

Sarah Perl, LCSW PLLC – Resilient Self Therapy

291 Wall Street Suite 3R Kingston, NY 12401

TELEMENTAL HEALTH INFORMED CONSENT

“Telemental health” means, in short “provision of mental health services with the provider and recipient of services being in separate locations, and the services being delivered over 2-way audio and visual electronic media.” Services delivered via telemental health rely on a number of electronic, often Internet-based, technology tools.

Resilient Self Therapy typically provides telemental health services using Doxy.me

The link to your provider’s HIPAA secured virtual “waiting room” will be shared with you via email at the onset of treatment. You can bookmark this link to use each time you are scheduled for a therapy session.

- You will need access to Internet service and technological tools needed to use the above-listed tools in order to engage in telemental health work with your provider.
- **Telehealth is only permissible when the client is located in a jurisdiction that their provider and/or supervisor is licensed to practice in. Therefore, when travelling, it is imperative that you inform your provider as this may indicate a need to reschedule or cancel your session.**
- If you have any questions or concerns about the above tools, please address them directly to your provider so you can discuss their risks, benefits, and specific application to your treatment.

BENEFITS AND RISKS OF TELEMENTAL HEALTH

Resilient Self Therapy recognizes that telemental health services may be an appropriate means of delivering psychotherapy services. It is the policy of Resilient Self Therapy that telemental health services are used in a planned way and not a last minute backup to making it in for a scheduled in person session. When engaging in telehealth sessions, it is important to be aware of both the benefits and risks of this method of service delivery.

Receiving services via telemental health allows you to:

- Receive services at times or in places where the service may not otherwise be available.
- Receive services when you are unable to travel to the service provider’s office.
- Receive services safely when health and safety risks are of concern.
- The unique characteristics of telemental health media may also help some people make improved progress on health goals that may not have been otherwise achievable without telemental health.

Receiving services via telemental health has the following risks:

- Telemental health services can be impacted by technical failures, may introduce risks to your privacy, and may reduce your service provider’s ability to directly intervene in crises or emergencies. Here is a non-exhaustive list of examples:
- Internet connections and cloud services could cease working or become too unstable to use.

- Despite assertions of HIPAA compliance and RST's best efforts to protect your privacy and the security of your health information, Cloud-based service personnel, IT assistants, and malicious actors ("hackers") may have the ability to access your private information that is transmitted or stored in the process of telemental health-based service delivery.
- Computer or smartphone hardware can have sudden failures or run out of power, or local power services can go out.
- Interruptions may disrupt services at important moments, and your provider may be unable to reach you quickly or using the most effective tools.
- Limited access to therapist's ability to fully understand non-verbal information when working remotely.

There may be additional benefits and risks to telemental health services that arise from the lack of in-person contact or presence, the distance between you and your provider at the time of service, and the technological tools used to deliver services. Your provider will assess these potential benefits and risks, sometimes in collaboration with you, as your relationship progresses.

ASSESSING TELEMENTAL HEALTH'S FIT FOR YOU

Although it is well validated by research, service delivery via telemental health is not a good fit for every person. Your provider will continuously assess if working via telemental health is appropriate for your case. If it is not appropriate, your provider will help you find in-person providers with whom to continue services.

Please talk to your provider if you find the telemental health modality so difficult to use that it distracts from the services being provided, if the medium causes trouble focusing on your services, or if there are any other reasons why the telemental health modality seems to be causing problems in the quality of care that you are receiving.

Raising your questions or concerns will not, by itself, result in termination of services. Bringing your concerns to your provider is often a part of the process.

You also have a right to stop receiving services by telemental health at any time without prejudice. If your provider also provides services in-person and you are reasonably able to access the provider's in-person services, you will not be prevented from accessing those services if you choose to stop using telemental health.

YOUR TELEMENTAL HEALTH ENVIRONMENT

You will be responsible for creating a safe and confidential space during sessions. You should use a space that is free of other people. It should also be difficult or impossible for people outside the space to see or hear your interactions with your provider during the session. If you are unsure of how to do this, please ask your provider for assistance. Some initial recommendations are to plan for being alone behind a closed door during your session time, the use of sound machines, headphones, and pre arranging childcare (if applicable).

