

Telemental Health Policy & Informed Consent

ROOTING THROUGH GRIEF, LLC: TELEMENTAL HEALTH POLICY & INFORMED CONSENT

RTG offers Telemental Health (TMH) - a treatment modality that occurs via live, interactive video-conferencing, in lieu of or in addition to in-person sessions. It includes both audio and visual components that allow you to receive mental health services remotely.

RTG exclusively utilizes TMH platforms that meet or exceed HIPAA requirements of privacy protection and encryption, including Regroup Connect, Google Meet, and Doxy.me.

Telemental Health does not include audio-only phone conversations, email or text messaging.

What To Expect

Before beginning TMH treatment, we will:

- Confirm you have access to the technology needed to participate in video-conferencing. This includes a strong, reliable internet connection and one of the following:
 - Computer (desktop or laptop) with a video camera
 - Tablet with a video camera
 - Mobile device
- Ensure you have the ability to create a safe and confidential space during sessions.
- Identify an emergency contact and locate information for local crisis services.
 - Please note, online therapy is not appropriate for clients in crisis and/or experiencing suicidal or homicidal thoughts.

For our first TMH session, we will:

- Verify your identity as the identified client, parent or guardian.
- Verify your Clinician's name, credentials and location.
- Verify our contingency procedure of re-establishing electronic or other connection if communication is terminated.
- Review this Telehealth Policy.

At the start of any TMH session, we will:

- Verify your physical location. You must be in the state or Maryland (or other state your Clinician is licensed to practice mental health in) at the time of the session.
- Confirm that there is no one present in your location who is not permitted to hear or share personal health information.

Technical Difficulties

Online therapy is technical in nature and problems with technology may occur. If something beyond our control disrupts the connectivity of our session, all parties should attempt to reconnect to the video call.

If after 10 minutes, the video call is repeatedly unsuccessful, we can decide to:

- complete the session via phone.
- reschedule for another time.
- discount the session based on length of session prior to disruption (e.g. less than 15 minutes the session will be rescheduled at no cost, 16-30 minutes will result in a charge for a 25 minute session).

Potential benefits associated specifically with Telehealth may include, but are not limited to:

- Increased feelings of comfort from being in a personal space instead of at an office.
- Improved access to qualified mental health professionals.
- Increased convenience of scheduling.
- Ability to engage with your/your child's Clinician more regularly.
- Inclusion of family members who may not be able to travel to the office.

Potential risks associated specifically with Telehealth may include, but are not limited to:

- Insurance companies may not reimburse therapy delivered via telehealth.
- Interruptions to the session due to technological difficulties.
- Discomfort with virtual face-to-face interactions versus in-person treatment.
- Limited access to immediate resources if risk of harm to self or others becomes apparent.
- Potential introduction of risks to your privacy.

Assessing Telemental Health's Fit for You/Your Child

Although it is well validated by research, service delivery via TMH is not a good fit for every person.

- During the course of treatment, it may become evident that telehealth is no longer an appropriate medium for providing counseling services. If this occurs, your Clinician will either offer to schedule an in-person session, if appropriate, or support you in transitioning to a qualified local provider.
- You also have the right to stop receiving services via TMH at any time without prejudice. If your Clinician also provides services in-person, has alternative openings in their schedule and you are reasonably able to access the Clinician's in-person services, you will not be prevented from accessing those services if you chose to stop using TMH.

Confidentiality

Because online therapy utilizes the Internet for the transmission of personal information, RTG cannot guarantee *confidentiality* of the personal information provided via this form of communication.

RTG exclusively utilizes Telehealth platforms that meet or exceed HIPAA requirements of privacy protection and encryption, including Regroup, Zoom and Doxy.me.

Recordings

Audio and/or video recordings are prohibited without your Clinician's consent. Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy.

In the event that your Clinician wishes to record your sessions, a separate consent document will be provided and discussed.

Harm to Self or Others

If there is an emergency during our work together where the Clinician is concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else or about your receiving proper psychiatric care, your Clinician will do whatever they can within the limits of the law to prevent you from injuring yourself or others and to ensure that you receive the proper medical care. For this purpose, the Clinician may also contact law enforcement, hospital or an emergency contact whose name you have provided.

Financial Agreement

Payment information is collected prior to the Initial Intake and thereafter a credit card is stored to be automatically charged either just before or at the time of session.

Should a payment issue arise, we can quickly address it prior to or at the start of session.

Policies for late cancellations and missed appointments for telemental health are the same as for in-person sessions, detailed in the "Financial Agreement".

Agreement to Telemental Health Policy

My signature below indicates my understanding of and agreement to the Telehealth Policy. I further understand that the policies and procedures included in the Telehealth Policy are in addition to and contingent upon signing the Notice of Privacy Practices and Client Agreement / Consent to Treatment.

I understand online therapy is not appropriate if I am experiencing crisis or having suicidal or homicidal thoughts. Should crisis occur, I agree to call 911, go to the nearest emergency room, or contact a crisis hotline.

By clicking the box below, I am agreeing that I, as either the Client or Parent/Legal Guardian of the Client, have read, understood and agree to the terms contained in the Telemental Health Policy & Informed Consent.