

ZUR INSTITUTE

Innovative Resources and Online Continuing Education

Digital Ethics

Webinar

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www.ZurInstitute.com











Therapeutic Boundaries

- Gifts
- Touch
- Self disclosure
- Home office
- Fees & Bartering
- Dual/Multiple Relationships
- Time & length of sessions
- Out of Office Experiences (home visits)
- Proximity, Clothing & Language
- Digital Boundaries



Digital Boundaries

- Online self disclosure & Transparency
- Clients Googling therapists
- Therapists Googling clients
- Texting during sessions
- Communication between sessions via cell phone, e-mail, chats, Skype, etc.
- Social Networking with clients
- Telehealth, TeleMentalHealth, E-Therapy
- Digital harassment by clients

Boundary Violations

When therapists cross the line of decency, violate or exploit their clients, or intentionally harm them

Boundary Crossings

- Neutral, appropriate, ethical, benign or clinically effective Interventions

Boundary Crossings

- Appropriate self-disclosure
- Home visits
- Non-sexual, comforting touch
- Appropriate gifts
- Ethical bartering
- Escorting client to an important medical app.
- Adventure therapy—Out of Office Experiences
- Appropriate e-mails/texts between sessions
- Googling clients for safety reasons
- Clients as Fan's on Facebook Page

Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is the revelation of personal rather than professional Information from the therapist to the client



Types Of Self-Disclosure Transparency

- **Verbal vs. Non-Verbal**
- **Deliberate - Intentional**
- **In-Person - Online**
- **Unavoidable**
- **Accidental**
- **Result of Client' s Actions**

Self-Disclosure

- **Result of Therapists' Actions**
 - Intentional
 - Unintentional (office, Web, small communities)
- **Result of Clients' Actions**
 - Online search
 - Stalking
 - Gossip in the community

Unavoidable Self-Disclosure

- **Rural Communities**
- **Small ethnic, spiritual, LGBT, disabled communities**
- **Military bases**
- **Sports Psychology**
- **12 Step & Self Help Programs**
- **Organizational Development**
- **Psychiatric hospitals & Inpatient settings**
- **Online – On the Web**

Self-Disclosure Can Increase

- **Familiarity**
- **Trust**
- **Positive therapeutic alliance**
- **Essential to establish credibility in the digital age**

Therapists Can Expect:

- Modern-informed “consumers” to Google their therapists
 - Before, during and after therapy
- Clients to post evaluations on Yelp.com
- All your Web postings to stay online for ever!
- Privacy Settings on Facebook to be perfectly imperfect

Therapists' Transparency In the Digital Age

- Clients Googling Therapists
- Online Evaluations
www.Yelp.com, RateMDs.com
- Social Networking
Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter
- Licensing Boards Sites
- www.complaintsboard.com



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Resources

Books by Dr. Zur

[Boundaries in Therapy](#)

[Clinical Updates](#)

[Dual Relationships](#)

[HIPAA Toolkit](#)

[Private Practice Book](#)

[Online Marketing of
Private Practice](#)

Articles for Therapists

[Boundaries](#)

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[Touch - Gifts](#)

[Critique of Therapy](#)

A Personal Reflection On Boundries & Meaning

by Ofer Zur

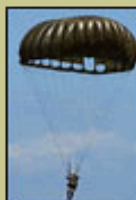


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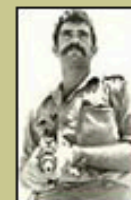
[Boundaries](#) -- [Kilimanjaro](#) -- [Pondering On Death](#) -- [Kilimanjaro Photos](#) -- [Alaska](#) -- [Malaysia](#) -- [China](#)

This page presents what my dear friend, Sam Keen, calls personal mythology. My personal sense of calling, that which gives me joy and provides meaning in my life, is often related to critical thinking and challenging commonly accepted truths and unquestioned beliefs. As this page portrays, my journey has led me to challenge, confront and face intellectual, spiritual, interpersonal, physical, emotional and other boundaries.

As a paratrooper in the Israeli Army, I experienced and challenged the boundaries of space and gravity.



As a lieutenant and combat officer, I have stood on the boundary of [life and death](#).



As an oceanographer and a deep-sea diver, I passed through the boundary between air and water.



After my military service I checked out the life of a sailor on a large ship. It was a fascinating anthropological journey into the life of sailors that landed me with a broken nose among other things.



As a young officer I served on a remote and small island in the Red Sea. Wondering about the boundaries between day and night, to the dismay of my soldiers, I experimented with reversing the daily routines, sleep during the day, eat breakfast at sunset, lunch at midnight and dinner at sunrise.



