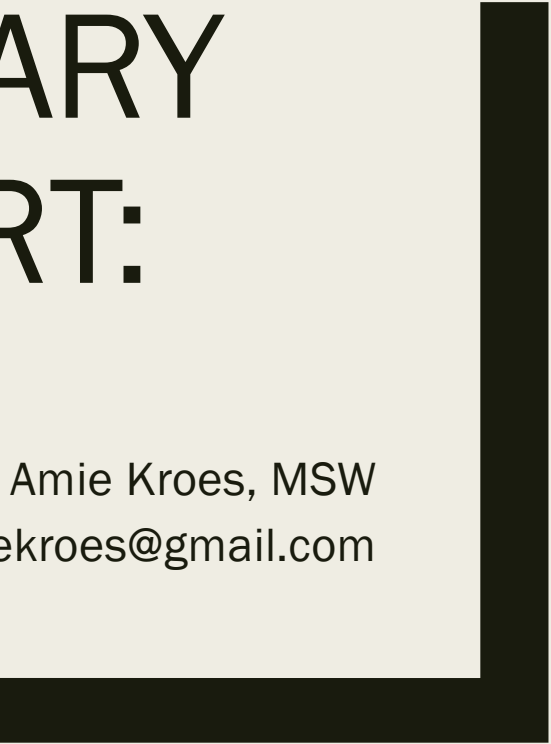




# SUPPLEMENTARY TEXT SUPPORT: GETTING STARTED

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# Agenda

- Why Supplementary Text support?
- Scope and Boundaries
  - *Screening*
  - *Creating and Maintaining Boundaries*
  - *Complex Emotions and Emergencies*
- Communicating Effectively
- Endings
- Examples
- Discussion

# Why Texting?

- Meeting a client 'where' they are
  - In 2014, research revealed that 55% of Canadians owned a smartphone. In 2016, ownership is at 76%. Meaning three out of four Canadians own a smartphone (*Catalyst Canada, 2016*).
  - According to marketing research firms, this is not just millennials.
  - Technological competence and comfort is growing across all age demographics
- Inclusivity – reducing barriers to service
- Extending services beyond 'the office'

# Scope and Boundaries: Screening

Things to consider when determining appropriateness for text support:

- Are they motivated?
- Are they comfortable with the technology?
  - *Benefit and/or risk*
- Do they have difficulty remembering appointments?
- Can they benefit from homework requiring check-ins?
- Have they had difficulty with boundaries in the past?
- Are they lonely and looking for a friend?

# Creating Boundaries

**Informed Consent** – create a contract with the client in advance so the purpose of the text support and the boundaries are very clear.

- Availability – what are the “open” hours?
- One way or two-way communication?
- Purpose of text support?
- Response time
- Anticipated response if a client violates an established boundary
- What to do in crisis
- Discontinuation – the service is a privilege, right to terminate if appropriate
- How to manage conflict or expectation differences
  - *“If at any point Claire (client) or Amie (counsellor) want to discuss how they feel about the supplementary text, and their expectations of the service, they will make a note about their feelings, and discuss any feedback at their next in person session.”*

# Maintaining Boundaries

- **Respond Quickly and Consistently:** We are modelling the maintenance of boundaries with a population group that often has difficulty doing this in their own life.
- **Reminder of the Agreement Established:** This is why the pre-work of negotiating boundaries is so important.
- **Be Empathetic:** You want them to know you care, but also, will assertively adhere to boundaries. When saying what you cannot do, also try to include what you CAN do.
- **Clarify your role and your boundaries:** be clear about the role of the counsellor and the role of the client. Easy to slip into “friend”.
- **Follow-up and Feedback:** Discuss the clients boundaries. If a client is regularly overstepping boundaries, it is likely that this is manifested in other contexts.

# Complex Emotions - Anger

People have a right to feel angry. Consider how you might respond if you were speaking in person.

