

TELETHERAPY – CLIENT INFORMATION

Due to current Covid-19 guidelines, all sessions will be conducted via teletherapy until in-person sessions can be safely and ethically resumed. To learn a bit more about what to expect from teletherapy please review the following information.

What is teletherapy and how does it work?

Teletherapy is any remote therapy that uses technology to help you and your therapist to communicate.

The therapeutic process is similar to traditional in-person therapy; but via phone or video-chat. It usually begins with a few initial sessions during which you and your therapist get to know one another and discuss treatment goals. After that, the therapy continues similar to in-person, based on your needs. As with in-person appointments, you will 'attend' your session at a scheduled time on an agreed platform (e.g. WhatsApp® or Zoom®). Further details on what to expect from traditional therapy, including limits of confidentiality can be read on the FAQ section of www.drortarichardson.com.

Will it be awkward?*

No matter what platform your therapist is using and how tech-savvy they may be, it's still going to be a different experience from in-person — so don't be alarmed if it doesn't feel like you and your therapist are "in-sync" right away.

It can be tempting to think that some discomfort or awkwardness is a sign that online therapy isn't working for you, but if you can keep an open line of communication with your therapist, you might be surprised by your ability to adapt.

It's also normal to "grieve" the loss of in-person support, especially if you and your therapist have worked together offline before.

It's understandable that there could be frustration, fear, and sadness from the loss of this type of connection. These are all things that you can mention to your therapist as well.

**Source: Healthline.com 7 Tips for Making the Most of Online Therapy During the COVID-19 Outbreak*

What platforms do you use?

Having reviewed the available options, I am currently offering

1. Telephone sessions via **WhatsApp®** or
2. Video-based sessions via **Zoom®**

Both WhatsApp® and Zoom® are encrypted to ensure data privacy for individuals as per the application developer, Services will be provided from a password protected device.



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Benefits of teletherapy:

- Reduce exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) by enabling both clients and therapists to engage in therapy while in isolation and/or during social distancing.
- Reduces unnecessary travel and waiting for your appointment.
- Overall the research does support that teletherapy is just as effective as traditional face-to-face therapy for a range of circumstances.

Potential Risks

There are potential risks associated with the use of a WhatsApp® / Zoom® service, but these are very small and the benefits have been assessed globally, by health institutions, as outweighing the risks.

These risks include, but may not be limited to:

- Information transmitted may not be sufficient (e.g. poor quality of video or information) to support therapeutic process. In the event of this occurring , alternative arrangements may be discussed.
- Although highly unlikely, security can fail, causing a breach of privacy of confidential information.

Your Rights

- You have the right to withdraw (opt out) your consent to the use of WhatsApp® / Zoom® at any time.
- You understand that the remote session will not be recorded.
- You understand that your therapist will conduct sessions in a confidential space and adhere to ethical and professional guidelines relating to telehealth.

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN- CLIENT CHECKLIST

1. Technical considerations

- a. Phone / computer/ webcam with access to WhatsApp®/ Zoom®
- b. Stable phone or Wifi signal to ensure good connectivity.
- c. Access to headphones with a microphone to improve sound quality and privacy.

2. Consider your environment:

- a. Do you have a private and quiet space for your session?
- b. Use a well-lit area with adequate space however avoid pointing the device into direct sunshine or very bright light.

3. Video-calls via Zoom®

- a. Zoom® is free for you to use. It can be downloaded as an app to your smart-phone, or can be accessed on a laptop via app or Google Chrome browser.
- b. In advance of your session, you will be sent a link to the scheduled call by your therapist.
- c. If using Zoom® you may wish to log on to start your video call a few minutes before your appointment time; where you will be in a virtual wait room. This should minimise any delays to your session, as the therapist can admit you at the scheduled time.
- d. As with in-person appointments, please give notice if you are delayed attending. If you do not attend, and do not cancel in advance you will be invoiced for the missed session.
- e. In the unlikely event that our video call becomes disconnected, I will wait for you to re-enter the call. If there are any difficulties with this, you may text or phone me via WhatsApp® to troubleshoot or to re-schedule.

4. Phone-calls via Whatsapp®:

- a. Whatsapp® allows 'free' calls by using your data or WiFi connection. It can be downloaded as an app to your smart-phone.
- b. If attending sessions via phone-call, please phone via WhatsApp® at your scheduled appointment time (e.g. 4pm) to commence your session.
- c. As with in-person appointments, please give notice if you are delayed attending. If you do not attend, and do not cancel in advance you will be invoiced for the missed session.
- d. In the event that our call becomes disconnected, I will wait for you call back. If there are any difficulties with this, you may text or phone me via WhatsApp® to troubleshoot or to re-schedule.

5. Payment:

- a. You will require access to PayPal or Revolut to transfer the fee after your session.
- b. This fee will be discussed with your therapist.
- c. If you do not attend, and do not cancel in advance you will be invoiced for the missed session.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you have any further questions in relation to teletherapy drorlarichardson@gmail.com