

Social Media Policy

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Social media is a relatively new area for complementary therapy, and this policy outlines my commitments regarding my interactions with clients and colleagues online and, in particular on facebook. Other healthcare practitioners may conduct their professional relationships differently, both online and offline, and I respect others' practices and preferences.

I welcome any comments, feedback or questions on this policy within sessions, or by email: contact@violasampson.com

Confidentiality and communication online

1. **I do not share information from my clinical practice outside of my professional supervision or collaboration with another healthcare professional at the client's request.** However, I may occasionally include clinical material in professional articles (printed or online) or in presentations and workshops, and only if all identifying information is removed or changed to protect confidentiality. I always ask permission to include a client's case information in any professional publication or presentation, including my website: www.violasampson.com. Clients are entitled to share any information about my craniosacral practice and their experiences of it, in any public or private setting, as they wish. Some clients are very private about their craniosacral therapy, while others like to share their experiences widely in blogs, articles or conversations online or offline. I respect their preferences equally.
2. **Any communication relevant to a therapeutic relationship is best made face-to-face**, or occasionally by phone, text, letter or a brief email exchange, and so I do not commit to seeing or responding to communications anywhere else, online or offline. If needed, any interactions online can be discussed fully in the session time – like any other interaction between sessions.

Facebook profiles

3. **I have two facebook profiles:** one for close friends and family, and one for my professional network within craniosacral therapy, natural healthcare and ecopsychology. I do not make public posts from either of these profiles and do not communicate to subscribers to either of these profiles.
4. **I do not accept, or invite, past or current clients as Friends to my facebook profiles** – one reason for this is that while clients can choose what they share with me in our sessions, they don't have full control over what appears in the newsfeeds of their facebook Friends.
5. **I will never access a past or current client's facebook profile**, regardless of their privacy settings, except in the very rare circumstances when I have good reason to be concerned for their safety or of another person's safety, and think that their status updates may provide me with important information. I will always let the client know in their next session if I have done so, and check any information back with them then.
6. **I encourage clients to take their privacy as seriously as I do their confidentiality.** If a client is concerned that their personal facebook comments may be appearing in my newsfeed, or mine on theirs (this may happen if we have mutual Friends and either of us comment on their posts) then I encourage discussing this with me in a session – in much the same way as we would if we found ourselves in similar social settings – so that we can find a way to maintain our social lives that feels comfortable and is supportive of our therapeutic work.

Facebook Pages

I have a facebook Page for my craniosacral practice at www.facebook.com/CraniosacralLondon.

7. **The purpose of this Page is to share ideas and information related to my craniosacral practice**, and to craniosacral therapy and natural healthcare more widely. I hope it will provide a space for open discussion and comment, as well as enable people to share their experiences of this lesser known therapy and its benefits. I have also established this Page to profile my craniosacral practice in a transparent way that enables clients and potential clients, as well as referring practitioners, to get a sense of my approach, perhaps more broadly than is possible in session, and in a similar way to word-of-mouth within their networks. Finally, it is part of a number of linked practitioner Pages that may facilitate people finding practitioners in their area and finding out more about craniosacral therapy from a diversity of therapists.
8. **Any facebook user can subscribe to this Page** (through clicking the 'Like' button) or choose to access it directly in their own time. Subscribers include colleagues, primarily other craniosacral therapists or healthcare practitioners (both within and outside of my referral network), current or past clients. As this Page is intended only for those interested in following posts related to my professional practice, none of the subscribers are personal friends or family.
9. **It is not possible for other facebook users to access the full list of subscribers**, although, they will be able to see which of their Friends 'Like' the Page. Depending on the subscriber's privacy settings, the fact that they have 'Liked' a Page may appear on their profile, timeline or newsfeed. 'Liking' my page does not give me access to the subscriber's personal facebook profile (as being a Friend does).
10. **'Likes' are not endorsements of my practice**; they are simply a way for facebook users to subscribe to my posts.
11. **My Page is linked (through 'Likes') to other practitioner Pages and relevant Pages.** Unless I have written a recommendation on their Page, this should not be taken as my professional endorsement of their practice or product. I encourage people to ask me directly if they are interested in my opinion of the professional services of any Pages I have linked to.
12. **Neither the recommendations box on my Page nor the 'Like' button are a request for testimonials.** I am bound by the Code of Ethics of the Craniosacral Therapy Association, that specifies that I do not solicit testimonials from clients. Any recommendations or testimonials on my Page or published elsewhere have been independently volunteered.
13. **All posts to my Page are public**, and so may appear in subscribers' newsfeeds and the newsfeeds of the Friends of the person who posted.
14. **To respect client confidentiality, I will never identify a client on my facebook Page, although they are welcome to do so themselves.**
15. **I will respond to all posts to my Page in a professional manner, and respectful of client confidentiality**, in a way that is suited to a public setting – similar to conversations in the reception area or shop floor of the Healthy Living Centre where I practice. I do not check my facebook Page every day, but will acknowledge posts as soon as I can.
16. **In the interests of open discussion and sharing, I have chosen to allow posts from other facebook users to appear straightaway, without my need for approval. I will not delete negative feedback, but I will remove all posts that are impolite or abusive in content or tone.** I will delete all advertising, recommendations or promotional posts, unless I have given permission for them to be posted. I will also remove posts if I feel concerned they may be detrimental to anyone's privacy or safety, or if the posts don't fit broadly within the defined purpose of this Page (see point 7).

Other online settings

17. **I occasionally engage in conversation in the comment threads of relevant articles or in online discussion forums.** If I respond to any interactions with past or current clients in these settings, the tone will be formal, in keeping with my other professional interactions, so as not to distinguish them as a client, and I will refrain from any discussion relevant to the therapeutic process or requiring clinical advice or detail, as this is most useful during sessions.
18. **I do not follow personal or professional blogs, twitter feeds and RSS feeds, or subscribe to other online postings or email newsletters of past or current clients,** with the occasional exceptions of those that directly relate professionally to my craniosacral practice when we have established a professional relationship alongside or subsequent to the therapeutic relationship (for example, where a client is also a healthcare practitioner within my professional network).
19. **I have a LinkedIn profile for my various professional networks and I also have profiles on other professional networking sites.** I do not associate directly with past or current clients on networking sites (eg establish 'connections' on LinkedIn) as this may give me information that a client may prefer to remain private.
20. **I will never search for a client's name online, except in the very rare circumstances where I have good reason to be concerned for their safety, or the safety of others,** and have good reason to think I may find information that could be helpful. If so, I will respect the client's privacy, and check the accuracy of any information I find with them at their next session.
21. **Like many people, there are various places my name is referenced online, and with the exception of my own website and articles I have published, I cannot guarantee these are part of accurate or current information.** Some information may be personal while other information refers to my professional life. This information is public (whether through my own choice or not) and I am happy to discuss a client's responses to any online references to my name, during a session, or if appropriate, through a brief email exchange.

Viola Sampson is a craniosacral therapist practicing in North London. As a registered practitioner, she is bound by the Code of Ethics of the Craniosacral Therapy Association and committed to continued professional development, including professional supervision with an accredited supervisor.

www.violasampson.com