

ZIMMERMAN
THERAPY GROUP

June 22, 2020

At Zimmerman Therapy Group, our clients and employee's health is of utmost importance to us. We are doing our part to help prevent the spread of illnesses such as influenza and COVID-19. Below we have answered some commonly asked questions about our response to COVID-19. We are honored to have the privilege to work with you and value your support during this time.

Sincerely yours,
Stephanie Zimmerman and all the staff at Zimmerman Therapy Group

COVID-19 FAQs

Are you an essential business?

Yes! Mental health is classified as an essential business on both the local and the state level.

Are you still open?

Yes we are! We have converted many clients to teletherapy which are video or phone sessions based on the client's preferences. Yet we continue to see some clients in person at our Old Town Clovis office.

Why have you chosen to still see clients in person?

We have chosen to keep our doors open to in-person clients because we recognize that there are some clients whose treatment would be compromised if we did not allow them to continue to be seen in person. For some children, people who experience certain types of anxiety, who may have a harder time remaining focused or who experience dissociation teletherapy may not be a viable or optimal option. We also recognize there are some who don't have adequate access to technology or a confidential space. For all of these reasons listed above we have felt it important to do what we can to keep our doors open.

What measures are you taking to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the office?

We have taken several steps to do what is required (and beyond) at this time. These steps include:

1. We ask that if you or your child are experiencing **ANY** symptoms, have come in contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or who have come in contact with anyone who is currently preventatively quarantining and have an upcoming appointment, we respectfully ask that you stay home and elect to have your appointment via our new telehealth option.
2. We have required that all clients who elect to continue services in person sign our "Continuation of services in person" waiver AND "Face Mask Mandate".
3. All in person clients will be asked a series of questions in order to prescreen you before your appointment.
4. We only have 4 therapy offices at our Old Town Clovis location so including staff we have kept our total number of people in the office at one time to remain under 10 including therapists.
5. We have strongly encouraged many of our clients to move to telehealth in order to decrease our client numbers in the office.
6. We have removed all non-essential items from our waiting room and therapy rooms.
7. We have hand sanitizer available to clients upon arrival and in all therapy rooms.
8. We routinely sanitize frequently used items in our waiting room and therapy rooms, including door handles and bathroom keys.
9. As a staff we are upholding ourselves to these same standards.
10. We are constantly reevaluating our COVID-19 policies and will continue to update clients should any further protective measures be implemented.
11. We ask that all non-client family members be left at home to ensure that only the client (and 1 parent if the client is a minor) enter the office.
12. If we are notified that one of our staff or clients has contracted COVID-19 we will notify all staff and clients that could have had contact with that person or received treatment within our practice on that day or any day after that. At that time the entire practice will move to teletherapy until the office can be professionally deep cleaned.
13. We recommend that you a) check your temperature prior to coming to your appointment and b) wash your hands or use hand sanitizer prior to entering the office.

Am I required to wear a mask in the office or in my session?

Per the new face mask mandate from Governor Newsom, *we are now requiring face masks to be worn by all staff and clients over the age of 2 yrs old until further notice. It will be your responsibility to provide your own face mask.* Our office will have a limited supply available for anyone who forgets to bring theirs or can not otherwise obtain a face mask. We appreciate your cooperation with this new regulation. Your cooperation helps protect our group practice which helps us to be able to keep providing treatment to you. If you are unable to comply with the face mask regulation, you have the option to start teletherapy with your therapist. If you have further questions about how this applies to children, and exceptions for certain treatments/cases, please feel free to ask your therapist or admin team member.

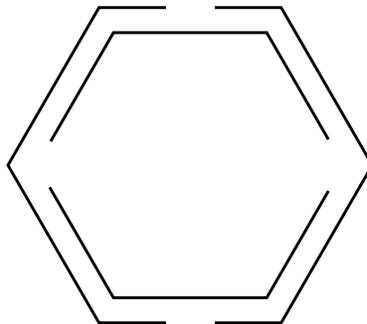
Why should I start therapy in the midst of a pandemic? Wouldn't it be better to just wait till this calms down?

While we can sympathize with the concern we would say what better time than to start than now. Most people have extra time on their hands which is a major reason why people put off starting therapy. We don't know when this will be "over" or even if "over" will be a clear cut date or rather a slow re-entry to life as normal. Either way, waiting for that day may be longer than anticipated and we would rather you have the coping skills and strategies to quarantine well!

In addition, we have seen a trend of clients who have come in because COVID-19 has triggered feelings of previous experiences whether that be of isolation, of an experience or feeling of being trapped, of helplessness or an experience of lack of control. COVID-19 has given us a collective opportunity to heal from previous hurts and traumas. And our staff of trained EMDR therapists are ready to help you find the freedom from those past wounds that you may have never imagined could be possible.

What are my options if I want to start therapy but don't want to come in person?

We completely understand your concern and respect your decision, and so for your convenience we have made teletherapy (video or phone sessions) available for all of our clients. It is as simple as clicking on the link provided to you via email/text and you will automatically be directed to the video platform. You will be able to access this platform from your phone or your computer. You will also be receiving in your client portal a telehealth consent form and a telehealth emergency form which allow us to stay compliant. If you elect to utilize our telehealth option, we kindly ask that you sign these forms as soon as possible to ensure a smooth process. We are asking that all children under 6yrs old be accompanied by a parent during their telehealth session. For more information on Telehealth, please feel free to check out our FAQs section on the "About" page of our website.



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