

YVONNE NEWBURY COUNSELLING

Social Media Policy

This is my social media policy/guidelines to ensure that I adhere to ethical protocols when posting or engaging online. These are my reflections on how I aim to behave online and expect clients to engage.

Keeping my professional and personal life as separate as possible

My social media accounts for family and friends are separate. They are locked down and there is no way for clients to access these sites. I am aware that these still may be easily traced so I will ensure to act responsibly and be mindful of my profile and cover pictures.

I will have accounts that clients can access and that are open to the public. I will never share pictures of my family or friends on these pages. These pages will be used to market my business and to post things that I think will be useful for clients.

Manage my privacy settings.

I will continually manage my privacy settings as it is not unusual for clients to look for therapists online.

Check and manage my profile.

I will check my profile regularly. I will ask friends/family to periodically check it as well to ensure that issues and information are accurate and/or privacy is still maintained.

I will also aim to keep my profile picture as up-to-date as I can to ensure clients can recognise me from my picture when we meet.

I will also consider the tone of my posts and comments to accurately represent how I communicate in a world that is not social media.

How I communicate online

I will avoid using language that other people might consider inappropriate or offensive. I will always aim to be polite, respectful and kind. I will aim to post only uplifting posts. I will always consider how I may be impacting clients through how I communicate. Clients may build a picture of me as a therapist through the content I display and the language I

use online. It is important that the content accurately represents who I am and what I offer. Anything I post will be considered in the context of my professionalism.

I am aware that all social media comments are permanent. Even if I delete them, they're recordable, shareable and often searchable. I am aware that what I post could be shared and read by anyone and could be taken out of context.

Maintaining appropriate boundaries with clients

I will maintain appropriate boundaries with clients. I will never accept friend requests from clients, and I will never identify anyone as a client. I will not engage in counselling online and will encourage clients to message me privately if they feel they need to share on my social media pages.

It's my choice if I want to respond

I am not obliged to engage in any posts or comments. It is my choice to engage. I can ignore tagged posts too. I will not be under any pressure to respond. Whilst my follower numbers are low, I am happy to engage with clients to show my appreciation for them engaging with me. This may change as followers grow.

I will consider my clients' feelings

I will consider carefully the posts I share. I will consider my clients' feelings before I share. Examples of this might be sharing of feeling joyous at Christmas, as lots of clients struggle at this time of year. Clients may be affected by posts in unexpected ways. Some posts may be misinterpreted by clients. I will do my best to be considerate of the issues that my clients may be experiencing.

I will be mindful of the instant nature of social media

Social media is fast-paced and constantly changes. I will aim to avoid making comments in the heat of the moment and at times of frustration or anger. I feel it is ok to disagree with what people say but I will not actively seek these posts out. I will also be extremely aware of how I express myself and the language I use to do this. I am aware that social media sites can make it easier to engage in behaviour that may not be acceptable.

Think about my motivation for posting

My motivation for posting will always be to promote my services and to encourage or connect positively with clients.

Negative situations on social media

The negative situations that I am aware of are

- Bullying
- Discrimination
- Abuse
- Prejudice
- Trolling
- Pile on

Examples of these are spreading rumours, harassment, intimidation, putting up false profiles, stalking, offensive remarks, and irrelevant comments that aim to provoke. A pile-on is usually targeted abuse by many people, often coordinated to ensure maximum impact.

How I will take care of myself when responding to negativity online

I can ignore situations rather than engage. I can turn off notifications. I can take a break from social media until the situation calms down or is resolved.

I will aim to regulate my time on social media. I will also engage fully in the world outside the online one and be around friends and family who love me. I will disconnect when possible so that I am not consumed by what is happening online.

Things I can do when things get serious.

- Block individuals
- Record when things are happening
- Take screenshots with dates and times if possible
- Contact the relevant people – Facebook, Instagram
- Contact the police
- Take legal advice