

DISCLOSURE AND INFORMED CONSENT FOR TELEHEALTH SERVICES PROVIDED BY PSYCHOTHERAPIST TYLER ONG

Welcome to my telemental health service. This is just like any therapy session except it is conducted online. Please show up on time, dress appropriately as if you are going out to an appointment, and make sure you use a laptop or tablet in a closed (preferably locked) private room during our online session. Use WiFi for connectivity; try not to use mobile data. Try not to use a smartphone for our sessions, and do not allow anyone to be in the room or disturb you during the session. Please switch off any other gadgets with recording or calling capacity (like smartphones) that are in the same room as you. I will go through a checklist with you later which will be used for every online session afterward.

I use **doxy.me** as my online platform and it meets the United States' standards on telehealth privacy and information protection under the Health Insurance Portability and Accessibility Act or HIPAA. This will be the **ONLY** way I will be officially communicating with you during online sessions. But since I cannot control the quality of every online session due to technical issues, should our session get cut, please immediately call me at **0906-357-8898** to switch to a phone session to continue. Two attempts should be made in calling before the session is deemed given up or lost. When in phone session, you still need to be in a closed private room without anyone disturbing you or who might overhear what we are discussing. Please do not activate the speaker phone function during phone sessions. Phone sessions are only for sudden disconnections from online sessions. I do not offer phone sessions as a separate service. Please do not drive while engaging in a phone session, for everybody's safety. I am not responsible for any damage to life, limb, and property should there be any accident while we are in the middle of a session.

An **appointment email** will be sent to you for you to access the doxy.me platform to start our session. You do not need to download any software or to register to any site. Just click on the link provided in the email on the date of our scheduled appointment, and it will take you to our online session. You will be directed first to an online "waiting room" if I am not yet done with a prior client or if I am not yet ready to start the session.

I only allow **cancellations and reschedulings** without charge at least 24 hours in advance, via text messaging. Any cancellations and reschedulings violating this time frame will be charged 50 minutes' worth of professional fee for the expected type of therapy for the cancelled or rescheduled session. For instance, if you were scheduled for an individual session and you cancelled at the last minute (violating the 24-hour advanced notice), you will be asked to pay 1,000 pesos first before you will be allowed to reschedule.

Your session is considered **no-show** (you did not show up for your online session) if you have not logged on to the link provided in your email after ten (10) minutes have passed since the originally-agreed appointment time. You will be charged the full 50-minute fee for the expected type of therapy for that session. For instance, if you were scheduled for a couple's session and did not show up, you will be charged 2,000 pesos. You will be notified via email, text messaging, or both. You will not be scheduled for a next appointment until all fees have been resolved.

Regarding **fees**, individual sessions (only one client participating) are charged 1,000 pesos per AND UP TO 50 minutes. Couple sessions (partners, spouses) and family sessions (at least two related people who are not partners; a parent and a child, or siblings) are charged 2,000 pesos per AND UP TO 50 minutes.

Time is rounded off to the next quarter increment of the 50-minute hour. Payment is to be made after the session. I will inform you how much the payment will be, at the end of the session. Fees are not up for negotiation. Please pay via bank/fund transfer/direct deposit to **BDO, to the account number 001008009183**. You are responsible for paying any bank fees that might be required for inter-bank transfers. Give a brief text message after payment has been processed to give me a heads-up. Full payment must be received by 12noon on the next day after the session. If payment is not made by then, it is possible your next appointment or schedule will be opened up to other clients and will be deemed cancelled. If this happens, you will need to text message for another schedule after you are able to pay your balance. I do not accept partial or advanced payments.

Regarding your **records**, I will manually write out important points of the session in your physical file. There will be no screenshots taken, and I will not electronically record our sessions. Please do not electronically record any part of our sessions as well. Only I as your therapist will have access to your records. Records will be destroyed if the therapist deems that the records might be at risk for nonconfidential exposure to unapproved parties. Records will also be destroyed after the passage of three (3) years to avoid the escalation of the pre-mentioned risk. The physical records are considered my property and will not be turned over to you, but I can provide certifications and brief summaries to you upon request, for a fee.

As part of the telehealth ethics for US-trained mental health professionals, I am not allowed to “follow” or “friend” you in any **social media** platform, and I am not allowed to accept any “follow” or “friend requests” from you as well. I am not allowed to provide consultations over email and text messaging especially since I do not have encrypted email and text platforms. **Text messaging** is only for appointment setting, cancellations, rescheduling, and payment updates. Email is only for quick questions outside of sessions and for emergencies. If sending an **email**, please write **LOREM IPSUM** on the subject heading to mask the content of your email and for me to know that you are the one sending the email instead of another person with access. Appropriate times of contact are business hours (9am to 5pm) during weekdays, and halfdays (9am to 12noon) on Saturdays.

