

VIDEOCALL and PHONE INFORMATION SHEET

You maybe used to online working and meetings or this may be all new to you. Online counselling has been proven to be very effective, but it is different to face to face in a couple of ways. This information sheet is to help you get the most out of your sessions.

The first thing to decide is which device you are going to use for the meeting, it can be your phone, a tablet, laptop or desk top pc. Make sure whichever device you are going to use has all the updates installed so that your machine is protected from viruses. Make sure you have a power connection or that your battery is fully charged. Video conferencing can use more power than a phone call. Make sure you have an alternative method of communication, such as a landline or mobile phone where I can contact you if our connection or device fails. Use a secured wifi signal, try to avoid using a public wifi service such as one in a café or university.

You need to make sure that the room you are going to use is private, comfortable and has a good wifi connection. Make sure there is little chance of you being disturbed so put your phone on silent and make sure family members know not to disturb you. For your safety, it is important that you let me know where you are when our meeting takes place so that we can monitor and reassess any possible risks.

It is a good idea to bring a drink, a notepad a pen and some tissues to the room with you. I do not mind if you are wearing pj's or wrapped in a quilt but please wear clothes that do not leave either of us needing more therapy.

Zoom meetings

Shortly before your appointment I will send you a link, when you click on the link follow the on-screen instructions on some devices it will ask you to download an app, just follow instructions to do that, it will then bring you to our 'meeting room'. Do not panic if this takes you a few minutes the first time it will be quicker next meeting. If you move the mouse to the bottom of the screen you will see a list of options that allow you to mute your mic or turn off your camera. I always set the meeting up so that these are turned on when we enter the meeting but if I can not hear you or you me, this is where we can solve those problems. There is also a text option so if you cannot hear me, I can type to you. Most devices have a built-in mic and camera which will be more than enough for our meeting. Zoom has the facility to record sessions, this feature WILL NOT be used by either of

us unless we have discussed this in detail previously.

Please ensure you have somewhere to place the device so that you do not have to hold it but that we can both see each other. If you are more comfortable with headphones, then please use them. If we lose connection, I will contact you on the number you have provided for me. As that will be on silent please remember to check the device. In our first session we will talk about how we will work and how I will ensure your safety.

At the end of our time online together, you should end the videocall when we have said goodbye. You will be reminded when it is time for the session to end.

After our session, you should ensure you have closed all Internet pages that relate to our time together to maintain your privacy from other people in your environment. Please then choose a pleasant activity to engage in for a while after the session before you return to the world offline.

If you have any questions before our first online video session, please email me at my secure email address at _____

Phone meetings

The procedure is much the same. Find somewhere comfortable and private to sit, where there is adequate wifi or 4g reception. If there is nowhere suitable, sometimes people do drive to a safe location where there is good data coverage. If this is the case, choose your location carefully and let your house mates know where you are going and for how long.

During the call it is easier if you can turn on speakerphone, so you don't have to hold your phone. Headphones can work well if you have them. Don't move around during the call, and don't engage in any other activity or accept other calls or texts. Do not record the call without asking permission, and nor will I, as above.

After the call I will not store your phone number on my contacts list without your permission. We cannot contact each other by phone in between sessions, unless there is a need to re-schedule the next meeting – if this is the case, we should do this by text.

I will not give your e mail or phone number to any other person without your prior permission.

I look forward to meeting you online or on the phone.