

THE BASICS OF SAFE AND ETHICAL ONLINE DELIVERY

PART 2

Australian Government
Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling

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Webinar ground rules and self care

- Confidentiality & no identification of clients or their stories
- Respect for others, in particular for presenters and panellists, when posing questions
- Each person is responsible for what they disclose
- Make no assumptions
- Keep specific case/supervision questions for supervision
- Contribute to the environment of safety & take care as you may be impacted
- If need be, take the issue to supervision or seek help from a therapist
- If anyone has another that I haven't stated here please let us know through Q&A

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WHAT WE WILL COVER

- WHAT THE CLIENT NEEDS PREPARE FOR SAFE ONLINE COUNSELLING
- ONLINE RELATIONSHIP
- EMOTIONAL REGULATION
- A SHIFT IN POWER DYNAMICS
- ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WORKING ONLINE

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EQUIPMENT THE CLIENT WILL NEED

- Which device to use?
- Secure connectivity
- Audio
- Clear picture
- Headset or ear buds



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THE ENVIRONMENT THE CLIENT WILL NEED

- A private, uninterrupted safe space
- Have time for a normal length session
- Outside?
- Support in their environment
- Comfort (warm, cool, seating)
- Be sitting at a table
- Have tested their audio and video

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THE DISINHIBITION EFFECT

"The online disinhibition effect describes the loosening of social restrictions and inhibitions that are normally present in face-to-face interactions that takes place in interactions on the Internet...."

Thus online disinhibition could be classified as benign disinhibition or toxic disinhibition."

John Suler

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THE ONLINE RELATIONSHIP

Is there anything about the online environment that you've noticed so far, that could interrupt or block the establishment of a safe therapeutic relationship?

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THE ONLINE RELATIONSHIP

What strategies do you need to have put in place regarding emotional safety and regulation?

What strategies do you need in place if a client says they are suicidal?

What is the difference to IRL?

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POWER DYNAMICS CAN BE VERY DIFFERENT ONLINE!

Power Dynamics can be very different online!
Clients can be more empowered due to Disinhibition effect.

Clients can:

- remain anonymous, or use a different name
- walk out whenever they like,
- turn off their video, or audio etc.

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ONLINE PRESENCE

"We propose that through present-centered relating that includes eye contact, softening and warmth in voice, vocal prosody, emotional attunement and in-the-moment engagement, the client perceives safety. This experience of neuroception of safety eventually shuts down the client's defenses, which is healing in and of itself."

Geller, S. M. R., Murphy, D., Wiggins, S., & Cooper, M. (Eds.), *Relational depth: New perspectives and developments*. (2013).

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FINISHING THERAPY

- How does ending therapy online differ from face to face?
- How could the disinhibition effect impact finishing?
- How could higher anonymity impact finishing?
- How do you finish a session when it is text, chat or email?
- Who has the "last comment". What are the rules?

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ETHICAL ISSUES IN THE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

- You as a therapist have less control of the client's environment
- What are some of the things which could happen in the online environment that wouldn't happen face to face

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ETHICAL ISSUES & MITIGATING RISK

- Reliable equipment
- Confidentiality and security
- Risk assessment of the client's suitability
- Crisis plan
- Plan for disconnection
- Client contact details & location
- Client support details
- Time set aside for the session

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