

Dr. Michael Levittan, Expert Psychotherapist, Discusses Some Essentials of Doing Online Therapy

LOS ANGELES, UNITED STATES, January 10, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Dr. Michael Levittan](#), an accomplished Psychotherapist, says virtual, or online therapy, has become increasingly popular as COVID has brought a multitude of changes to our world. According to Dr. Levittan, at the same time, there is an increased demand for therapy as the world has been beset by violence, conflicts, and controversies that have caused significantly greater anxiety and depression. Virtual therapy - phone and video - has not been around long enough to receive evidence-based assessments for efficacy and safety, Dr. Levittan adds.

"Virtual therapy is a good second choice to person-to-person therapy," informs Dr. Levittan. "It is especially effective when there is an already-established therapy relationship between patient and therapist. In that case, what is missing virtually - direct eye contact, and in-room, immediate interpretation of facial expressions and body language - can be readily imagined and supplemented by paying more attention to the tone and inflection of the voice."

Dr. Levittan says the medium, itself, must be processed by the therapist and patient when some form of virtual therapy is utilized. Hopefully, the patient can express feelings about using video or phone therapy, as well as the inevitable technological problems that arise. It is all "Grist for the Mill." If the patient has not given much conscious attention to the virtual medium, then a primary task for the therapist is to facilitate the process of bringing unconscious thoughts and feelings about the medium to conscious awareness. This is the very essence of deeper psychotherapy.

Therapists must attempt to make it comfortable and desirable to explore what it feels like to be doing therapy by video or phone, states Dr. Levittan. Specifically, it is a necessity to examine the



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deficiencies of doing virtual treatment, including the lack of physical proximity (co-presence). There is an intimacy to face-to-face interactions that is missing virtually, Dr. Levittan explicates. Even with video therapy, non-verbal communication, and eye contact are somewhat compromised. The interaction does not feel as personal. It is also worth researching whether the work of commuting to an office to do therapy indicates greater personal investment and a greater willingness to be open-minded to the therapy process. Lastly, the strangeness and uncomfortableness of doing telehealth mirrors the strangeness and uncomfortableness of our rapidly changing world that brought telehealth to such prominence in the first place.

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