kept separate from professional accounts wherever possible. Personal accounts are intended for family and friends and will have appropriate privacy settings in place.

It is recognised that information shared online can sometimes be traced or accessed despite privacy settings. For this reason, care will be taken to ensure that profile pictures, cover photographs, usernames and publicly available information remain appropriate and consistent with professional responsibilities.

Professional social media accounts may be available publicly and can be accessed by current and prospective clients. These accounts will be used primarily to promote the counselling

service, share relevant information and resources, and communicate in a positive and professional manner. Personal information or photographs relating to family and friends will not be shared on professional accounts.

Privacy and online presence

Privacy settings will be reviewed regularly to ensure that appropriate levels of privacy are maintained across personal and professional accounts.

Professional profiles will also be reviewed periodically to ensure that the information provided remains accurate, appropriate and representative of the counselling service.

Care will also be taken with the tone and content of posts, comments and interactions, recognising that clients may form an impression of the counsellor and the counselling service through what they see online.

Professional communication online

All online communication will aim to be respectful, considerate and professional. Language or content that could reasonably be considered offensive, discriminatory, inappropriate or harmful will be avoided.

Social media content will be considered in the context of professional responsibilities. Although social media can feel informal, anything shared publicly may be viewed by clients, prospective clients or members of the wider community. The intention is to ensure that online communication remains consistent with the values of the counselling service.

Social media content can be copied, saved, shared or viewed outside of its original context. This will be taken into consideration before posting or engaging with content online.

Maintaining appropriate boundaries with clients

Professional boundaries will be maintained when interacting with clients online.

Client requests to connect through personal social media accounts will not be accepted. This includes friend requests, personal follows or other requests to connect through accounts intended for personal use.

Clients will not be identified as clients, either directly or indirectly, on social media. Information that could identify an individual or their involvement with the counselling service will not be shared.

Social media will not be used to provide counselling or therapeutic support. If a client contacts the professional social media account about a personal or therapeutic matter, they will be encouraged to use the usual counselling communication channels instead.

Messages sent through social media may not be monitored continuously and should not be used for urgent or crisis support.

Interacting with clients online

Interactions with clients on professional social media accounts will be approached thoughtfully and with consideration for professional boundaries.

There is no expectation that every comment, message, tag or interaction will receive a response. Responses may be limited, delayed or not provided where doing so is considered more appropriate professionally.

Where clients comment on or engage with professional social media content, responses will be kept appropriate to the public nature of the platform and will not disclose or imply a therapeutic relationship.

Care will also be taken with likes, reactions, comments and other forms of engagement, as these interactions may be visible to others and could unintentionally disclose a connection between a client and the counselling service.

Confidentiality and protecting client privacy

Confidentiality remains important in all online interactions.

No client information, identifying details, screenshots, photographs, messages or other material relating to counselling sessions will be shared on social media without appropriate consent.

Care will be taken when discussing general counselling topics or experiences to ensure that examples cannot reasonably be linked to an identifiable client.

Searching for clients online

Clients will not routinely be searched for or monitored on social media. Counselling relationships are based on information shared within the therapeutic setting, and maintaining appropriate boundaries is important to the counselling relationship.

There may be exceptional circumstances where information encountered online raises a significant concern regarding a client's immediate safety or wellbeing. Any action taken in such circumstances will be considered carefully and in accordance with professional, ethical and safeguarding guidelines.

Reviews, testimonials and recommendations

Clients will not be pressured or expected to provide reviews, testimonials or recommendations.

If a client chooses to leave a review or comment about the counselling service, this will not be used to confirm or disclose that the individual is or has been a client.

The counsellor will not request that clients publicly identify themselves as clients or describe their therapeutic relationship in a way that could compromise their privacy.

Consideration of clients' experiences

Social media content will be shared with consideration for the different experiences and circumstances of clients.

It is recognised that clients may respond to content in unexpected ways. Posts relating to celebrations, relationships, family, holidays, achievements or other personal experiences may affect individuals differently.

This does not mean that all potentially sensitive content will be avoided, but consideration will be given to how content may be experienced by clients and whether it is appropriate for a professional counselling account.

Using social media mindfully

Social media is fast-moving, and content can be posted and shared instantly. Time will be taken to consider posts and comments before engaging, particularly when feeling frustrated, angry or emotionally heightened.

Differences of opinion are natural, but arguments or confrontational interactions will be avoided. The counselling service will not actively seek out online disputes or engage in interactions that could undermine professional relationships or boundaries.

Purpose and motivation for posting

The primary purpose of professional social media activity will be to promote the counselling service, share helpful and relevant information, raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing, and provide a positive and supportive online presence.

Before posting, consideration will be given to whether the content is appropriate, respectful, relevant and consistent with the values and professional standards of the counselling service.

Changes to this policy

Social media platforms and online communication continue to develop and change. This policy may therefore be reviewed and updated periodically to ensure that it remains appropriate and reflects current professional and ethical expectations.

Clients are welcome to ask questions about this policy or about how social media interactions are managed.