

Sligo Arts Psychotherapy Centre

Contract and Consent Form for Online Therapy

The current Covid-19 crisis has precipitated therapists the world over to close their face to face practices and move to online platforms until it is safe to meet face to face. At Sligo Arts Psychotherapy Centre, we have had to adapt to alternative ways of working in order to continue your ongoing Art or Drama therapy sessions.

In order to continue to practice ethically under our professional bodies IACAT and IAPTP guidelines, we had to engage in temporary online therapy training. We have now all participated in an up to date training in TeleTherapy.

With this as our working model we will use and adapt it to conduct online therapy sessions during the emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a temporary measure until the COVID-19 HSE and state social distancing restrictions permit or are over. We will then return to Sligo Arts Psychotherapy Centre where Art and Drama therapy sessions will resume as face to face therapy sessions in our relevant therapy practise rooms.

Due to this new method of working, a new informed contract and consent form needs to be agreed and signed. Please read this form carefully, if you are happy to consent to it, please sign it and return it to your therapist as soon as possible so that your therapy sessions may recommence. Thank you

Questions and Concerns

You may have concerns about accessing online video technology. Perhaps you have not engaged with online video calls before. You may also have concerns around data protection and confidentiality.

Your therapist can set up a video consultation with you to go through any questions or concerns you may have before you begin your online therapy sessions. At this consultation, your therapist will talk with you about all they are doing to minimise any possible risks.

Concerns and Benefits of Online Therapy

Concerns

- It is not possible for your therapist to make a complete guarantee that data will not be breached while working with you, the client online, due to the nature of working on the internet.
- At times the internet connection or technology may not work. If this should happen an alternative method may need to be used and you will need to consent for your therapist to contact you by your phone, text or email to continue your therapy session.
- Confidentiality can be inadvertently breached if someone else enters the room other than you, the client or if someone hears what is said by you or your therapist from inside or outside the room.

Benefits

- Therapy sessions can continue even though we are all experiencing the unprecedented emergency of COVID-19 and while we are being directed to follow social distancing guidelines.
- Travel costs decrease
- Therapy and support can be provided regularly.

Location of Online Therapy

The platform we will be using for online therapy is Zoom. It adheres to the HIPAA and EU GDPR standards for data protection. It is recommended by our professional body IACAT.

You will need to download the Zoom app and sign up to a Zoom account to receive your online therapy session. Please familiarise yourself with how Zoom works and how to join a meeting before your scheduled online therapy session. Your therapist will discuss with you before starting your online therapy sessions how they will provide a link for you to join. Please make sure that the therapy session has been paid for the day each week so you can receive this link.

The scheduled appointment day and time set for sessions will be the same day and time every week, just like in face to face therapy sessions. If this needs to be rescheduled, you or your therapist will do so beforehand.

You will need to come to your scheduled online therapy session, just the same as if you were coming in person to your face to face therapy sessions, otherwise this will be seen as a cancellation and the session will be charged for. Please notify your therapist the day before if you will not be attending.

Confidentiality

Due to the nature of working online, we cannot control or guarantee all aspects of confidentiality as we can in face to face therapy sessions in our own therapy practice rooms. We have chosen to work through Zoom because it adheres to the HIPAA and EU GDPR standards for data protection. It is recommended and endorsed as a safe online platform by our professional body IACAT.

- Please ensure that there is an adequate internet connection in your home.
- Please provide an appropriate confidential, private space for your online therapy session, where you feel secure and confident that you will not be listened into or overheard.
- To provide consistency for your therapy sessions try as much as possible to provide the same location and space each week.
- Please use headphones, if you feel you need them for more privacy
- Please set up a laptop or tablet in advance of the therapy session time, so we do not have to spend time setting up technology during the therapy session.
- Please do not have any smartphones in the space, if this is not possible please make sure Siri and all other voice activated devices are turned off during the online therapy sessions.

As always, confidentiality between you and your therapist is maintained, except in circumstances where you are at risk of harm from others, or where you are at risk of causing harm to yourself or to others. If any concerns of this nature arise, your therapist will discuss them with you before taking any action. We are obliged to report any child protection concerns that may arise during the course of our work together.

Materials

Due to the limited time in which we had to provide materials for you, these will now need to be supplied by you, the client. It is important to provide yourself with some materials and tools that will help you to express yourself creatively. These materials can be whatever you have to hand around your house that you would like to use. Do not go to unnecessary expense or effort to buy materials.

Recording Sessions

To maintain confidentiality, it is important that sessions are not recorded without the mutual agreement between, your therapist and you, the client. Any recording made must be mutually agreed upon beforehand by all parties mentioned and will only be used for the mutually agreed purposes.

Costs and Payment of sessions

The cost and length of an online therapy session will be the same as face to face therapy sessions.

Online therapy sessions need to be paid for the day before the scheduled therapy session via a bank transfer or Paypal. Please be mindful that some transfers can take a few days.

If this is not possible then a postal order or cheque is acceptable and can be posted to your therapist at their given address.

If you would like to pay for a few therapy sessions ahead of time that is also possible.

If payment for the therapy session has not been received the day before, this will be seen as a cancellation of the scheduled session. As with face to face sessions we have a 24 hour cancellation policy therefore your therapist will still need to be informed by text or phone call if you want to cancel your therapy session or your therapy session will still be charged for.

Supervision and Notes

During the Covid-19 restrictions, as therapists, we will continue to engage with professional supervision, as we are ethically obliged to do so. As with face to face therapy sessions, after online therapy sessions short, concise and factual clinical notes will be kept confidentially by your therapist. Some material from the online therapy sessions may be used anonymously and confidentially and solely for the purposes of supervision or training.

Art and Drama therapists working at Sligo Arts Psychotherapy Centre adhere to the code of ethics of their professional body IACAT and to EU GDPR guidelines in the storing of data.

I.....have read all the above information

and as the client, I consent to engage in online therapy sessions with

.....within the guidelines outlined above.

Signed.....Date.....