“It’s Complicated”
Exploring the Role of the Internet and Social Media in Interpersonal Therapy

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Disclosures

We have no disclosures to declare
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New York Med
Two Big Questions

• How does the internet, social media and online networking affect the relationship between client and clinician?

• How does the internet, social media and online networking affect the relationships of our patients?
What is social media and online networking?
Social Network Defined

Web-based services that allow individuals to construct a **public or semi-public profile within a bounded system**, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and **view and traverse their list of connections** and those made by others within the system.

Social Media Defined

Internet-based media and interfaces designed to **connect people** to each other and facilitate interaction with **user-generated content**.

Forms of Digital Communication

Text, Email

Facebook, LinkedIn

Twitter, YouTube, Blogger
Which SoMe and Networking Platforms Do You Use?

Facebook = yes
Twitter = yes
LinkedIn = yes
Google+ = yes
Instagram = yes
YouTube = yes

Blue = yes
Red = no
facebook
Jenny Laidlaw
@jlaidlaw

Resident physician @UofTPsych @UHN. Interests include: medical psychiatry, medical education, and social media in healthcare. These tweets are my own.

Toronto
Joined March 2011

10 Photos and videos

Twitter

Tweets

Tweets & replies

Photos & videos

Jenny Laidlaw retweeted
Psych Journal Club @psychiatryjc - 5h
This month’s #psychjc includes a #tweetchat w/lead author & #hsrd15 keynote Katherine Wisner at 4PM ET Wed Jun 17th ow.ly/O7mzu

Jenny Laidlaw retweeted
Psych Journal Club @psychiatryjc - 5h
June’s #psychjc will be live tweeting from Harvey Stancer Research Day!
ow.ly/O7m7Z Updates on rsrch at @uoftpsych #hsrd15

Jenny Laidlaw retweeted
Psych Journal Club @psychiatryjc - Jun 5
In follow-up to December’s #psychJC the @CPA_APC has published 13 #choosingwisely recommendations: cpa-apc.org /media.php?mid=... Thoughts?
YouTube: Dr. David Goldbloom Discusses Depression. [Link](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WKAxyOOY41M) Accessed March 10, 2014
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2015

Review: I Know How She Does It

Short version: I loved L.V’s recent release (I Know How She Does It, out yesterday). I read it while on a vacation weekend with Josh, and found it both fascinating and inspiring. I want to get a copy for all of my friends, particularly those with jobs outside the home. It is definitely worth a slot on your summer reading list.

5a this morning. Coffee, time tracking, L.V, planner, mindfulness, and a baby monitor. LIFE.

Longer version, for those with time to digest a longer review:

What is social media and online networking?

How does this affect my relationship with clients?
Communication with Clients

Who communicates with clients by:

Blue = yes  Red = no

1 new message received
Email and Text Consequences

**Benefits**

- No telephone tag
- Focus on specific issue
- Flexibility
  - Respond when and where you want
- Plan what you will type
- Documented
  - For patient record

**Drawbacks**

- Presumption of availability
- Dealing with emergent issues
- Extension of therapy beyond sessions
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Limited opportunity for clarification

Getting Google-y

Is it ethical to Google your client?

Blue = yes  Red = no
# Googling of Clients

## In Favour
- Pre-screen a new client
- Find information in an emergency situation
  - Suicidal ideation or attempt
- Clarify confusing information
  - Grandiosity vs. greatness
- Supplement history

## Against
- Complicates therapeutic relationship
- ? Informed consent
- ? Disclosure of having acquired information online
- Documentation
- ? Part of the clinical record
- Public vs. private source

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Googling of Clients

• DiLillo & Gale (2011)
  ➢ 854 doctoral graduate students
  ➢ 98% reported using search engine or social networking site to find client information, despite believing that this practice was unethical

• Kolmes & Taube (2014)
  ➢ 227 therapists
  ➢ 28% accidentally discovered information online
  ➢ 48% intentionally sought information in a non-crisis situation and 8% in a crisis situation
  ➢ 24% sought information on a terminated client

Case 1
Case 1
Case 1
Case 1
Case 1
Getting Google-y Again

Have you ever Googled yourself?

Blue = yes                           Red = no
Case 2
Case 2
Case 2 - Discussion

“I think sometimes we post things just because we’re frustrated and need somebody else who understands to see it… It’s not inappropriate.”

vs.

