



Psychology for Personal Development

Our Privacy Policy

Privacy of personal information is an important principle to CBT Psychology for Personal Development. We are committed to collecting, using and disclosing personal information responsibly and only to the extent necessary for the services we provide. We strive to be open and transparent regarding how we handle personal information. This document describes our privacy policies.

WHAT IS PERSONAL INFORMATION?

Personal information is information about an identifiable individual. Personal information includes information that relates to: an individual's *personal characteristics* (e.g., gender, age, home address or phone number); *health* (e.g., health history); or, *activities and views* (e.g., thoughts, emotions, etc).

Our organization, CBT Psychology for Personal Development, includes psychologists, therapists, administrative and support staff. We restrict their access to any personal information we hold as much as is reasonably possible. We have their assurance and commitment to follow our privacy and principles.

Like all psychologist and psychotherapists, we collect, use and disclose personal information in order to serve our clients. This includes, developing the psychological treatment individual plan, keeping track of treatment goals, documenting topics addressed in session and treatment progress, and engaging in supervision.

PROTECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION

We understand the importance of protecting personal information. For that reason, we have taken the following steps:

- Paper information is either under supervision or secured in a locked or restricted area.
- Passwords are used on computers and cell phones.
- Electronic information is transmitted either through a direct line or has identifiers removed or is password protected.
- Staff are trained to collect, use and disclose personal information only as necessary to fulfil their duties and in accordance with our privacy policy.

RETENTION AND DESTRUCTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

We need to retain personal information for some time to ensure that we can answer any questions you might have about the services provided and for our own accountability to external regulatory bodies. We do not want to keep personal information too long, in order to protect your privacy. We keep our client files according to our regulatory body's regulations. This is for about 10 years after the last contact with adult clients and for child clients, 10 years past the date at which they would turn 18 years of age. Our client and contact system is PHIPA compliant, which means that it protects your information according to the regulations or the Personal Health Information Protection Act. We destroy paper files containing personal information by shredding. We destroy electronic information by deleting it and, when the hardware is discarded, we ensure that the hard drive is physically destroyed.

YOU CAN LOOK AT YOUR INFORMATION

With only a few exceptions, you have the right to see what personal information we hold about you. Often all you have to do is ask. We can help you identify what records we might have about you. We will also try to help you understand any information you do not understand (e.g., short forms, technical language, etc.). We will need to confirm your identity, if we do not know you, before providing you with this access. We charge a fee for such requests.



If there is a problem, we may ask you to put your request in writing. If we cannot give you access, we will tell you within 30 days if at all possible and tell you the reason, as best we can, as to why we cannot give you access. If you believe there is a mistake in the information, you have the right to ask for it to be corrected. This applies to factual information and not to any professional opinions we may have formed. We may ask you to provide documentation that our files are wrong. Where we agree that we made a mistake, we will make the correction and, where appropriate, notify anyone to whom we sent this information. If we do not agree that we have made a mistake, we will agree to include in our file a brief statement from you on the point and, as appropriate, we will forward that statement to anyone else who received the earlier information.

DO YOU HAVE A CONCERN?

Our Information Officer, Dr. S. Galperin, can be reached at sgalperin@cbtpsychology.com or at 904-597-4404 to address any questions or concerns you might have. If you wish to make a formal complaint about our privacy practices, you may make it in writing to our Information Officer. She will acknowledge receipt of your complaint, ensure that it is investigated promptly and that you are provided with a formal written decision with reasons. If you have a concern about the professionalism or competence of our services or the mental or physical capacity of any of our professional staff we would ask you to discuss those concerns with us. If we cannot satisfy your concerns, you are entitled to complain to the College of Psychologists of Ontario, which is the regulatory body of Psychologists and Psychological Associates.