



Communication Policy & Agreement

Contacting Me

Following are the best ways for you to contact me:

- **PHONE:** 970-316-2424. You may leave a voicemail for me here, which is confidential and secure.
- **MAIL:** 236 S. 3rd Street, #215, Montrose, CO 81401
- **CLIENT PORTAL and myTherapist app** (both managed by Therasoft, which is HIPAA secure):
 - I will send you an invitation to sign-in to your client portal with a unique-to-you pin #.
 - through the portal/app you may securely message me, view upcoming appointments, and exchange documents
- **MESSAGING (TEXT):** either through the client portal, myTherapist app, or through the Signal app (a secure messaging app), which can be downloaded for free here: <https://signal.org/>
- **Sharing ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS/FAX:**
 - Through the Therasoft client portal and/or myTherapist app
 - Through secure electronic fax: 888-355-0737.
- If you want to communicate with me through conventional email or text, I will have you sign the Consent for Non-Secure Communications form to allow us to do so. These methods are secure on my end but may or may not be on your end:
 - You may text me at 970-316-2424, which is secure on my end, but probably not yours, so I **strongly encourage you to utilize the portal, myTherapist app, or Signal app** on your smartphone instead. If you use your regular phone's SMS it is still vulnerable to breaches of security en route to me. If you would like to do this, I will require you to read and sign the Consent for Non-Secure Communications form.
 - You may email me at karen.unfold@tsecuremail.com. Again this is secure on my end, but not necessarily on yours. For anything more than scheduling or logistics, I will only reply through the portal and/or secure messaging through myTherapist app, Signal, or via phone conversation.
- If you wish to receive appointment reminders, these are sent securely from my end, but are received through conventional SMS or email on your end. Therefore if you would like this extra service, to help you avoid missed sessions and related fees, I will also have you sign the Consent for Non-Secure Communications form.

I subscribe to the following service(s) that can allow us to communicate more privately through the use of encryption and other privacy technologies. None of them will cost you money, but each requires some setup before they can be used. Please ask me if you would like help getting set-up on any of these services:

- Secure **Client Portal** through Therasoft
- Secured email (karen.unfold@tsecuremail.com) through TSecureMail from Therasoft. *This is only secure on my end and en route; your end may be unsecured.*
- Secure (text) messaging. These services can be used on a computer or smartphone:
 - **Tsecure Message** (through Therasoft) - which you can access through the myTherapist app and/or client portal on your laptop/computer.
 - **Signal** secure messaging app: available to download for free.

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- **Secure online video ‘telehealth’** software through Therasoft. You may access this from your laptop (it requires either iOS or Windows operating system) or through the myTherapist app on your smartphone. This option is for telehealth therapy sessions only.

Social Media

Please refrain from contacting me through any form of social media. As I do not use most social media, you would probably be hard-pressed to find me on any, but more importantly they are not secure, private, or confidential.

It is important that we be able to communicate and also keep the confidential space that is vital to therapy. Please speak with me about any concerns you have regarding my preferred communication methods.

Presence & Use of Phones and other Devices in-session

To ensure your utmost privacy while we are in-session, I always turn my phone to airplane mode which keeps it from transmitting any data or “listening in.” I strongly encourage you to do the same with any electronic devices you have with you for the duration of your appointment (until we get to scheduling and payments), as this may also help you stay more present (without the interruption of notifications).

Response Time

Often I am not able to respond to your messages and calls immediately. For voicemails, emails, and other messages, ***I strive to respond within 24 hours during normal business hours during the work week*** (typically Monday through Friday although I may occasionally be out of the office for work or personal reasons). I rarely respond during evenings or on the weekends. I may occasionally reply more quickly, or respond at the end of the day or on weekends, but please be aware that this will not always be possible so please do not expect it or think that I am ignoring you if I don’t. As a self-care practice, I typically turn all of my devices off during these times. Be aware also that there may be times when I am unable to receive or respond to messages, such as when out of cellular range, out of town, or simply unplugged from electronics.

Emergency Contact

If you are ever experiencing an emergency, including a mental health crisis, please call the local crisis team from the Center for Mental Health at **(970) 252-6220**. Alternatively, you can call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room. Another good resource is the Colorado Crisis Line at **1-844-493-TALK (8255)** or you can also text them by **texting “talk” to 38255**.

If you need to contact me about an emergency, the best method is the same as above:

- By phone: 970.316.2424
- If you cannot reach me by phone, please leave a voicemail and then follow up with a secure text message through the client portal/app

Disclosure Regarding Third-Party Access to Communications

Please know that if we use electronic communications methods, such as email, texting, online video, and possibly others, there are various technicians and administrators who maintain these services and may have

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access to the content of those communications. In some cases, these accesses are more likely than in others. I have done what I can, on my end and to the best of my ability, to employ secure methods of communication, but given the nature of our increasingly digital world, there is a lot that happens between service providers and servers (and on your end) that I have no control over.

Of special consideration are work email addresses. If you use your work email to communicate with me, your employer may access our email communications. There may be similar issues involved in school email or other email accounts associated with organizations that you are affiliated with. Additionally, people with access to your computer, mobile phone, and/or other devices may also have access to your email and/or text messages. Please take a moment to contemplate the risks involved if any of these persons were to access the messages we exchange with each other. I encourage you to think about the ways that you engage in systems and practices that ensure your privacy and security in our communications with each other, including passwords, using the most secure options I have provided, and securing your devices themselves.

I have read the preceding information, and I understand my choices as a client or as the client’s responsible party for communications. Furthermore, by signing below, I agree to the methods of communication as outlined above. I have also read and reviewed the HIPAA Notice of Privacy Practices.

Client Name(s): _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other Responsible Party’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other Responsible Party’s Relationship to Client: _____

Therapist/Witness: _____ Date: _____

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