

Preparing for Therapy with Tara in Zoom:

The goal of this information is to help you get ready to have a safe and comfortable zoom/ online therapy meeting with me. You should also review the other new patient forms. The minimum includes the HIPAA Privacy Notice form, informed consent, and the Patient Info Sheet-Intake. *You should also receive an email with a google calendar invite with a zoom link in it (it's a weblink you can click on that will take you to the meeting).* I apologize that your therapy privacy and technical orientation is in this form, but I want to be sure to send it to be sure I've covered these things below, to make the zoom experience as smooth as we can. Thanks for your patience, as you may already be familiar with zoom and issues of confidentiality.

Getting set for Zoom:

While my office environment offers the ability to keep personal space buffers, I know everyone has been adjusting their sense of awareness and comfort with the amount of social distancing/ isolation/ quarantine appropriate through the course of the Covid-19 epidemic becoming the new “viral” normal. Some people may isolate because of risks of exposure from professional or social encounters, and some may isolate because they are in, or live in proximity to someone in, a higher risk group that may be more susceptible to the Covid-19 virus or the “Long Haul” effects post-Covid infection. I want to make sure you know I've been thinking about how to keep you, me, and all the people I come into contact with (including other immune-compromised patients) safe. I hope we can work together, hang in there, and be back together on the couch sometime not too distant!

CDC Covid Updates: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/index.html>

The June 2020 [NIH Study published on infectivity of asymptomatic Covid-19 Carriers](#)

Here's a handy tracking map from University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME): <http://www.healthdata.org/covid>; and [California Covid-19 statistics and projections](#)

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I am currently only offering phone or Zoom sessions. If you have difficulty, we can look at the zoom platform together. **Please make sure you are receiving/ set google calendar as a "known-sender" in your contacts. Many people seem to find their Zoom Invite is in their spam folder.**

If we're scheduled for sessions by phone or Zoom, **please remember these important things to protect your privacy** and allow yourself to feel safe and comfortable sharing even though you're not sitting on the couch across from me:

- You need a space where you won't be overheard, interrupted, or asked questions. Some people find a room, some sit in their car, I've even had a number of clients that've met from a comfy closet! Please be sure whatever space you're in, that you're well lit (so I can see your shining face, but not so overexposed that all I can make out is a bright blob...it's harder to track subtle feelings you may experience if I can't see you well). 🖋️

- In my office, I have a safe, private space with a door that locks and generally I have the ability to control the environment to create a cozily safe working space, including tissues for tears and noses, and blankets in case you're cold or sad. I'm very sorry, I can't do that by phone or Zoom—we both have to do our part to try to create a home-away-from-home for your therapy sessions; or really, an office version which can allow me to support you emotionally through whatever technology works best for your sessions. Please gather whatever comfort objects you'd like to have to make your session more comfy and helpful. 😊

- Each time we meet by phone or Zoom 👁️, Please confirm that you feel safe, comfortable, and that you feel you have privacy to speak freely about whatever comes up for you. OR note if you do not have privacy in the session. That helps create a shared space for the work and allows awareness of any confidentiality issues specific to our session that day. 🙏

- Please make sure I have up-to-date emergency contact info for you, and I know your location (if you're in my office and have a

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health or emotional issue that requires outside assistance, I'm right there to help! Meeting by phone or Zoom, if you need help or we get disconnected and I'm not sure, it's important (and legally required!) that I know how to get you help where you are. That means a street address or intersection, city, state, and zip code). A backup phone number for your location is good if you have one.

- For couples that are meeting me together using Zoom, you'll need to be able to get into frame together, so you'll need a spot that allows that, and to set your Zoom camera setting to widescreen.

- If you are unexpectedly intruded upon 😬, please let me know and we will pause.

- If we're meeting at a time or you're in a place that may become or be dark, please use a light source with you other than your computer, so that I can see you!

- Please go the restroom before we begin our session! Also, consider having something to drink nearby, in case of coughing, dry mouth, etc.

Once again, I'm very sorry that over the last couple of years Coronavirus has transformed our world and our life environments; and in addition to COVID, many people are feeling deeply affected by the violence and suffering from aspects of life both near and far. Generations of abuse, repression, oppression, particularly for BIPOC and LGBTQIA people. Russia's power-grab in their invasion of the Ukraine and shutting of energy supplies for higher profits. Ongoing mass shootings here in the US, and around the world, many of them targeting children and marginalized people. These things are deeply affecting life around the globe, and as it continues to effect people and communities, please take care of yourself and those you love. I hope this note helps, even if just a little. I can help with feelings of being afraid, alone, stressed, sad, disoriented, overwhelmed, tightly wound, difficulty sleeping, and when things like this get overwhelming on top of other life stressors. Just get in touch, and we can see whether you just need a word or two to touch base, or we can

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schedule a session (even if that means an extra one, that's ok.). Please ask for help if you need it.

Before we meet, Please text me the address of the location where you'll be when we meet for your consultation, thanks!

Tara