



## Safe Harbour Expressive Therapies

### Communication and Privacy Policy

- **For new and potential clientele:** A client information pack will be given to you (for in person sessions) or emailed to you (for online sessions) containing consent and release forms, policies and other information about sessions. **Before future art therapy sessions can take place**, clients must read and / or sign the confidentiality as well as the consent and release forms.
- **For in person sessions:** All interactions within an in-person session will remain confidential unless:
  - o You make a serious threat of harm to yourself or another person, or there is an indication of child or elder abuse
  - o If session documents are required for legal matters, we will discuss the specifics with you before releasing any information. Documents will only contain the information that was requested – everything else will remain confidential.

We will take every reasonable measure to ensure privacy and safety of the client while in the office, including enforcing current COVID measures. Before sessions can take place, we ask that you read and sign confidentiality and release forms to acknowledge agreement with the terms within these forms. You also acknowledge:

- o It is unethical for us as therapists and interns to discuss sessions in detail with other individuals (including other professionals, client's family) at all other times unless you give us your written permission.
- o You may not invite outside individuals to these sessions without our prior knowledge and consent; this includes family members, home health care workers or other professionals. Prior consent may be given for reasonable requests (i.e. a child who is reluctant to come into the therapy room unless a parent is present), but the outside individual(s) must sign consents and agree to certain conditions (i.e. no recording the session) before any future sessions take place.

Artwork may be taken home with the client or kept in the office with the client's art supplies. Due to space considerations, if not claimed within 6 weeks of completion, the artwork will be destroyed.



- **For online sessions:** All interactions within an online session will remain confidential unless:
  - You make a serious threat of harm to yourself or another person, or there is an indication of child or elder abuse
  - If session documents are required for legal matters, we will discuss the specifics with you before releasing any information. Documents will only contain the information that was requested – everything else will remain confidential.
  - We have an obligation to verify your whereabouts if someone asks about you when COVID tracing, but all other information will remain confidential
  
- Safe Harbour Expressive Therapies must abide by privacy laws established by PIPEDA as well as provincial legislation governing personal health information protection (PHIA). Therefore, online activity must meet standards set out by this legislation.
  - It is unethical for us as therapists / interns to discuss sessions in detail with other individuals (including other professionals, client's family) unless you give us your written permission.
  - You may not invite outside individuals to these sessions without our prior knowledge and consent; this includes family members, home health care workers or other professionals. Prior consent may be given for reasonable requests (i.e. a child who is reluctant to be online unless a parent is present), but the outside individual(s) must sign consents and agree to certain conditions (i.e. no recording the session) before any future sessions take place.
  - Online sessions will take place on Zoom. Zoom has made significant upgrades to ensure end-to-end encryption for transmitted information. Session links will be sent to you after booking the online appointment. Please do not share this link with anyone else.
  - Our security and virus protection software are kept up to date, and virus scans take place on a regular basis. For additional security and encryption, the therapist's computer is protected by a Virtual Private Network (or VPN).
  - You must have a cell phone or tablet with camera function to take pictures of the artwork in these online sessions. It is your decision on whether to send these images through the Zoom chat window during the session or to the encrypted email address ([safeharbourstudio@protonmail.com](mailto:safeharbourstudio@protonmail.com)) after the session. You may also give us permission to capture the artwork using a screen capturing tool.
  - It is your responsibility to ensure their online session space is safe and private. If possible, having the session in a separate room in your house or apartment would be ideal. If this is not possible, we can set up a session while other residents are out, or in another safe, secure location.
  - No recording of sessions will take place unless written permission is given.



For more information about health information  
privacy laws:

PIPEDA: [https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/the-personal-information-protection-and-electronic-documents-act-pipeda/pipeda\\_brief/](https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/the-personal-information-protection-and-electronic-documents-act-pipeda/pipeda_brief/)

PHIA: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/hcs/phia/>

- **File Storage:**

- The therapist will upload all client documentation to a secure, encrypted file storage site.
- With your permission, we will photograph artwork in an in-person session and upload it to a secure, encrypted file storage site. The client may choose to bring home the artwork created at an in person session. Because of space considerations, any original artwork left in the office will be destroyed after 6 weeks.
- Online clients are asked to send their artwork pictures to [safeharbourstudio@protonmail.com](mailto:safeharbourstudio@protonmail.com). From here, it will be uploaded to a secure, encrypted file storage site.
- Online and in person clients will have all documentation stored for 7 years after their last session.

- **Confidentiality limitations:**

- Please treat the contents of your session as confidential! If you decide to share with someone outside of the therapist-client relationship (including family members, friends or other health professionals), we stress that it is your decision alone, and art therapists and interns working at Safe Harbour cannot be held responsible for responses you may receive. If we are asked to share client information, we will need a time-sensitive confidentiality waiver signed by you for specific contents only.
- In the past, some clients have shared details of art directives with other professionals without the therapist's knowledge. It is important to emphasize here that **these directives are from a personalized program which is meant to support your individual needs.** These directives are no different than any other intervention provided by other counselors to the client and are NOT to be treated as general art activities. Facilitation of these therapeutic directives are outside the scope of practice of professionals who are not trained art therapists; in fact, this facilitation may be harmful to certain vulnerable individuals for whom the directive was not meant (such as a directive for depression facilitated to those who are living with anxiety, psychosis, dissociation...). As art therapists and interns working at Safe Harbour, we cannot be held responsible for how an art directive is facilitated by an untrained professional outside of the session.



- To avoid confusion and potential ethical as well as safety concerns, community professionals are welcome to contact us at (709) 632 9464 or by email at [info@safeharbourstudio.com](mailto:info@safeharbourstudio.com).
- **For email:** General inquiries or e-transfers can be sent to [info@safeharbourstudio.com](mailto:info@safeharbourstudio.com). Sensitive personal information or artwork images can be sent to [safeharbourstudio@protonmail.com](mailto:safeharbourstudio@protonmail.com).
- **Contact hours:** Our regular office hours are from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday. Phone call messages, texts or website messages are usually answered within 24 hours.

For immediate help, call the 24 hour mental health crisis line at **1 888 737 4668**.

- **Online session privacy tips for clients:**
  - Your device (computer, tablet or phone) should be password protected. Do not share your password.
  - Ideally, no one else should use your device. If this is not possible, choose or create an email address for corresponding between sessions that is exclusive to you.
  - Make sure the wireless internet connection is private and trusted (i.e. – private home connection instead of a public connection).
  - Always keep your virus and security software up to date and scan your computer regularly.
  - If possible, get a VPN (virtual private network) for additional security. Some virus programs have a VPN built in (like McAfee or Norton) and others are sold separately. Some good VPNs are Nord VPN (<https://nordvpn.com/fastest-vpn-site/>) and Proton VPN (<https://protonvpn.com/>).
  - Unique session codes are embedded in the Zoom session link. Please do not share this link.
  - When using electronic means to communicate with the therapist which are not encrypted or password protected (such as facebook messenger, text...), do not communicate sensitive information or transmit sensitive files (i.e. images).