**‘GEEK THERAPY’**A black and white logo with a flower

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VIDEO, ONLINE, & ROLE PLAYING GAMES

INFORMATION

Play and therapy have been used together in treatment for over 50 years. Gaming can be a useful therapeutic tool in treatment as it allows for rapport building and increasing individualization of the treatment plan. Video games, online games, and role-playing games have their specific benefits and risks. This document is designed to inform clients of those benefits and risks and consent to specific gameplay.

*“Geek therapy”* is an affinity-based approach that invites clients to explore their fandoms, passions, and interests within a therapeutic space (Keet Therapy, 2022a). These affinities can include video games, comic books/manga, movies, tv shows, tabletops and board games magic, and /or anime (Leyline Education, 2020). Granic et al. (2014) named the following domains of wellness that can be explored through video gaming:

1. **Cognitive**: promoting concentration and mental processes related to attention; faster and more accurate attention allocation, improved memory, higher spatial resolution in visual processing, problem-solving, critical thinking and planning skills and frustration tolerance can be goals explored through video games in therapy.
2. **Motivational**: cultivating a persistent and optimistic motivational style to be applied to work and educational contexts. Ability to assess a client’s cognitive processing through how they approach tasks within a video game e.g., resilience in the face of failure.
3. **Social**: prosocial skills can be acquired through gameplay that is specifically designed to reward effective cooperation, support and helping behaviors, in addition to leadership skills and responsibilities (i.e. role assignment, task delegation, crisis management, logistical planning, and how to share rewards with others); the game becomes a tool for mutual cooperation and sharing of internal dynamics.
4. **Cultural**: inviting clients to explore complex experiences and perspectives from around the world; exploring unfamiliar cultural environments and differing social contexts poses an opportunity to reflect on their own cultural models and expand upon their perspectives. The game can assist in promoting awareness of one’s role or identity at a given moment in life.
5. **Psychological**: emotional tolerance can be assessed and explored through the therapeutic use of video games; developing emotional regulation, activating emphatic processes, promoting emotional literacy and mood management skills through meaningful collaborative, cooperative and/or competitive play.
6. **Biological**: augmented reality games (such as Pokemon GO, Nintendo Wii Sports and Balance Board) can be useful to promote physical activity among those who are normally reluctant to engage, in addition, promote occupational and physical therapy goals.
7. **Spiritual/Meaningful**: video games can invite clients to explore a deeper sense of meaning whether that may be linked to themes on spirituality, ethics, and/or morals. Additional elements within meaningful gaming include players finding connection among characters and/or other players, resonating themes within the gaming narratives, and various forms of character identification.