

## **Mandy Wax - Digital Policy**

### **Email:**

I am not currently using an e-mail encryption programme, so any emails we send to each other may be vulnerable to viruses or human error. For this reason, it is best to be thoughtful about what you include in emails to me, and which email address you choose to use with me. Often, it is best to rely on email for non-confidential communications like setting up appointment times and things like that. In an effort to keep confidential and psychological material "in the room" it is best avoided in emails unless we discuss it beforehand. I will always request your preferred email address from our first session. If you choose to communicate with me by email, be aware that all emails are retained in the logs of Internet Service Providers. Furthermore, they can be vulnerable to viruses and unintended forwarding or replication. If you are concerned about the confidentiality of your emails, you may wish to contact me by telephone instead.

I check emails only at fixed times during office hours – I avoid checking them on weekends and holidays. I endeavour to respond to all emails within 24 hours upon opening them. If I am away for an extended period, you will receive an automated response. Emails should never be used in the event of an emergency, in which case you should contact emergency services.

### **Text messages:**

You may feel free to contact me by text message to alert me if you are running late for a session or for similar reasons. However, because of the lack of context of text messages, it is generally not the best method for communicating with me about more important matters, so please do phone and leave me a message.

As a private practitioner I am unable to offer an emergency service, even by phone. Should you experience an emergency please contact either the emergency services or if you are feeling suicidal, ring The Samaritans: 116 123. If you feel that this may be an issue, please discuss it with me.

### **Zoom:**

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, I have been using the Zoom video conferencing system. When engaging via video conferencing, we both agree not to record sessions. It is also crucial that you are sure that your environment from which you are conferencing with me is safe, secure, and private.

### **Social Media:**

I do not knowingly engage with clients over social media. Whether you follow me on social media or not is of course at your discretion, though I would suggest for reasons of confidentiality and preserving our therapeutic relationship that it's advisable not to. Like many others, I maintain a private Facebook account for personal reasons, and a Linked- In account for professional ones. I aim to keep my Facebook as private as possible and it would not be appropriate to be Facebook "friends" with former or current

clients. I acknowledge that there can be some overlap across social networks, and that this sometimes comes to light on Facebook. If this were the case, it would be something we would need to discuss in session.

As the above, I have decided that it would not be appropriate to add current or former clients as "connections" on Linked-In.

**Google:**

I have found it is best to avoid encountering information about you that does not come directly from you, so in general practice I do not Google my clients. I am aware, however, that clients will often Google prospective therapists as part of their process in choosing one. If you did so with me, and this produced any questions, I would be happy to address them with you. Going forward, I have found it is best to find out from each other what we need to know face-to-face.