My time attending Hebrew University in Jerusalem, studying chemistry and oceanography, was one of my most profound and powerful spiritual awakenings, as Jerusalem embodied the convergence of three major spiritual traditions.



Watching the movie Motorcycle Diaries threw me deeper into an "existential funk" and further into questioning my calling. Upon reflection ([see sacrifice paper](#)) I came up with two responses: The first is to go (part time) back to my old stomping grounds in Africa and see how I can apply myself for the good of humanity. Secondly, to challenge the boundary of air and oxygen by daring to climb with my son, age 14, and our very close family friend Sarah, 24, the awesome 19,300 feet of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, also known as the "Roof of Africa."



Climbing Kilimanjaro with my older son has a special meaning - it is a metaphor for our lives as it involves:

- **Envisioning the goal:** Quite a high goal in this case. Kilimanjaro is the tallest free-standing mountain and the largest volcano in the world.
- **Understanding or constructing the meaning of the challenge and the metaphor or symbolism of the journey:** Kilimanjaro provides several metaphors and symbols for us to ponder. It was created by fire and is crowned with ice. Perhaps the most awesome metaphor for the perspective that the mountain provides is that one can see the curvature of the world from the top.
- **Evaluating the Goal:** Appraising its merit, meaning and how attainable it is.
- **Planning how to reach it:** Big steps, small steps, sequence and much more.
- **Considering different options and outcomes:** My son and I remind ourselves repeatedly that "Life is a series of plan Bs"
- **Training:** While physical training is obviously important, emotional, relational and spiritual aspects of the training are much more important.
- **Executing:** This phase involves doing our super best to reach the peak and, at the same time, surrendering and being present to how things will unfold.

Pondering on Kilimanjaro, Death and Preciousness of Life

Many people have asked me whether the Kilimanjaro trip, jumping from planes, scuba diving

The “Google Factor”

5 Levels/Types of Searches



- **Level 1:** Curiosity (‘Google light’)
- **Level 2:** Due diligence-Thorough search
- **Level 3:** Intrusive search to listserves
- **Level 4:** Deceitful:FB friend pseudo name
- **Level 5:** Illegal search - Cyber-stalking

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.The YouTube logo, featuring the word "You" in black and "Tube" in white inside a red rounded rectangle.

- Digital evidence increasingly plays a critical role in criminal law proceedings.
- Courts have allowed the introduction of material from Internet social networking profiles in criminal and civil cases.
- Youths have been prosecuted for violent behavior posted on video-sharing websites like YouTube.

From
Facebook
to . . .
Prison



Cyber Trail:

Consider anything you post online
as tattooed on your forehead:

-



Stay Informed:

- Google yourself regularly
- Use different combinations
 - Dr. Ofer Zur + Ofer Zur + Dr. Zur
 - Ofer Zur, Ph.D. + O. Zur + O. Zur, Ph.D.
- Sign up **right now** for “Google Alerts” at <http://www.google.com/alerts>

To Google or not to Google Our Clients?



??????

- Is it ethical?
- Do we need to tell clients?
- Is it ethical if it might save lives?
- Do we need an informed consent?
- Should we add a section to Office Policies?
- What is the standard of care?

To Google or not to Google Our Clients

- Suicidal client in coma
- Single woman working from a home office
- Home visit to an unknown neighbourhood
- Is a client delusional or Fortune-500 executive?
- More . . .



To Google or not to Google Our Clients?

It depends on the

- **Client**
- **Therapist**
- **Setting**
- **Therapy**
- **Relationships**



Sample of Informed Consent

At times Dr. xx might conduct a web search on a client before the beginning of therapy or during therapy. If you have concerns or questions regarding this practice, please discuss it with Dr. xx.

Source: 61 Clinical Forms:

<http://www.zurinstitute.com/forms.html>

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Generational Divide

Digital Natives

**Young Generations: Under 40
(Net Generation – Web Generation)**

Vs.

