

# COUNSELING VIA WEB



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# INTRODUCTION

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Technology has become vital in everyone's lives and people are turning to it for reasons such

- ✖ Meeting new people and developing relationships
- ✖ Learning new skills
- ✖ Pursuing education
- ✖ Accessing support
- ✖ Accessing finance
- ✖ Shopping online

# Frequently used terms for online counseling

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- ✗ Cyber counseling
- ✗ Web based counseling
- ✗ Online support
- ✗ Web therapy

## Definition

According to National Board of Certified Counselors online counseling defined as “technology assisted distance counseling for individuals, couples, and groups involves the use of the telephone or the computer to enable counselors and clients to communicate at a distance when circumstances make this approach necessary or convenient”.

# CONTACTING THE THERAPIST

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- ✕ Email
- ✕ Chat room
- ✕ Telephone via internet (Skype)
- ✕ Videoconference
- ✕ Internet forums
- ✕ Traditional phone calls

# PROS OF ONLINE COUNSELING

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- ✖ Flexible to those who have time constraints
- ✖ Accessibility to those who live in remote areas
- ✖ Physically disabled clients are able to utilize counseling services at their own convenience
- ✖ Art of writing has the advantage of enhancing self-reflection
- ✖ Clients feel more free to write and express their feelings
- ✖ The clients can always re-read, rehearse, and reinforce the solutions and resolutions it contains



# PROS OF ONLINE COUNSELING CONTINUED...

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- ✖ Clients find online anonymity more comfortable and are willing to disclose more details
- ✖ Faster exchange of materials such as assessment tools and documents through emails and other online modalities
- ✖ It is fairly affordable and convenient

# CONS OF ONLINE COUNSELING

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- ✗ Lack of visual clues
- ✗ Unable to evaluate any kind of non-verbal behavior
- ✗ Misinterpretations of written communication
- ✗ Therapists are unable to respond to crisis situations especially with suicidal issues
- ✗ Online therapy is not appropriate for those who suffer from serious psychiatric symptoms
- ✗ Most of the insurance companies do not cover online therapy

# CONS OF ONLINE COUNSELING CONTINUED...

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- ✖ Difficult process for diagnosing
- ✖ Information shared by the client may not be always secure due to technological issues
- ✖ Written form of communication may possibly impair therapeutic skills of the experienced counselor
- ✖ May not be suitable for all cultures and also could lead to cultural misunderstandings



# COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES

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- ✘ The counselor must communicate the pros and cons of online counseling. For example, the limitations of computer technology which could breach confidentiality
- ✘ Counselor has the responsibility of providing details such as educational qualifications, and verify their license to practice
- ✘ Online therapists practicing in the United States need to consider legal issues related to licensure in the client's home state

# COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES CONTINUED...

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- ✘ Counselor also has the responsibility of completely verify client's identity in order to ensure the counseling process is authentic and genuine
- ✘ Obtain alternative methods of contacting the client during emergency situations
- ✘ Counselors electronically transfer client confidential information to authorized third-party recipients only when both the counselor and the authorized recipient have "secure" transfer and acceptance communication capabilities

# COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES

## CONTINUED...

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- ✘ Counselors must ensure that clients are intellectually, emotionally, and physically capable of using on-line counseling services, and of understanding the potential risks and/or limitations of such services
- ✘ If the counselor determines that on-line counseling is inappropriate for the client, they should avoid entering into or immediately terminate the on-line counseling relationship and encourage the client to seek traditional method of counseling
- ✘ Counselors provide on-line counseling services only in practice areas within their expertise

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THANK YOU