

## STEPS TO PREPARE YOUR COMPUTER FOR A TELE-MENTAL HEALTH SESSION

Freedom's Hope Counseling, LLC, uses HIPAA compliant Microsoft 365 Teams for tele-mental health sessions.

### What to expect:

- You will receive a session invitation email
- Several minutes prior to the session, click on the session link in the email:  
**Join Microsoft Teams Meeting.**
- You may choose one of 3 options:
  - 1) Continue on this browser;
  - 2) Download a free windows app;
  - 3) If you already have Microsoft 365 Teams app downloaded, open the app.
- A small window will open at the top of the computer page. Click on “**Open Microsoft Teams.**”
- Click “**Join Now**”
- A therapist will accept you into the Teams session.

### ADDITIONAL STEPS TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE VIDEO LINK

1. **Quit out of all other non-therapy programs before the session.** Some important examples of programs to quit are:
  - **Skype.** This is a big offender. Even when you're not making a call with it, Skype may be using your Internet connection for its own needs. Make sure you've *quit* Skype — not just closed its window.
  - **Dropbox, Google Drive and other file synchronization/sharing services.** These use the Internet in the background all the time. It is part of their job.
  - **Cloud backup software.** It is best to shut them down for the duration of session. Remember to start them back up when you're done.
  - Close **web browser tabs or windows that you don't need.** Websites and web applications do a lot of Internet back-and-forth while you have them open.
  - Anything else you can find that's open!
2. **Either connect your computer to the WiFi router with a cable, or move *very* close to the WiFi router.**
3. **Make sure your antivirus program and system software updates aren't scheduled to run during the session.**
4. **Avoid cable internet**
5. **Backup connection** - A cell phone.

<https://personcenteredtech.com/courses/tmhpresenting/online-therapy-video-sessions-go-glitchy-tips/#>

## PREPARING YOURSELF FOR A TELE-MENTAL HEALTH SESSION

### **Find a comfortable, safe and private setting.**

Wear **comfortable clothing**. Solid pale colors are best for internet transmission. **Comfortable seating** will facilitate attention focused on the matter at hand.

**Private:** no one will walk in, no one can hear the conversation, and no one will interrupt you during a session.

**Lighting:** It is important that a therapist is able to see your facial expressions. Avoid backlighting such as a window behind your camera focus. Face the window if possible. Several small lamps in the room are also effective.

**Camera:** It is best to place the camera at eye level, in front of your face, and on a solid foundation to provide the best transmission. If using a phone, place the phone on the side for a vertical view. If the phone has a PopGrip, it can be easily propped on the outside of an empty coffee mug.

**Safety:** If your vehicle is the only private setting available, the car **must be in park (not driving)**, and the vehicle should **not** be in an isolated setting.