

# Karen Frykholm LCMFT

KS License LCMFT 2811

MA License: LMFT 1334

## MY PRIVATE PRACTICE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY\*

This document outlines my office policies related to use of Social Media. Please read it to understand how I conduct myself on the Internet as a mental health professional and how you can expect me to respond to various interactions that may occur between us on the Internet. If you have any questions about anything within this document, I encourage you to bring them up when we meet. As new technology develops and the Internet changes, there may be times when I need to update this policy. If I do so, I will notify you in writing of any policy changes and make sure you have a copy of the updated policy.

### Friending

I do not accept friend or contact requests from current or former clients on any social networking site (Facebook, LinkedIn, 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. If you have questions about this, please bring them up when we meet and we can talk more about it.

### Fanning

I do not subscribe to a typical commercial Facebook Page. At this time, my position is that the potential risks of maintaining such a Page outweigh any potential gains. This section has been retained for those wishing to view the original document. In the future, however, I may keep a Facebook Page for my professional practice, to allow people to share my blog posts and practice updates with other Facebook users. All of the information shared on this page is available on my website. If I decide to post a basic Facebook Page, you are welcome to view it and read or share articles posted there, but I do not accept clients as Fans of such a Page. I believe having clients as Facebook Fans creates a greater likelihood of compromised client confidentiality and I feel it is best to be explicit to all who may view my list of Fans to know that they will not find client names on that list. Although my professional body is the American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, I adhere to the higher standard of American Psychological Association's Ethics Code, which prohibits my soliciting testimonials from clients. I feel that the term "Fan" comes too close to an implied request for a public endorsement of my practice. Note that you should be able to subscribe to the page via RSS without becoming a Fan and without creating a visible, public link to my Page. You are more than welcome to do this.

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## Following

I may elect to publish a blog on my website and post psychology and relationship health news on Twitter. I have no expectation that you as a client will want to follow my blog or Twitter stream. However, if you use an easily recognizable name on Twitter and I happen to notice that you've followed me there, we may briefly discuss it and its potential impact on our working relationship. My primary concern is your privacy. If you share this concern, there are more private ways to follow me on Twitter (such as using an RSS feed or a locked Twitter list), which would eliminate your having a public link to my content. You are welcome to use your own discretion in choosing whether to follow me. Note that I will not follow you back. I only follow other health professionals on Twitter and I do not follow current or former clients on blogs or Twitter. My reasoning is that I believe 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 treatment or to satisfy my personal curiosity. In addition, viewing your online activities without your consent and without our explicit arrangement towards a specific purpose could potentially have a negative influence on our working relationship. If there are things from your online life that you wish to share with me, please bring them into our sessions where we can view and explore them together, during the therapy hour.

## Interacting

Please do not use SMS (mobile phone text messaging) or messaging on Social Networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn to contact me. These sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. 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. Engaging with me this way could compromise your confidentiality. It may also create the possibility that these exchanges become a part of your legal medical record and will need to be documented and archived in your chart. If you need to contact me between sessions, the best way to do so is by phone. Email through the website Contact form is second best for quick, administrative issues such as changing appointment times. See the email section below for more information regarding email interactions.

## Use of Search Engines

It is NOT a regular part of my practice to search for clients on Google or Facebook or other search engines. 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 (coming to 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 unusual situations and if I ever resort to such means, I will fully document it and discuss it with you when we next meet.

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## Google Reader

I do not follow current or former clients on Google Reader and I do not use Google Reader to share articles. If there are things you want to share with me that you feel are relevant to your treatment whether they are news items or things you have created, I encourage you to bring these items of interest into our sessions. If I send article references to you, it will be via secure email from my website.

## Business Review Sites

You may find my therapy practice on sites such as Yelp, Healthgrades, 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. Codes of Ethics for most mental health professional disciplines hold that it is unethical for mental health providers to solicit testimonials. For example, the American Psychological Association Code of Ethics explicitly states “Psychologists do not solicit testimonials from current therapy clients/patients or other persons who because of their particular circumstances are vulnerable to undue influence.” As a Clinical Member of American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, I personally adhere to the higher standard of APA. Of course, you have a right to express yourself on any site you wish. But 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 treatment 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 urge 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 harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with me, you can always contact the Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board, which oversees licensing, and they will review the services I have provided. Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board, 700 SW Harrison St., Suite 420, Topeka, KS  
<https://ksbsrb.ks.gov/>

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## Location-Based Services

If you used 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 place my practice as a check-in location on various sites such as Foursquare, Gowalla, Loopt, etc. However, if you have GPS tracking enabled on your device, it is possible that others may surmise that you are a therapy client due to regular check-ins at my office on a weekly basis. Please be aware of this risk if you are intentionally “checking in,” from my office or if you have a passive LBS app enabled on your phone.

## Email

I prefer using email only to arrange or modify appointments or suggest an article or online lecture for your therapeutic benefit. To begin using my end-to-end encrypted HIPAA-compliant email service, first send an email using the CONTACT form on my website. My return email will include the word *Oread* in the sender address.

Do not use regular or work email, as regular email is not completely secure or confidential. Please do not email personal content related to your therapy sessions. If you choose to communicate with me by email, be aware that all regular emails are retained in the logs of your and my Internet service providers. 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. The Hushmail system that I use keeps the content of our messages encrypted and private, but To/From logs would be apparent on your server. You should also know that any emails I receive from you and any responses that I send to you become a part of your legal record.

## Texting

You may text regarding scheduling concerns or request to for a call, but be aware that the website phone number listed for the office is not compatible with texting.

**Use the Contact form on the website to request the Email & Text Questionnaire Form, which must be signed and submitted before the private text-compatible phone number is provided.**

## Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to review my Social Media Policy. If you have questions or concerns about any of these policies and procedures or regarding our potential interactions on the Internet, do bring them to my attention so that we can discuss them.

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