

# Position Statement (via AI): Use of AI in Marital and Family Therapy

As marital and family therapists (MFTs), we are committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in our practice, ensuring that the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in therapy enhances the therapeutic process while safeguarding the dignity, autonomy, and well-being of our clients. This position statement outlines key ethical considerations for the responsible use of AI in clinical settings.

## 1. Informed Consent and Transparency

Therapists must fully disclose the use of AI tools in therapy, ensuring that clients understand how these tools will be integrated into their treatment. This includes:

- Explaining how AI functions in the therapeutic context and the role it will play.
- Clarifying what types of data will be collected, how it will be used, and who will have access.
- Emphasizing that AI is intended to **support** therapeutic outcomes, not replace human interaction.
- Obtaining **informed consent** from clients before using AI tools, with clear communication of their right to opt-out and use traditional therapy methods.

## 2. Data Privacy, Security, and Ethical Use

Safeguarding client information is paramount. Therapists must ensure that:

- Client data is stored securely using encryption, anonymization, and other protective measures.
- AI tools comply with relevant privacy laws and standards (e.g., HIPAA) to protect sensitive information. Must have BAA signed to be HIPAA compliant.
- Clients are informed about how their data will be processed and reassured that confidentiality remains a priority.

## 3. Mitigating Bias and Ensuring Fairness

AI algorithms can unintentionally perpetuate biases, leading to inequitable outcomes. Therapists have an ethical responsibility to:

- Be aware of potential biases in the AI tools they use.
- Select tools that have been rigorously tested for fairness across diverse populations.
- Regularly evaluate and monitor AI outputs to ensure they align with the values of inclusivity and cultural competence.

## 4. Therapist Competence and Responsibility

Therapists are ethically obligated to stay informed about the AI tools they incorporate into their practice. This includes:

- Understanding the limitations, risks, and benefits of these tools.
- Engaging in ongoing education and professional development to ensure competent use of AI.
- Being vigilant in maintaining the therapeutic alliance, ensuring that the use of AI enhances—rather than detracts from—the relational nature of therapy.

## 5. Client Empowerment and Right to Opt-Out

Clients must retain control over their therapeutic experience. Therapists must:

- Respect clients' autonomy by offering them the option to opt-out of AI-based interventions.
- Provide adequate alternatives to AI-supported therapy, ensuring clients feel safe and respected regardless of their choice.

## 6. The Role of Mental Health Boards in Public Education and Oversight

Professional boards have a duty to provide oversight and public education on the use of AI in therapy. Boards should:

- Develop educational materials to help the public understand the benefits, risks, and ethical implications of AI in mental health care.
- Monitor the use of AI tools in clinical settings, advocating for high ethical standards and transparency.
- Engage with the public to address concerns, promote informed decision-making, and provide avenues for complaints.

## **Conclusion**

The integration of AI in marital and family therapy offers new possibilities for enhancing care, but it must be done with caution, transparency, and an unwavering commitment to ethical practice. As therapists, we embrace innovation while prioritizing the human connection that lies at the heart of our work. We remain committed to ensuring that AI serves as a tool to support—not replace—the therapeutic relationship, empowering clients on their journey toward well-being.