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OUR COMMUNICATION PLAN

At our first session, we will develop a plan for backup communications in case of technology failures and a plan for responding to emergencies and mental health crises. In addition to those plans, your provider has the following policies regarding communications:

If the session is interrupted and you are not having an emergency, disconnect from the session and your provider will wait two (2) minutes and then re-contact you via the telehealth platform. If that does not work due to a technological failure, look to your cell phone or email to receive a communication from your provider about alternate ways to communicate for the remainder of your session.

If the session is interrupted for any reason, such as the technological connection fails, and you are having an emergency, do not call your provider back; instead, call 911, or go to your nearest emergency room. Call your provider back after you have called or obtained emergency services.

Your provider will respond to your messages within 24 business hours. Please note that your provider may not respond at all on weekends or holidays. Your provider may also respond sooner than stated in this policy. That does not mean they will always respond that quickly.

Our work is done primarily during our appointed sessions. Contact between sessions should be limited to: confirming or changing appointment times & billing matters or issues.

Please note that all textual messages you exchange with your provider, e.g. emails and text messages, will become a part of your health record.

Your provider may coordinate care with one or more of your other providers. Your provider will use reasonable care to ensure that those communications are secure and that they safeguard your privacy.

OUR SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PLAN

As a recipient of telemental health-based services, you will need to participate in ensuring your safety during mental health crises, medical emergencies, and sessions that you have with your provider. Your provider will also develop with you a plan for what to do during mental health crises and emergencies, and a plan for how to keep your space safe during sessions. In order for telemental health to be provided safely, is important that you engage with your provider in the creation of these plans and that you follow them when you need to.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES SPECIFIC TO TELEHEALTH SERVICES

These are for your safety in case of an emergency and are as follows:

You understand that if you are having suicidal or homicidal thoughts, experiencing psychotic symptoms, or are in a crisis that we cannot solve remotely, your provider may determine that you need a higher level of care and Telemental health services are not appropriate.

Resilient Self Therapy requires an Emergency Contact Person (ECP) who may be contacted on your behalf in a life-threatening emergency **only**. You should verify that your ECP is willing and able to go

to your location in the event of an emergency. Additionally, if either you, your ECP, or your provider determines it to be necessary, the ECP agrees take you to a hospital. Your signature at the end of this document indicates that you understand your provider will only contact this individual in the extreme circumstances stated above. Please enter this person's name and contact information below as well as complete your individualized Emergency Procedure Plan by entering all the information requested.

If you have a mental health emergency, we encourage you not to wait for communication back from your provider, but do one or more of the following:

- Call Lifeline at (800) 273-8255 or go to <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>
- Call 911
- Go to the emergency room of your choice

PLEASE LIST YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSON HERE:

Name and Relationship to you:

Phone:

You agree to inform your provider of the address where you are at the beginning of every session.

Additional Notes pertaining to your Emergency Safety Plan:

YOUR SECURITY & PRIVACY

Except where otherwise noted, your provider employs software and hardware tools that adhere to security best practices and applicable legal standards for the purposes of protecting your privacy and ensuring that records of your health care services are not lost or damaged.

As with all things in telemental health, however, you also have a role to play in maintaining your security. Please use reasonable security protocols to protect the privacy of your own health care information. For example: when communicating with your provider, use devices and service accounts that are protected by unique passwords that only you know. Also, use the secure tools that your provider has supplied for communications.

RECORDINGS

Do not record video or audio sessions without your provider's consent. Making recordings can quickly and easily compromise your privacy, and should be done so with great care and only if permission has been granted by your provider. Your provider will not record video or audio sessions unless written consent has been obtained from your for the purpose of training or supervision.

FEES

The same fee rates will apply for telemental health as apply for in-person psychotherapy. However, insurance or other managed care providers may not cover sessions that are conducted via telecommunication. If your insurance, HMO, third-party payor, or other managed care provider does not cover electronic psychotherapy sessions, you will be solely responsible for the entire fee of the session. Please contact your insurance company prior to engaging in telemental health sessions in order to determine whether these sessions will be covered.

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PATIENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read, understood, and agree to the terms of Sarah Perl, LCSW PLLC's Telemental Health Informed Consent

Signature: _____

Name (Printed): _____

Date: _____