

Tips for Successful Telepsychology Sessions

Get ready: Before your first session, give yourself some time to review the emailed instructions for accessing my 'virtual waiting room'. If you're unsure, talk to our office; we can arrange for you to test out what to do before your actual appointment.

Prepare your device: Before your session starts, make sure your device is fully charged. Have your charger handy, as you may need to plug it in. Close all other browser windows or apps - this may be achieved by simply restarting your device. If you are using a smartphone, set it to 'do not disturb'.

Optimize your connection: You may have to ask others in your household to reduce using the internet while you are in session. Ideally a computer with wired ethernet connection is best, otherwise it's preferable to have a strong WiFi signal.

Improve the sound quality: Wear earphones, preferably noise-cancelling headphones, as it will be easier for you to hear with, reduce distracting noises around you, and increase the privacy of the call for you, as well as reduce possible echoing for me.

Optional extras: Get comfy with your favourite cuppa, have pen and paper handy to take notes, and perhaps a box of tissues within reach.

Telepsychology requirements: The platform we are using works best with Firefox, Chrome, or Safari. Most people have automatic updates on, but if you don't, please update to the latest version, and check that you have allowed access to your camera and microphone (in Settings - Apps - Permissions).

Ensure your privacy: Choose a private and quiet space where you will be able to speak freely. You may want to close windows, block heating vents that carry sound, or place a fan or radio as a noise screen outside your closed door; or you could choose to sit in your car. Let me know beforehand if there may be situations when you may not be able to speak freely, we could type in the 'chat' messaging function during those moments.

Enhance the video experience: Prop up your device to keep it steady, ideally on a higher surface, so we can sit comfortably face to face. Decent lighting helps us see each other clearly.

Don't worry if you have technical issues: Just keep in touch with our office via phone or email. This is a time of adjustment for everyone and we will try our best to sort things out.

Treat it just like a session in my office: Look into my eyes on the screen, rather than at the camera or your own face. If you are distracted by seeing yourself, cover that part of the screen with a sticky note.

With a little preparation, video sessions can feel just as personal as in-person sessions.

See you there.