

## Client Step-by-Step Instructions for Online Counseling

**Please Note:** Online counseling is available only to **Georgia residents** (even though you can have a session when you are outside of Georgia so long as your primary residence is within the state). If you live in another state and believe **LifeSwitch** is your best option, please see **“Potential Clients who reside in Other States”** which appears at the end of this instruction set

1. I understand this is a big decision and you may have questions before you are ready to start online counseling. We offer a free phone consultation which usually lasts about 15 minutes. If you would like to do that you can reach out via the contact tab or send me an email to [latella.mike@gmail.com](mailto:latella.mike@gmail.com) with a couple of good times for me to call you back in the next 24 hours. I will generally try to call you within a few hours of your email but it could take longer depending on my schedule. If after our conversation you want to start the online counseling just pick up with step 2 below
2. When you are ready to get started, **please send me an email** to [latella.mike@gmail.com](mailto:latella.mike@gmail.com) and state that you are ready to begin online counseling. That will trigger two events:
  - a. *You will receive an email in short order from Thera-link. The email will be an **invitation to create an account** with Thera-link which is the first step in getting started. It is easy to do and your information is considered highly confidential and therefore protected from outside compromise*
  - b. **Additionally you will receive three forms from me that need to be filled out, signed and returned:**
    - i. **Informed Consent** (establishes our relationship, what is expected of you and what you can expect of me. We will spend 15 to 20 minutes in our first session reviewing this form.
    - ii. **HIPAA Rights** – your signature is needed to say you have received, read, and understand
    - iii. **New client information form.** This is a form that will give me all objective data like contact information and current situation as well as past issues of drug and alcohol use and other mental health challenges you may have experienced. I know this is highly confidential and sensitive information. No one will see it but you and me.
3. Once you have set up your account and returned the forms to me, you can **go to the Thera-link website and choose your appointment time.** The calendar will only offer you appointment times that are available, so pick the time that is convenient for you. You will be prompted to choose the type of appointment and for the initial session you will need to choose the **90 minute new client introduction session.** Prior to setting the appointment, Thera-link will prompt you to pay for the first session. You must pay for the first session prior to setting the appointment. You can find the fees for online counseling under the rates tab. There is no cost for using Thera-link and no other hidden fees. The only cost you pay is the session fee.
4. Once you complete the forms and set an appointment time, and prior to the session appointment **please make sure you are ready to go with your technology.** If your phone, Ipad, or computer/laptop is relatively new there shouldn't be anything to do other than going to the website and signing in. If your system is older then you may have to download the Thera-link app. Either way, check out the instructions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> PDF entitled **“Technical Set-Up”**, watch the three short videos on the webpage and if you have any questions just reach out and we will figure it out together.
5. Finally, once you are set up and we have completed the first session, setting up your next appointment will be as easy as signing in and finding a convenient time available on the calendar. Sign up, it blocks the time on the calendar, I get

notification, and you are all set. Just remember, you will need to pay prior to each session on Thera-link unless you have worked out another arrangement with me. All future sessions will be the “regular Session” so just make sure you select that as the appointment type

***Potential Clients who reside in Other States”***

If you live in another state, but feel strongly that LifeSwitch is the best option for you, please reach out and we can discuss. I have international certification which allows me reciprocity in most other states, but I still have to pay a fee to practice in that state. Usually it is \$100 to \$150. If you want to discuss just give me a call or email and maybe we can figure something out.