- Normalize
- Externalize from the client
- Externalize from you
- Redirect and Ground
- Explore the emotion
- Be Assertive
- Offer options

# Responding to Emergencies











- Know your agency policies
- Use Applied Suicide Intervention Skills
  - Probe for Context
  - Ask directly about suicide
  - Ask about a plan
  - Ask about their reasons for dying
  - Ask about their reasons for living
  - Ask if they have felt this way or attempted suicide before
  - Scale their risk
  - Find Protective factors/internal resilience
  - Offer referral
  - Create a safety plan
- If you feel their risk level is too high or you have doubts that they will follow their safety plan, you have an obligation to break confidentiality and report this.



# Communicating Effectively

Netiquette: Etiquette while online. A type of online culture.

### Emoji's Explained

	Face with tears of joy		Loudly crying face
	Face screaming in fear		Grimacing Face
	Face with cold sweat/ nervous		Pouting/Angry Face
	Perservering or helpless face		Smirking/flirting/ smug Face
	Scared/Surprised face		Confused Face

# Communicating Effectively

## Abbreviations and acronyms

1. LOL

2. BRB

3. WTF

4. BM&Y

5. CTN

6. IDC

7. NVM

8. IDK

9. OIC

10. TMI

11. TTYL

12. NP

13. JK

14. POV

15. FML

16. LMK

17. SMH

18. IMHO

19. AFK

20. AFAIK

21. PFT

# The Therapeutic Relationship: Endings

- Most will happen naturally, at your direction
- You will find that with most clients, once a boundary has been set, and reinforced, they expect the conversations to be brief and full of purpose.
- Some people just want to talk. Use the same skills you do in an in-person session
  - *Validate difficulty in endings*
  - *Be specific and clear about the purpose of this style of communication*
  - *Be specific and clear about boundaries*
  - *Review crisis options (online or phone)*
  - *Review an achievable goal that they can do and do right now*
  - *Give referrals*



# Examples

# One-way Communication Options

- Amie (A): Hello, this is a reminder that you have an appointment with me on June 5th at 3pm.
- A: Hello, as discussed, this is a reminder to fill in your homework sheets
- A: Hello, your daily self care tip: take a 10 minute walk outside over your lunch break and notice three things you find interesting.

# Two-Way Communication

- A: Hi Stacey, it's been a week. Have you had a chance to think about your homework?
- Stacey (S): Yes, I have been rating my mood twice a day.
- A: How has that process been working for you?
- S: Sometimes I feel a little guilty when my rating isn't good
- S: Like I want to wait until later and hope my mood improves so it feels like I'm improving
- S: Is that silly?
- A: No, that isn't silly
- A: Sounds like the process is giving us lots to talk about next week though!
- S: Yes, its interesting what is coming up for me
- A: If you can, keep at it, and we will discuss what you find interesting next session.
- S: Okay, thanks!

# Maintaining Boundaries

\*previous conversation about homework\*

- S: Okay I can do that
- A: Great, I will see you next session
- S: Well, but I am still having the issue at work.
- S: I can't seem to keep it together and I think I might get fired
- A: That sounds like a really difficult spot, Stacey. I'm sorry to hear it! Let's come back to this next week.
- S: Next week?! But I might be unemployed and homeless by next week. I'm in a crisis, I need to talk about this NOW!
- A: Stacey, you are a very powerful, and strong woman. Remember some of the grounding exercises we discussed? You can do this until our next session.
- If you feel you need some assistance though, please feel free to call our crisis line 1-800-\*\*\*-\*\*\*\*

# Maintaining Boundaries – Complex Emotions

- S: I feel like you are blowing me off
- S: Like I don't matter at all to you
- A: Stacey, working with you is important to me, and I do not mean to give the impression that you do not matter
- S: Well you are. You clearly don't want to talk.
- A: Stacey, you are correct. I both care, but cannot continue this conversation. We agreed to talk about homework over text, and to talk about life in our sessions.
- S: But this is IMPORTANT!
- A: And I understand that. It is okay to be upset. I know you often feel let down by others in your life. We have a time scheduled next week.
- A: I want to be able to give you my undivided attention, which I can do then, but not now. If you are still unhappy next week, we can talk about those feelings then as well.
- S: \*stops responding\*



# Questions?

