



Mental Wellness During COVID-19

Tips for Providing Virtual Care and Support

Tips for Providing Mental Wellness Virtual Care & Support

Video Conferencing:

- Ensure good lighting for both you and your client
- Bandwidth, make sure you have a stable connection and adjust as need be.
- Watch your background; make sure there is nothing inappropriate behind you i.e. files, other computer screens, personal information, create a neutral background if possible.
- Clothing; consider wearing solid colors so your clothing is not a distraction.
- Consider using a headset or earphones so there is clear communication with no feedback.
- Client setting; ensure client is in an appropriate setting, area where no one will walk in, or to let you know if there is another individual in the room who may be off camera, you want to make sure you know who is in the room.
- Ensure you know the platform you are using is secure.
- Choose an office/work space that is comfortable, be mindful of your background
- Limit distractions, avoid; eating your lunch, glancing at your cell phone or texting, looking at another screen on your computer, being interrupted, back ground noise, etc... the client will see all of these distractions.
- Adjust your screen so you are eye level with your screen and do not sit too close to your screen.

Therapy over the phone:

- Often used for crisis calls or forgotten appointments.
- Can be used for quick check-ins between emails and appointments.
- Ensure the security of your phone connection- if you are using a voiceover IP phone or internet phone, use due diligence as you would your internet, making sure it is secure and no one can listen in.
- You cannot see the non-verbal so you will have to acknowledge them and you have to do that verbally by letting them know you are paying attention using MmmHmms and Aaaaahs.
- Pay attention to your pitch, quality, tone; try standing while you talk.
- Be wary of pauses in conversation, you may want to keep pauses shorter so you do not feel disconnected.
- Telephone therapy can be effective for a variety of concerns and people like it.

Email Communication

- All email should be encrypted.
- Ongoing reminders about safe communications; not to leave email open, log out after each use.
- Keep emails short, address one or two points.
- Suggestions and homework can be sent to clients.
- For connection with clients in between online sessions to set times and dates.