Digital Immigrants

Older Generation: 50+

Not All Digital Immigrants Were Created Equal

Types:

1. Avoiders
2. Minimalists
3. Eager Adopters
4. Innovators



Passive vs. Active

Older Generation vs. Younger Generation

- TV vs. 2nd life
- Britannica vs. Wikipedia
- Watching movies vs. Creating movies
- Viewing photos vs. Manipulating photos
- Traditional classrooms vs. Online Games
- Looking at photo albums vs. Creating albums

Generations are different:

- Communicate
 - Play
 - Socialize
 - Learn
 - Create
- * Work place
 - * Read
 - * Privacy
 - * Multitask - Hop
 - * Sense of Self

Phones or Texting During Sessions

Clients

Receiving & sending:

- Texts
- phone calls
- E-mails
- Clients watch Videos on Cell phones or Ipads during session



Clients Texting During Sessions

- Minimally disruptive
- Significantly disruptive (& rude)
- Can be 'telling' : Giving therapists additional perspective and a new understanding
- A different way to join clients

E-Mail & Therapy

- *Are E-mails considered psychotherapy?*
- *If I give my E-M must I check it often?*
- *HIPAA Compliance*
- *Encryption*
- *E-M signature?*
- *E-M & Tele-health*
- *Are E-M part of the clinical record?*



E-Mail in Therapy

- Clarify your own thoughts regarding e-mails
- Discuss with clients
- Office Policies on e-mails
- Notify client that e-mails are part of the clinical records
- E-mail includes an electronic signature
- If you are conducting tele-health, follow state laws, and relevant codes of ethics

Texting With Clients In Between Sessions

- Txting is vry effective way 2 talk w young clients
- Clarify your own thoughts regarding texting
- Agency/department policies
- Discuss with clients
- Office Policies on texts & cell phones
- Notify client that texts are part of the clinical records

Texting in Between Sessions

- Can be very effective
- Convenient
- Immediate
- Anytime – Any place
- Clients can view it repeatedly



Texting in Between Sessions

- Appointment reminder
- Rescheduling
- Regulate emotions
- Continuity of connection
- Info
- Much more . . .

Office Policies

E-MAILS, CELL PHONES, COMPUTERS AND FAXES: It is very important to know that computers and e-mail communication can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and hence can compromise the privacy and confidentiality of such communication. Additionally, Dr.xx's e-mails and data on his computers are *not* encrypted. It is always a possibility that faxes can be sent erroneously to the wrong address and computers, including laptops, may be stolen. Dr.xx's computer is equipped with a firewall, a virus protection and a password, and he backs up all confidential information from his computer on a regular basis. Please notify Dr. xx if you decide to avoid or limit, in any way, the use of e-mail, text, cell phones or e-faxes. If you communicate confidential or private information via e-mail, text, fax, etc, Dr. xx will assume that you have made an informed decision, will view it as your agreement to take the risk that such communication may be intercepted, and he will honor your desire to communicate on such matters via these methods. Please do not use e-mail, text, or faxes for emergencies. Due to computer or network problems, e-mails or e-faxes may not be deliverable, and Drxx may not check his e-mails, texts or faxes daily or weekly, when he travels.

The Skype Dilemma

Skype is free, easy to use, popular

But . . .

- **Is Skype Secure?**
- **What about Skype's encryption level?**
- **Is Skype HIPAA Compliant?**

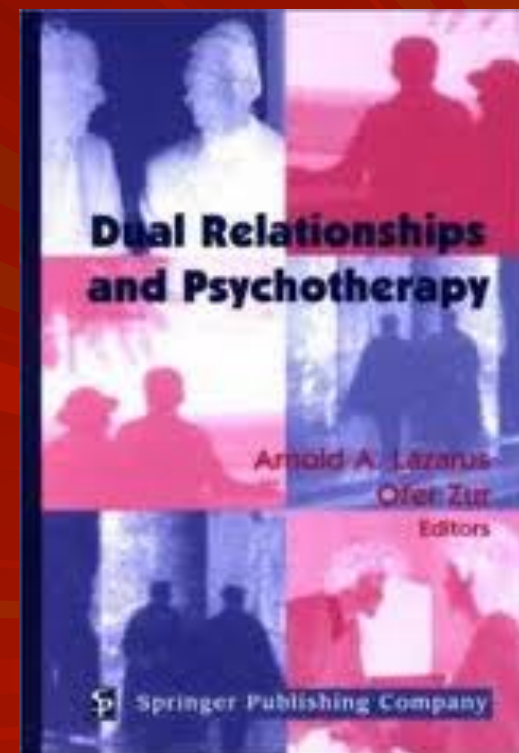


Facebook & Therapy



Like

CONFIDENTIAL



Is it ethical to have a client as a Facebook friend?

- **FB Page vs. Profile**
- **Confidentiality!!!**
- Who is the client?
- What is on your Facebook profile?
- Privacy settings
- Public access
- Social Media Policies - Office Policies
- Does it constitute Dual Relationships?