“I think we’re held to a higher standard in some senses in terms of our professional behavior and even our personal behavior.”

What Does Your Client Know?

• Can get information about:
  ➤ Address, phone number
  ➤ Information about and pictures of you, your partner and family outside of work
  ➤ Involvement with extra-occupational activities, sports, politics, charities
  ➤ Online dating, relationship status, likes and dislikes
But Do They Really Know?

- Kolmes & Taube (2011)
  - 332 psychotherapy clients
  - 70% of patients had found information about their therapist online, most intentionally
  - Only 28% disclosed this to their therapist during a session
  - Information from: Google, Facebook, LinkedIn
  - Most felt shame, discomfort, embarrassment and feared judgement or rejection by their therapist

What Do Clients Know?

Professional & Personal Identity

Generation X and Millennials

Perceived

Actual

Baby Boomers

Bridging the Gap?

- Knowledge and use of online media
- Clinical knowledge & judgment

Years in training/practice
Why use SoMe?

Information sharing

• With other HCPs
  ➢ Instantaneous
  ➢ Collaborative
• With patients & public
  ➢ Advocacy
  ➢ Credible information
• With trainees
  ➢ Role modeling appropriate online behavior

What is social media and online networking?

How does this affect my relationship with clients?

What do the guidelines suggest?
Online Behaviour Guidelines

• Jurisdictional laws regarding privacy and confidentiality
• Professional organization social media policy
• Institutional social media policy
  ➢ University
  ➢ Hospital
  ➢ Health Network
  ➢ Practice Group
• Personal social media policy
Guidelines - Common Principles

- Client confidentiality is paramount
- SoMe should always be considered public AND permanent
- For personal use, utilize the most stringent privacy settings available
- Apply the same standards of professionalism that you would in face-to-face interactions
- Postings are subject to the laws of copyright and libel

Guidelines - Common Principles

- Maintain professional boundaries with clients
  ➢ i.e. no “friending” of clients
- Understand the technology and your audience
- Be transparent and avoid conflicts of interest
- Focus on areas of expertise
- Respect others
- Few absolutes
  ➢ Guidelines are necessary, but not sufficient to regulate ethical and professional online behaviour
What Can I Do?

• Take responsibility for your web presence
• Consider the distinction between your personal and professional identities
• Use privacy settings to protect your information when possible
• Get a consultation when ethical and clinical issues about online behaviour arise
• Be cautious of which email addresses you use for what

Personal Social Media Policy

• Informed consent document for each client
  ➢ Friending
  ➢ Following
  ➢ Interacting via text
  ➢ Use of search engines
  ➢ Google Reader
  ➢ Business site reviews
  ➢ Email
  ➢ Location-based services

Questions to Ask Yourself Before Googling a Client

• Why do I want to conduct this search?
• Would my search advance or compromise the treatment?
• Should I obtain consent from the patient prior to searching?
• Should I share the results of the search with the patient?
• Should I document the findings of the search in the medical record?

“I don’t know which doctor to choose. One has more friends on Facebook, but the other one just retweeted my message.”
What is social media and online networking?

How does this affect my relationship with clients?

What do the guidelines suggest?

How does social media and online networking affect my clients’ relationships?
Virtual or Reality?

• Mixed data on whether online social contact enhances relationships or leads to feelings of social isolation
• While many academics espouse the dangers of a connected world, the majority of adolescents and adults have become increasingly linked with others online
• In any event, significant implications for interpersonal psychotherapy
TED Talk – Prof Sherry Turkle
Virtual or Reality?

“An abundance of cautionary books and articles now exist about these new media and the possible devolution of relationships through diminishing face-to-face contact, the impact of multitasking on attention and brain development, and the creation of false identities and relationships”

Virtual or Reality?

There is concern that

“relating to others through email, texting, and online chats provides at best the illusion of a real relationship and at worst an attachment to a machine rather than a person”

Use of Social Media Sites - Teens

A Typical Facebook User Has 145 Facebook Friends

% of teen Facebook users who have a friend network of the following size

- 0-100: 30%
- 101-200: 12
- 201-300: 9
- 301+: 15
- Don't know: 34


A Typical Instagram-Using Teen Has 150 Followers

% of teen Instagram users who have a network of followers of this size

- 0-100: 25%
- 101-200: 11
- 201-300: 6
- 301+: 18
- Don't know: 39


Typical Twitter-using Teens Have 95 Twitter Followers

% of teen Twitter users who have a network of followers of this size

- 0-100: 29%
- 101-200: 10
- 201-300: 5
- 301+: 10
- Don't know: 44


http://www.pewinternet.org/topics/social-networking/pages/12/
Virtual or Reality?

