



# EMBODIED PSYCHOLOGY

Suite #506, 8215-112 Street Edmonton AB, T6G 2C8

## **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.

### **LIKING**

I keep a Facebook Page for my professional practice to share articles and practice updates with other Facebook users ([www.fb.com/embodied.psych1](http://www.fb.com/embodied.psych1)). You are welcome to view my Facebook Page and read or share articles posted there, but please keep in mind that if you “like” my Facebook Page, others will be able to see this, and they may make the connection that you are a client of mine.

### **FOLLOWING**

I publish a blog on my website and I post psychology-related information on Instagram ([instagram.com/embodied.psych](http://instagram.com/embodied.psych)). I have no expectation that you as a client will want to follow my blog or Instagram account. My primary concern is your privacy. 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 Instagram and I do not follow current or former clients on Instagram. 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 Instagram, Facebook, or LinkedIn to contact me. These sites are not secure and I may not read these messages in a timely fashion. If you need to contact me between sessions,

the best way to do so is by phoning our office or emailing me directly at [Nicole@embodiedpsychology.ca](mailto:Nicole@embodiedpsychology.ca) 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.

### **BUSINESS REVIEW SITES**

You may find my psychology practice on sites 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 College of Alberta Psychologists Ethics Code states that it is unethical for psychologists to solicit testimonials. 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 feel I have done something harmful or unethical and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with me, you can always contact the College of Alberta Psychologists, which oversees licensing and whose mandate it is to protect the public, and they will review the services I have provided.

### **EMAIL**

If you choose to email me related to your therapy sessions, please remember that email is not completely secure or confidential. To help ensure confidentiality on my end, I use an email service called Protonmail, which provides end to end encryption. If you would like me to secure our email messages further by placing a password on them, please let me know and I will do so. 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.

**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.