



## TECHNOLOGY GUIDE

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Welcome to Telepresence! We think you will find this a rewarding and convenient way to obtain mental health care.

Many people are relieved to learn that no experience or technical expertise is necessary to attend sessions via videoconference. All you need is broadband internet access (DSL or cable), a computer, and a webcam to access our services. You can even use your smartphone over Wifi, if you prefer.

We offer a secure, private, easy-to-use videoconferencing solution called Zoom. The program works over the internet, so it is compatible with any kind of computer, anywhere with internet access, even at work or behind a firewall.

Here's how it works: We send you an email with a meeting invitation into your own private online "room." You simply click on the link within the email, and the program launches itself. It works seamlessly without any technical knowledge needed. This solution is not only easy, it is fully HIPAA-compliant.

Some patients prefer to use their favorite unsecured teleconferencing program. Please refer to our telepresence consent form for a discussion of the risks and benefits of utilizing unsecured programs for your sessions. We at SynerGenius are happy to utilize the communication solution that works for you. Please inform us at least 48 hours prior to your appointment if you would prefer a program other than Zoom, so that we can make the appropriate system available at the time of your visit.

We are happy to assist with technical questions on the Zoom platform to ensure that your first session is easy and hassle-free. However, if you have questions related to installation or setup of your webcam, you will need to utilize the technical support available from your webcam or computer manufacturer. If we are unable to connect due to technical problems, your appointment will be conducted via telephone at our usual hourly rate.

### *Zoom Tips*

- Prior to our session, you will be sent an email containing a link. This link will take you directly to the session.
- Since Zoom installs itself to your computer automatically, all you need to do is click your meeting link a few minutes prior to your scheduled appointment to allow time for the installation to complete.
- When our session launches, the program will create a pop-up to ask you if you'd like to use Join by Computer or Join by Phone. Computer is usually the default. Simply click Join Audio (after checking that Computer is highlighted) to use the microphone built into your webcam, which is usually the easiest way.
- If your webcam is new to you, or if you just want to test this out before your appointment, you can click the meeting link anytime you like prior to your meeting to see how Zoom works on your system and confirm that your webcam is correctly installed.
- If you prefer to attend your session via smartphone, Zoom supports either iOS or Android devices. Simply search for the "Zoom Cloud Meetings" app in your App Store. Please keep in mind that videoconferencing uses a lot of data, so we highly recommend you connect to a wireless internet connection (WiFi) rather than using your cellular data allowance for sessions.

### *Basic Videoconferencing Tips*

- Internet: Videoconferencing requires a fast and steady internet connection. The best connections are wired (ethernet) connections, followed by wifi, followed by your wireless cell network. Please note: Videoconferencing can easily use 4GB of data in an hour, so I strongly recommend you utilize Wifi or wired internet for sessions, to avoid using up too much of your cell phone data allowance during our session.
- Setting: Choose a private setting where no one else can see or hear us. Ideally, you should be in a well-lit room, either at home or work, with the door closed. You could also connect from your parked car or a shaded outdoor area with little traffic, but, again, you will need to be aware of available Wifi and your data usage in such locations. Choose a time and place where you won't be interrupted. Turn off the TV and close any programs or apps on your device that may distract you.

If this is your first time videoconferencing, or if technology makes you a bit nervous, you can just skip this page! 😊

Videoconferencing doesn't have to be complicated. Following the instructions on the prior pages will result in an easy, problem-free meeting experience for the vast majority of patients - even if you ignore all of these "finer points".

### *Advanced Videoconferencing Tips*

Spending a few minutes to set up and test your videoconference equipment will help ensure the best results during our appointments. Here are some pointers:

- **Lighting:** Most webcams will adjust lighting automatically so that we can see each other well. Lighting from the front or side helps me see you better. If the light is behind you, you will appear as a silhouette, and it will be harder for me to see your expression. If you are outdoors on a sunny day, try to connect from the shade, as bright sunlight may wash out the picture.
- **Sound:** The built-in microphone on your webcam or smartphone is usually sufficient for our sessions. Try to stay 1-2 feet from your microphone and speak directly towards it during our sessions, to make sure the microphone picks up your speech. Some people like to use a headset with a built-in microphone such as you would use to talk or listen to music on your cell phone. They are available at the pharmacy or electronics stores for about \$20. This will help you hear me better and prevents others from overhearing what I say to you. It can also help me hear you better.
- **Position:** To obtain the best results with your video camera, place your device on a steady, level surface such as a desk. If you need to hold your camera in your hand, try to hold it steady and stay in one position. Keeping the camera pointed at your face around eye level, around 1-2 feet from your face, will make sure I can see your entire face.
  - In some cases I may need to see your entire body while sitting, standing or walking (for example, to evaluate gait or tremors). We may need to find a way to position the camera so that I can see you from head to toe, but we can figure that out during your session.

Welcome to the future of mental health care, and thank you for choosing SynerGenius Telepresence!