There are **risks** for any telehealth service. Even if the online platform I use has been deemed compliant with the US HIPAA standards, there are unforeseen events such as Philippine WiFi service quality, electrical disruptions like brown-outs, malicious hackers, people indeliberately overhearing bits and pieces of our conversation, computer viruses, sudden technological failure of software, and sudden auditory disturbances like passing trucks or people shouting in the background. I also need to inform you that my text messaging and email platforms are NOT encrypted end-to-end, so there is a risk anything you and I discuss over these platforms will be intercepted by others. So please do not make it a habit to contact me over text and email other than the purposes I discussed above.

While **confidentiality** is maintained to the best of my ability, the following situations will require me to break confidentiality: if a judge orders me to provide information to a court, reports of concrete plans for suicide and/or homicide, reports of child and/or elderly abuse/neglect, and if a client decides to bring a lawsuit or other adversarial legal processes against me. For the last situation, therapeutic relationship is deemed no longer existing, and all my responsibilities to you as a client ceases.

Should there be an **emergency and/or if you cannot control the privacy** of the session anymore, please say aloud the keywords: **“PENNYROYAL”** and I will immediately cut the session short and log out. I will

then email or text message you the fee you need to pay for that session, and you will need to text message me after you pay to set the next appointment.

IF you are in an emergency, please seek out the appropriate helping agency immediately (e.g., police, ambulance services), and go to the Outpatient Department (OPD) of your nearest hospital. There is also a list of mental health professionals under “Referral Network” in the menu bar on my site you can contact for emergencies.

To simplify,

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES ARE TO

- prove your identity online
- show up on time for your online session
- dress appropriately
- use a laptop or tablet for our sessions, using WiFi connectivity
- make sure the room you are in is closed, private, and there are no external noises and disturbances. I need you to be present and attentive to the session as if this was an in-person appointment.
- make sure no one barges into the room in the middle of the session
- switch off your phone and other gadgets with you during the session
- call me at 0906-357-8898 if our session gets cut, up to a maximum of two call attempts
- if you need to cancel, do so at least 24 hours in advance via text messaging
- pay all the fees you need to on time, and via direct deposit/bank transfer to my account. You are also responsible for inquiring and paying the necessary fees that banks impose (if any) on transfers/wires.
- between sessions, keep contact to a bare minimum to protect your own information. If you really need to, contact me during business hours ONLY, via text messaging (for appointments and times) or email (for quick questions and clarifications). I am not responsible for any information you choose to tell others about, if these lead to unforeseen negative consequences
- use the keywords PENNYROYAL when needing to cut the session short, and LOREM IPSUM on the subject heading of emails
- identify the nearest hospital with an emergency room (ER) or outpatient department (OPD) for emergencies, and to access the “Referral Network” in my site for emergency counseling
- feedback what you liked, did not like, or wished could be improved for the next session

CHECKLIST FOR EVERY TELEHEALTH SESSION:

- state your full name and birthdate (ALTERNATIVE: show government I.D. card)
- are you alone in a closed room? (DO: pan the camera 360 degrees)

- can someone overhear outside of your room (windows, door)?
- are there any gadgets that are switched on, especially those with recording capacity? (DO: please switch them off or switch them into airplane mode or in silent mode)?
- if we are cut off from videoconferencing, please call me at 0906-357-8898 to continue the session.
- if you choose to cut off from the session because you cannot control privacy anymore, please say the keywords aloud: "PENNYROYAL". I will immediately cut off the session without further comment. The session will be charged the minimum fee for a 50-minute hour, or if that has already been breached, according to the amount of time consumed rounded to the nearest quarter of the 50-minute hour.

SERVICES FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS:

As of the moment, I am NOT seeing minors (clients below 18 years of age) and seniors (60 years and above) for telehealth services. Couples and families must share the same gadget to access the screen as my platform's current service does not allow for multiple/group video-calling. I do not accept proxy appointments. I do not also accept clients who do not have the capacity to consent for whatever reason (e.g., neurodevelopmental delay or deficiency, brain damage, etc.). **The telehealth service I provide is not suitable for emergency situations such as intense and/or persistent suicidal and/or homicidal urges. Please access the Mental Health hotline of the Department of Health (DOH) in these situations.**

GEOGRAPHICAL JURISDICTION:

I only provide telehealth services to clients who are physically in the Philippines at the time of sessions, with the exception of past or continuing clients who are outside the Philippines covered under the ethic of continuity of care.

Do you understand AND accept the above statements and conditions? _____

Signature over printed name of client

Date

Acknowledged and witnessed by: Tyler Ong, PsyD, MS, CIMHP, CCATP, CAGCS