

Electronic Communication and Social Media Policy

In order to maintain clarity regarding our use of electronic modes of communication during your treatment, River Bends Psychology has prepared the following policy. This is because the use of various types of electronic communications is common in our society, and many individuals believe this is the preferred method of communication with others, whether their relationships are social or professional. Many of these common modes of communication, however, put your privacy at risk and can be inconsistent with the law and with the standards of Dr. Crouch's profession. Consequently, this policy has been prepared to assure the security and confidentiality of your treatment and to assure that it is consistent with ethics and the law.

If you have any questions about this policy, please feel free to discuss this with Dr. Crouch. Please note that as technology develops and the Internet changes, River Bends Psychology may have to update this policy. Dr. Crouch will notify you in writing of any policy changes as well as insure that you have a copy of the updated policy.

Email Communications

Dr. Crouch uses email communication and text messaging only with your permission and only for administrative purposes unless another arrangements has been made. That means that email exchanges and text messages with River Bends Psychology and/or Dr. Crouch should be limited to things like setting and changing appointments, billing matters and other related issues. Please do not email Dr. Crouch about clinical matters because email is not a secure or confidential way to contact her. If you need to discuss a clinical matter with Dr. Crouch, please feel free to call her so to discuss it on the phone or wait to discuss it during your therapy session. The telephone or face-to-face context simply is much more secure as a mode of communication.

Please note that emails are retained in the logs of Internet Service Providers (ISP). Also, any email communication between Dr. Crouch and you will be retained and will become a part of your therapy record.

Text Messaging

Because text messaging is a very unsecure and impersonal mode of communication, Dr. Crouch will not text message to nor do I respond to text messages from anyone in treatment with me. So, please do not text message me unless we have made other arrangements.

Social Media

Dr. Crouch does not communicate with, or contact, any clients through social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Google+, etc. In addition, if Dr. Crouch discovers that she has accidentally established an online relationship with you, she will cancel that relationship. This is because these types of casual social contacts can create significant security risks for you as well as blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship.

Professional Social Media Accounts

Dr. Crouch maintains accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in a professional capacity only. You are welcome to view these pages and read content as only professionally related information will be posted on these pages.

Dr. Crouch strives to uphold your privacy and confidentiality. Dr. Crouch hopes that you also share this value, and will use your discretion when using social media. Please do not contact Dr. Crouch via social networking. These sites are not secure, and Dr. Crouch cannot guarantee that she will check these messages.

Dr. Crouch asks that you do not attempt to engage with her in a public forum, such as liking posts, making comments, @replies, or following on social media platforms if we have an established therapeutic relationship. This would compromise your confidentiality. In addition, the American Psychological Association's (APA) Code of Ethics, Principle 5.05, prohibits soliciting testimonials for clients. Thereby, liking, following, and/or commenting can be an implied request for a public endorsement, which violates the ethics code for which Dr. Crouch must adhere to.

Similarly, Dr. Crouch will not contact you via social media sites, will not follow you, will not engage with you online, and will not view your online content. If you wish to share items you have online, please do so during session so both you and Dr. Crouch can view them together in person.

Personal Social Media Accounts

Dr. Crouch may participate on various social networking sites, but not in a professional capacity. If you have an online presence, there is a possibility that you may encounter her by accident. If that occurs, please discuss it with her during your therapy appointment. Dr. Crouch believes that any communications with clients online have a high potential to compromise the professional relationship. In addition, please do not try to contact her in this way. She will not respond and will terminate any online contact no matter how accidental.

Websites

Dr. Crouch has a website that you are free to access. It is used for professional reasons to provide information to others about her practice. You are welcome to access and review the information that is on the website and, if you have questions about it, discuss it with her during your therapy sessions.

Web Searches

Dr. Crouch will not use web searches to gather information about you without your permission. She believes such acts violate your privacy rights; however, she understands that you might choose to gather information about her in this way.

In this day and age there is an incredible amount of information available about individuals on the internet, much of which may actually be known to that person and some of which may be inaccurate or unknown. If you encounter any information about Dr. Crouch through web

searches, or in any other fashion for that matter, please discuss this with her during your time together so that you all can deal with it and its potential impact on your treatment.

If you come across River Bends Psychology and/or Dr. Crouch on any sites, such as Yelp, Vitals, EHealthscore, etc, please know that River Bends Psychology and/or Dr. Crouch has NOT voluntarily added the business to that particular site. By Dr. Crouch's practice being listed on any of these sites is NOT a request for a testimonial or review (please see above regarding APA Code of Ethics).

Recently it has become fashionable for clients to review their health care provider on various websites. Unfortunately, mental health professionals cannot respond to such comments and related errors because of confidentiality restrictions. If you encounter such reviews of Dr. Crouch or any professional with whom you are working, please share it with her so you both can discuss it and its potential impact on your therapy. Please do not rate Dr. Crouch's work while you are in treatment together on any of these websites. This is because it has a significant potential to damage our ability to work together. Dr. Crouch hopes that you will communicate your thoughts and feelings about your work together directly in session. However, if you choose to rate or review River Bends Psychology and/or Dr. Crouch, please be aware that you are revealing personal information about yourself online in a public forum.