



Safety Considerations in Online Therapy

In 2018 [Tim Berners-Lee](#), the person credited with 'inventing the internet', gave an interview to the UK-based newspaper The Guardian, outlining what he described as:

'the destructive effects of abuse and discrimination, political manipulation, and other threats that plague the online world.'

It is a sad fact that the internet can be a dangerous place for the ill-informed and the naive.

Those who practice online therapy need to be aware of how to keep themselves and their clients safe from both technological and physical perspectives.

Technological safety considerations include:

- Making sure you use a secure email platform
- Choosing secure video software
- Securing notes in a password-protected file, computer or hard drive
- Making sure you, the practitioner, are in a private environment that cannot be overheard by family or neighbours when you are working online with clients

In terms of client safety, therapists need to consider the following:

- Is the client in a safe environment when therapy takes place?
- Could the client be in any danger if an abusive partner overheard the session?
- Make sure that the therapist has the emergency contact details of the client in case they fall ill during a session.

Practitioner self-care is also essential. Consider:

- How long one sits in front of the computer screen
- If working on the phone, make sure that the speaker volume is at a level that does not damage hearing.
- Be sure to take breaks between clients and move around for exercise.

Sources:

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/nov/05/tim-berners-lee-launches-campaign-to-save-the-web-from-abuse>

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