



Melissa R. Tower, MA, LLP, CPC
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Thank you for entrusting me with your care!

In preparation for our future session, here are some things you should know. I am now offering in person sessions as well as continuing virtual sessions. I prefer that you only attend in person sessions with me if you are feeling well and are not physically feeling ill in any way.

I am fully vaccinated and boosted and I will not be wearing a mask during in person sessions, unless you request me to do so. The CDC continues to request that if we plan to meet in person, the Covid-19 symptom questionnaire should be completed prior to every session. You can find this form at this link: <http://www.melissa-tower.com/clientforms.html#newclientreg> Most insurances are continuing to pay for telehealth services but I recommend that you verify with your insurance company directly if you have any concerns regarding payment.

If you are meeting with me in person then you will be meeting with me at the location of my personal residence: 3245 Riverwoods Dr. NE, Rockford, MI 49341. I do request that you respect the privacy of my home, property, and my family while meeting with me. My office is located in the rear space just behind my garage. You can park in my driveway or on the street in front of my house. Please park your car close to the garage and on one side of the driveway so that this will make it easier to park another car next to yours if needed.

You will find the entrance to the waiting room by following the boardwalk to the right of the house. Please be careful walking on the boardwalk as it can be slippery at times. Once in the waiting room please make sure the door is fully shut. I will be with you shortly. Please understand there will be times when someone will need to collect themselves before leaving. The same time will be afforded to you if needed. We will all work together to stay on time so everyone can maximize their session. You will be able to leave my office from a separate exit door in order to maintain privacy. Every measure has been taken with this new office to protect your privacy.

Please try to use the bathroom facilities prior to your arrival to in person sessions as I **do not** have a bathroom easily accessible for public use. You may use the bathroom in my home but please let me know if you need so that I can allot time to escort you.

I have a therapy dog or emotional support canine in training on site and may be in our sessions at times. Her name is **Breaga** (*Bray-gah*). She is a large, hypoallergenic St. Berdoodle (St. Bernard and Standard Poodle). **Please notify me if you are uncomfortable with having my therapy dog in training during your sessions, no reason necessary.**

As a new client, I hope you have had a chance to review my website to get to know a little more about me, my experience, services and what to expect. Also, please READ and complete the **New Client Registration Forms** at the following link on my website:

<http://www.melissa-tower.com/clientforms.html#newclientreg>

If you prefer the flexibility to meet with me virtually, always or even on occasion if your insurance permits; I request you also complete the **TeleHealth Consent Form** within the New Client Forms. The **Release of Information Form** is only for anyone else you wish for me to have permission to speak to regarding your care. Please do not fill this form out for your primary care physician as that release is within the New Client Registration Forms. It is also very helpful for me to know the level of your mood over the past two weeks along with your level of anxiety symptoms. This is best measured by completing the **BAI** (Beck



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Anxiety Inventory) and the **PHQ-9** rating scales. You will see the links to all of these forms and rating scales through the link above.

I have purchased the HIPPA compliant and secure version of Google Meet platform for my virtual sessions and I have been finding this to be most reliable. Virtual sessions are best when using a desktop or laptop computer, having a good internet connection, and **strict privacy**. You may use a smartphone or tablet device as well but you will need to download the Google Meet App to the device you plan to use. I email the meeting invitations the night before or the morning of our scheduled sessions, so please let me know prior to then if you plan to come to the meeting in person. If you wake up feeling ill, no worries, just email me and I will email you a link to meet virtually instead if you feel up to it.

My email address is the best way to reach me: melissa@melissa-tower.com. Please contact me by email should you need to reach me. I do check my emails often and try to respond as quickly as I can. If your email is quite lengthy then there may be a charge for my time reading and responding, please review my fees regarding frequent or lengthy emails within my website.

My email is encrypted on my end for your privacy but please note that most likely your email is not and may be viewable by others. I will respond to your email but I will do so very carefully and as discreetly as possible as far as how I respond. I do offer highly secure messaging, calling, and an additional virtual platform application called SPRUCE. This is specifically an APP called SPRUCE to be used on a smartphone or tablet device. I will need to send you a text to "invite" you to join SPRUCE. Feel free to let me know if you would like to correspond that way as well for additional security with the phone number you would like me to send you the invite notice and link.

If you need to speak with me, please call me through SPRUCE or my office phone: 616-344-5153. I usually am not able to answer the phone so please leave a message and I will return your call as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to all of this information! There is a lot here so do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

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