FB Profile vs. Page

facebook

Search

Ofer Zur Find Friends Home

Ofer Zur

Owner at Zur Institute Studied Psychology at Wright Institute Married Born on May 23, 1950 Add your hometown Add languages you know Edit Profile

People You May Know See All

Erica Nicole
6 mutual friends
Add Friend

Fiona Rose
7 mutual friends
Add Friend

Sponsored Story See All

Jeremy Baril likes Liquid Web Inc.

Liquid Web Inc
Like

Sponsored Create an Ad

facebook

Search

Ofer Zur Find Friends Home

Zur Institute, LLC

Education · Sonoma, California · Edit Info

Healthy Life Next Day Ethics Values

Wall Zur Institute, LLC · Everyone (Most Recent)

Share: Status Photo Link Video Question

Write something...

Zur Institute, LLC

People from different cultures touch more or less, depending on the culture. On average, friends in Puerto Rico will touch 180 times in an hour. Friends in England do not (on average) touch at all. In the United States, friends will touch twice in an hour. It's quite possible that warming up a bit - being more open to nonsexual touch - can help with connection and comfort.

428 Impressions · 1.40% Feedback

Like · Comment · Share · Yesterday at 9:24am

4 people like this.

View 1 share

Carey Caccavo Wheaton And Italians?
Yesterday at 9:32am · Like

Zur Institute, LLC Probably very high!
Yesterday at 11:11am · Like

Write a comment...

Write a recommendation...

1 Chat (Offline)

Clients as Facebook Friends?

It depends on the **Context:**

- What is on the FB
- Client
- Therapist
- Setting
- Therapy
- Relationships



What kind of dual or multiple relationships are being established when a therapist accepts a FB friend request from a client?

Sample of Informed Consent

SOCIAL NETWORKING:

Dr. xx does not friend requests from current or former clients on social networking sites, such as Facebook due to the fact that these sites can compromise clients' confidentiality and privacy. For the same reason. Dr. xx requests that clients do not communicate with him via any interactive or social networking web sites.

Source: Clinical Forms

www.zurinstitute.com/forms.html

Consider Adding to your Biographical Questionnaire

ESTIMATE HOW MANY HOURS A DAY YOU SPEND ONLINE:

Facebook _____ YouTube _____ Gaming _____

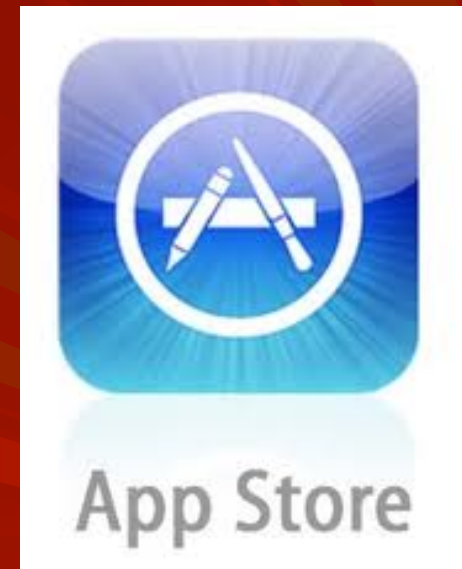
Browsing _____ Texting _____

Work/School _____ Other _____

**DO YOU FEEL YOUR TECHNOLOGY USE IS
BALANCED AND HEALTHY, OR COULD IT BE
IMPROVED? Please explain:**

Mental Health Apps: Like A 'Therapist In Your Pocket'

- Stress reduction. Progressive Relaxation
- Eating disorders
- Cognitive Therapy & CBT
- Meds
- Mood or Sleep Logs/Charts
- 'Mobile mood diary'
- Homework
- Thousands more . . .



Digital Harassment

- Clients put multiple Internet negative posting on their therapists
- Clients post their online comments under many pseudo names on many different sites
- Clients post special web sites, detailing their negative evaluation

Negative Online Evaluations:

- Do NOT impulsively protest!!!
- Consult with experts
- Try to resolve it amicably
- Contact person, web-maser, or server
- Bury unsavory content with new publications
- Contact www.reputation.com Electronic Frontier Foundation at www.eff.org
- Carefully evaluate your options
- . . . Surrender

Ethical Issues in Telehealth:

- Use of Skype in Telehealth: Is Skype HIPAA compliant
- Across states' lines
- Confidentiality
- Cloud storage
- Record Keeping
- Competence & Scope of practice
- Emergencies
- Informed Consent

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