



## **Social Media Policy**

If you have any questions about anything within this document, I encourage you to bring them up when we meet. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when I need to update this policy. If I do so, I will notify you in writing of any policy changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

### **Fanning**

I do not maintain a Facebook fan page.

### **Friending**

I will not accept “friend” requests on any social networking website from current or former clients. These sites include Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, etc. Despite the privacy settings available to members of these websites, a “friend” and any interactions are viewable to others within the network. I want to maintain your confidentiality and ensure the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. This policy applies to family members and/or other supports that may enter into the therapeutic room with you.

### **Following**

Move Toward Change LLC maintains a business Twitter account and blog posts on our website. These social media sites permit visitors to follow, comment, or link content to other sites. I will not accept “follow” requests from current or former clients on social blogging such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter. I want to ensure your confidentiality and respect your privacy regarding your personal interactions, commentary, and views.

This policy also applies to any family member and/or support that may enter the therapy room. Note that I will not follow you back. Casual viewing of clients’ online content outside of therapy may generate confusion in our professional relationship. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without our explicit arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on our working relationship. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

### **Online Interactions**

Please do not use messaging on Social Networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn to contact me. These sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. Do not use Wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with me in public online if we have an already established client/therapist relationship or a former client. Engaging with me this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart.

### **Search Engines**

I am fully aware that clients or potential clients will utilize search engines to research professionals. I believe clients should be fully informed regarding their choice in health care providers. It is NOT a



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regular part of my practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook or other search engines. 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 ensuring 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.

### **BUSINESS REVIEW SITES**

You may find my private practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which 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.

American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy's Ethics Code states under Principle 1.3 that it is unethical for marriage & family therapists to utilize their position to engage in dual relationships which highlights the possibility that clients may be 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.

If you feel I have done something harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with me, you can always contact the North Carolina Licensure Board for Marriage & Family Therapists, which oversees licensing, and they will review the services I have provided.

NCMFTLB

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[www.ncmft.org](http://www.ncmft.org)

Email: [ncmftlb@nc.rr.com](mailto:ncmftlb@nc.rr.com)

### LOCATION-BASED SERVICES

If you used location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. I do not place my practice as a check-in location on various sites such as Swarm, Gowalla, Loopt, etc. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins at my office on a weekly basis. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally “checking in,” from my office or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

This policy utilizes information from Dr. Keely Kolmes and her consulting services for clinicians at [www.drkkolmes.com](http://www.drkkolmes.com).

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