In general, it is the policy of the PRACTICE that your counselor/therapist will not provide you with their personal cell phone number, or email address. All communication outside of your counseling/psychotherapy sessions should be handled by contacting the PRACTICE office at (702) 895-1532. This is the PRACTICE’s policy related to the use of Social Media and the Internet as a way of communicating with your counselor/therapist outside of sessions. Please read through this information as it will help you to better understand how your counselor/therapist will conduct themselves as a mental health professional. It will also explain how you can expect your counselor/therapist to respond in various interactions, should they occur, with you on the Internet, or through other forms of technology.

Counseling/therapy can at times feel friendly, especially when a close relationship develops between you and your counselor/therapist, and it may seem natural for you to want to communicate with her/him outside of treatment sessions. However, your counselor/therapist cannot be your friend. Any interaction outside of treatment sessions would be considered a “dual relationship”. This would not be ethical, may not be legal, and definitely would not be in your best interest. Dual relationships compromise the professional relationship and can call into question your counselor/therapist’s ability to put your best interests first.

Our primary concern is always your wellbeing, and maintaining your confidentiality and privacy. Another consideration in limiting interaction outside counseling/therapy sessions, especially through the Internet is that it may jeopardize your confidentiality and privacy. Social Media sites, email, messaging, including texting, are not secure means of communication. It may also create the possibility that these interactions will become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented in your file. If you have any questions about anything within this document, you are encouraged to bring them up with your counselor/therapist when you meet. Please review the following types of communication/interaction that should not occur between you and your counselor/therapist.

All Social Media Networking Sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.): Staff of the PRACTICE will not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking sites. A counselor/therapist may use Twitter or publish a blog as a means to communicate with friends, family and colleagues. If you “follow” your counselor/therapist, she/he will not “follow” you back. These sites are not secure and interacting on them as friends, contacts, or as a follower can compromise your confidentiality and privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of the therapeutic relationship between you and your counselor/therapist.

Messaging (SMS Mobile Phone & Social Network Messaging): Please do not use any of the messaging functions on any social network sites to communicate with your counselor/therapist. Your counselor/therapist will not message you in response. In the rare circumstance that you have been given your counselor/therapist personal cell phone number; please do not use text messaging as a form of communication. Your counselor/therapist will not respond in kind. Engaging with your counselor/therapist in this manner could compromise your confidentiality and privacy.

Emailing: While your counselor/therapist will not give you her/his personal email address, we recognize that email addresses may be easily found on the Internet. Please do not try to communicate with your counselor/therapist by email and do not email any content related to your counseling/therapy sessions. Email is not completely secure or confidential. Email communications are retained in the logs of the Internet service provider(s) being used. While it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, in theory, available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the Internet service provider.

Search Engines: Your counselor/therapist will not search for you through Google, Facebook or any other type of search engine as part of their work with you. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. For example, if your counselor/therapist has a reason to suspect that you are in danger and is unable to reach you through the contact information that you provided there might be an instance in which using a search engine becomes necessary as part of ensuring your welfare. These are unusual situations and if this ever occurs, your counselor will document the situation and discuss it with you at your next scheduled session.

If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with your counselor/therapist, please bring them into your sessions where they can be discussed together.