



Social Media Policy

The British Columbia Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC) requires Registered Clinical Counsellors (RCC) who use Social Media to have a Social Media Policy. This document outlines my policies related to my use of social media. Please read it to understand how I conduct myself on the Internet as a mental health professional, how you can expect me to respond to various interactions that may occur between us online, and the potential limitations of Social Media.

If you have any questions about anything within this document, please do not hesitate to bring them up when we meet. As the internet and technology continually evolves, there may be times when I would need to update this policy. If I do so, I will post it on my website and inform current clients during our sessions.

In keeping with the profession's code of ethics, I maintain confidentiality of our relationship with the exception of circumstances where I have legal obligations to break confidentiality due to risk of harm to yourself or others; ordered disclosure by courts; and written consent to release confidential information. As such, if you post or comment on any of my social media accounts, you are opening up the possibility of people inferring about our relationship or asking you about your connection to me. It is your choice as to any disclosures you make about yourself online.

This is how I conduct myself on the various aspects of social media:

| FRIENDING |

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc). I believe that adding clients as friends or contacts on these sites can compromise your confidentiality and our respective privacy. It may also blur the boundaries of our therapeutic relationship. I also do not interact with clients on social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn. If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way is to do so by phone or email. Direct email at cordelia@anchoredhearts.ca is best for administrative matters such as booking or rescheduling appointment times.

| FOLLOWING BLOGS, SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES AND ACCOUNTS |

I have no expectation that you as a client will want to follow my blog, business Facebook page or Instagram account. I mainly follow other mental health professionals on social media – however, I do not follow current or former clients on any social media accounts. You are welcome to use your own discretion in deciding whether or not to follow my social media accounts.

| ONLINE CONTENT |

If there are things from your online life (e.g. a blog or social media post, eulogy of a loved one, video containing personal content, etc.) that you wish to share with me, you are more than welcome to bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour. Please note that I will not view your online content outside of this. I believe that casual viewing of clients' online content outside of the therapy hour can create confusion in regard to whether it's being done as a part of your therapy or to satisfy my personal curiosity. Viewing your online activities without your consent and without our explicit arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on our therapeutic relationship. As such, it is my preference that any information that I learn about you be shared by you during our sessions.

| INTERACTING |

Please do not use messaging on Social Networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn to contact me. Please do not use wall postings, @replies, or other means of engaging with me in public online if we have an already established client/therapist relationship. These sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. Engaging with me this way could compromise your confidentiality. Please note that if you interact with me online, it may create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal client record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart. Additionally, in the case of an emergency, I would not be able to respond in a timely manner as I may not check these accounts regularly. In the case of an emergency, please call 911 or the crisis line at 604.872.3311.

| USE OF SEARCH ENGINES |

It is NOT a regular part of my practice to search for clients or look up information on clients using Google, Facebook or other search engines. It is important to me that I know you as you are in my office. Occasionally, clients information may show up on my

newsfeed or other public domains. If I do come across your information online, you can be assured that I will move on and avoid reading content. Extremely rare exceptions may be made during times of crisis. If I have a reason to suspect that you are in danger and you have not been in touch with me via our usual means (showing up for appointments, phone, or email) there might be an instance in which using a search engine (to find you, find someone close to you, or to check on your recent status updates) becomes necessary as part of ensuring your welfare. These are very unusual situations and if I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it and discuss it with you when we next meet.

| BUSINESS REVIEW SITES |

You may find my psychology practice on sites such as Yelp, Google, Yahoo Local, Bing, or other places which list businesses. Some of these sites include forums in which users rate their providers and add reviews. Many of these sites comb search engines for business listings and automatically add listings regardless of whether the business has added itself to the site. If you should find my listing on any of these sites, please know that my listing is NOT a request for a testimonial, rating, or endorsement from you as my client.

The British Columbia Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC) Standard for Promoting and Advertising Services states, “an RCC should never solicit testimonials, expressly or by implication, from clients or other persons who, because of their particular circumstances, may be vulnerable to undue influence”(BCACC Code of Ethical Conduct and Standards of Clinical Practice and Guidelines for Registered Clinical Counsellors, 2011).

You have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. However, due to confidentiality, I cannot respond to any review on any of these sites whether it is positive or negative. I urge you to take your own privacy as seriously as I take my commitment of confidentiality to you. You should also be aware that if you are using these sites to communicate indirectly with me about your feelings about our work, there is a good possibility that I may never see it. If we are working together, I hope that you will bring your feelings and reactions to our work directly into the therapy process. This can be an important part of therapy, even if you decide we are not a good fit. None of this is meant to keep you from sharing that you are in therapy with me wherever and with whomever you like.

Confidentiality means that I cannot tell people that you are my client and my Ethics Code prohibits me from requesting testimonials. But you are more than welcome to tell anyone you wish that I'm your therapist or how you feel about the therapy I provided to you, in any forum of your choosing.

If you do choose to write something on a business review site, I hope you will keep in mind that you may be sharing personally revealing information in a public forum. I encourage you to create a pseudonym that is not linked to your regular email address or friend networks for your own privacy and protection. If you feel I have done something unethical and feel uncomfortable discussing it with me, you can contact BCACC or the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (which are associations I am registered with) and they will review my services.

| LOCATION-BASED SERVICES |

If you use location-based services on your mobile phone, you may wish to be aware of the privacy issues related to using these services. I do not and will not place my practice as a check-in location on various sites such as Facebook, etc. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, or applications such as "Find my Friends," it is possible that others may become aware that you are a therapy client due to your location.

| EMAIL |

I prefer using email to schedule or reschedule appointments. Please do not email me therapy sessions-related content as email is not fully secure or confidential due to the risk of third-party interception. If you choose to communicate with me by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of your and my Internet service providers. Although it is unlikely that someone will be looking at these logs, they are, technically available to be read by the system administrator(s) of the Internet service provider. It is important for you to know that any email correspondence between us becomes a part of your legal client record.

| CONCLUSION |

Thank you for taking the time to review my Social Media Policy. If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies or regarding our potential interactions on the Internet, do bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them. If you would like to contact me, you may do so at cordelia@anchoredhearts.ca or at 778-775-5238.