



FIFE CONSULTING

Providing Guidance, Hope, and Healing

Electronic Communication Policy

E-mail and texting offer easy and convenient ways for consultant and client to communicate. In some situations, it has advantages over office visits or telephone calls. However, it is important remember: there are important differences. E-mail is not to be used as a substitute for consulting sessions, nor is it to be used by clients to share information that you want to be kept private from other family members. Similar to leaving a message on my voicemail, there is no person at the other end of the call – just a computer. You can't tell for certain when your message will be read, or even if I am in the office or on vacation. Nonetheless, I believe that the ease of communication e-mail can afford a benefit to client care. Below are some guidelines for contacting me using e-mail.

- E-mail is never appropriate for urgent or emergency problems! Please use the telephone or go to a Hospital Emergency Room for emergencies.
 - E-mail is great for asking those little questions that do not require a lot of discussion. Appropriate uses of e-mail also include referral and appointment scheduling requests.
 - **E-mail is not confidential.** It is like sending a postcard through the mail. You should also know that if sending e-mails from work, your employer has a legal right to read your e-mail if he or she chooses.
 - E-mails should not be used to communicate sensitive medical information, such as information regarding sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS/HIV, mental health, developmental disability, or substance abuse.
 - E-mail may become a part of the client record when we use it; a copy may be printed and put in your chart.
 - E-mail is not a substitute for seeing me. If you think that you might need to be seen, please call and book an appointment!
 - Either party can revoke permission to use the e-mail system at any time.
- I DO want to communicate with Dr. Stephen Fife electronically. I have read the above information and understand the limitations of security on information transmitted. I understand that Dr. Fife may not be able to communicate with me electronically about my specific condition if there are concerns regarding confidentiality.
- It is permissible for Dr. Fife to contact me via email regarding scheduling.
- It is NOT permissible for Dr. Fife to contact me via email.

Client Name: _____

Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Adapted from Katherine M. Hertlein, Ph.D.

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