• Texting may appear to be superficial, but may be way of continuing existing relationships

• Social media is not used to establish new relationships, but to connect with family and friends
  > Parallel and augment real-life interactions rather than replace them

• Internet changes how people communicate, but not why they do so

Causation vs. Correlation

Technology users are aware of more stressful events in the lives of their close friends and more distant acquaintances.

The average number of stressful events (out of a total of 12 possible) that people knew occurred in the lives of their close friends and more distant acquaintances in the past 12 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Close Friends</th>
<th>More Distant Acquaintances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>User of this technology 3.7</td>
<td>User of this technology 5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-user 2.2</td>
<td>Non-user 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>4.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>4.7</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
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<td>5.8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Photo sharing</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text message</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Based on responses to Q4: “Please tell me if you know someone—other than yourself—who has experienced any of the following in the past 12 months. Do you know someone who has ...” followed by a list of 12 different stressful events.

Source: August 2013 survey. N=1,801 adults.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

http://www.pewinternet.org/topics/social-networking/pages/12/
What is social media and online networking?

How does this affect my relationship with clients?

What do the guidelines suggest?

How does social media and online networking affect my clients’ relationships?

How do I incorporate the internet, social media, and online networking into my IPT work with clients?
Goals of Interpersonal Inventory

• Establish an understanding of:
  ➢ Current relationships
  ➢ History of current problems as applied to that relationship
  ➢ Information relevant to resolving the problem area; e.g. attachment or communication style and patterns of interaction
  ➢ Appropriate treatment goals

Example of Interpersonal Inventory

**FIG 2** Inventory diagram of a patient’s interpersonal network.

Case 3 - Role Play

• Groups of three
  ➢ Therapist
  ➢ Client
  ➢ Observer

• Roles will be handed out

• Task
  ➢ Complete a brief interpersonal inventory covering family and friends in five minutes!
  ➢ Observer will report back to the group
Intimacy in Communication

10 LEVELS OF INTIMACY IN TODAY’S COMMUNICATION

10. TALKING
9. VIDEO CHAT
8. PHONE
7. LETTER
6. IM
5. TEXT MSG
4. EMAIL
3. FACEBOOK MSG
2. FACEBOOK STATUS
1. TWITTER

Goals of Communication Analysis

• Assist the client in:
  ➢ Identifying communication patterns and how they link to their symptoms
  ➢ Recognizing their own contribution to the communication issue
  ➢ Communicating more effectively with others

• Assist the client by:
  ➢ Exploring communication
  ➢ Discussing narrative
  ➢ Focusing on affect

Communication Analysis with Text or Emails?
Reflecting on Challenges

• What do you think are the greatest challenges in incorporating the internet, social media and online networks into interpersonal psychotherapy?
Take Home Points

• The digital age poses both opportunities and challenges for health care clinicians, especially those practicing psychotherapy.

• Challenges can be overcome with consideration of guidelines, explicit education, reflective practice and role modeling of appropriate behaviour.

• Especially in interpersonal psychotherapy, therapists need to consider the online lives of our clients.
Next steps?
Resources

An Ethical Framework for the Use of Social Media by Mental Health Professionals

Dr. Keely Kolmes

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220 Montgomery Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94104
415-501-9998

Are you ready to commit to healthier relationships?

I'M READY! TELL ME MORE!

AS FEATURED IN

The New York Times
The Huffington Post
The Washington Post

If you want to be notified about my new offerings, upcoming presentations, and other professional news, sign up for my newsletter!

Email Address

Sign Me Up

http://drkkolmes.com/
Resources

• AADPRT Professionalism and the Internet Curriculum
• Canadian Federation of Medical Students (CFMS) Guide to Medical Professionalism: Recommendations For Social Media
References

• Chretien K, Goldman E, Beckman L, Kind T. 2010. It’s Your Own Risk: Medical Students’ Perspectives on Online Professionalism. *Academic Medicine*. 85(10)S68-71
• Kaczmarczyk et al. (2013). e-Professionalism: A New Frontier in Medical Education. Teaching and Learning in Medicine. 25(2), 165-170.
WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY