



## Catholic Psychotherapy Association Social Media/Forum Policy

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The Catholic Psychotherapy Association (CPA) exists to support mental health practitioners by promoting the development of psychological theory and mental health practice, which encompasses a full understanding of the human person and society in communion with the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

In accordance with the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 19) we exist to support our members in their vocation to serve. Given our geographic distance, and in accordance with the Decree on the Means of Social Communication (*Inter Mirifica*), we recognize that the proper use of technology and media can be of great benefit to our members and to the Association's mission. As such, we have developed a series of social media and email forums to allow for charitable, fruitful, and uplifting support among our members.

It is important for our members to recognize that participation in the forums requires that the individual be in good standing and have membership dues paid in full or these privileges will be consequently removed. Involvement in these social media forums is a membership privilege subject to the goals and mission of the CPA.

The information shared in these networks is public in that there is no guarantee of privacy. This electronic access to CPA forums and networks applies even in limited-membership forums as we do not have a way to restrict forwarding or other subsequent use of any posting. As such, all members are strongly encouraged to use prudence in their participation. It is also important for our members to be aware that our tax-exempt status results in some limitations of what can be posted in these forums. As such, the CPA reserves full rights to remove or deny any postings.

This policy and the statements of etiquette apply to all CPA email groups, listserv, Google groups, and any other form of social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Hereafter, these will be collectively referred to as Forums.

### **Policy**

- Only those Forums created by the CPA are official Forums of the CPA. No other forums may be developed using the name of the CPA, its logo, or other identifier.
- All behavior on the Forums must be in full conformity of the Bylaws of the CPA.
- All Forums must be moderated and/or monitored by an administrator appointed by the CPA Board. Such administrator will have the authority to remove content and/or individuals who violate this policy from any Forum. Such a decision may be appealed directly to the CPA Board.
- All messages are to be charitable, civil and, professional in tone and nature. This is not to dispel academic and professional charitable disagreements, nor to eliminate friendly informality, which is also appropriate for a Forum, but to ensure that the tone is charitable as appropriate for a Catholic organization.
- Messages sent cannot go against the teaching of the Catholic Church; however, questions related to the reason or clarification of Church teaching are appropriate. This may include messages asking for

clarification or resources regarding a specific application of Church teaching. Moderators will address any questions or information that appear to be incongruent with sound Catholic teaching. The CPA does not officially endorse any opinions or resources shared in the Forums.

- Messages must be deemed to be in concert with the by-laws and mission of the CPA. Messages are prohibited that deviate from the mission of CPA. All shared ideas on this listserv are the personal and/or professional ideas of the individual sending the email and are in no way the opinion of, or endorsed by, the CPA.
- In accordance with our non-profit status, the Forums may not be used for political purposes, including the endorsement or criticism of political candidates and/or parties.
- While the CPA may use the Forums to make announcements related to the election of CPA officers, no particular member (or group of members) may use a Forum for campaign purposes.
- Commercial postings, postings promoting services, or any other posting meant to advance the business, financial, or other personal interests of any particular member or entity are reserved for a periodical bulletin provided for these purposes. The content of commercial or promotional material in the eNewsletter is reserved for the discretion of its editors and the Communications Committee Chair.
- Examples of allowed activities would be job postings and discussion of professional products, provided such discussion is not done as a way to promote the financial interest of any person or entity. Posting job openings is also appropriate.
- Postings should be for the good of the association and membership and shall never be used to directly, or indirectly, self-promote a particular member, ministry, or otherwise be used for personal gain. As previously mentioned, a periodical bulletin will be provided for these purposes.
- All messages sent must include a signature.
- Postings may not be used for any illegal activity including defamation, copyright infringement, or any other legally prohibited purpose.
- Confidentiality: The messages cannot, in any way, compromise client confidentiality. All possible identifying information regarding clients must be removed. Members should follow APA ethical guidelines related to client confidentiality.
- Due to anti-trust concerns, the Forum may not be used to discuss professional fees.
- If in doubt as to the content of a post, please contact the Moderator.

## **Etiquette**

**Reading Listserv Messages:** All members who have been added to the listserv by the moderator will receive messages sent to the main listserv address: [cpanetwork@googlegroups.com](mailto:cpanetwork@googlegroups.com). Messages will come directly to the email address you have given the moderator. You do not need to log into the Google site to view messages. To avoid having listserv messages end up in your spam box please add the above email address to your contact list.

**Sending Messages:** You will not receive a copy of messages that you send. Users must use care in sending messages to the entire Forum. Users should only send a message to the entire list when it contains information that pertains to most members. Administrative messages, such as “remove me from the list”, “please change my email address”, etc. should not go to the entire list. Instead, contact the Moderator.

**Replying to messages:** When replying to an Email Listserv/Google Group Forum message, the default setting is for the message to go to the entire list. Messages intended for only one CPA member (e.g., “thanks for the information” or “me too”) should not go to the entire list. Instead, these types of messages should be sent to the individual by deleting the group address and entering the individual’s email address. If you need technical assistance to do so, please contact the Moderator.

**Subject Lines:** The writer should ensure that the subject line of the message accurately describes the topic of the message. Generally speaking, when replying to a message, include the same subject line as the original. If you are talking about a new topic, please change the subject line to reflect the new message.

### **Violations of Listserv Policies and/or Etiquette**

If a message is deemed to be in violation of policy (or etiquette), the Forum Administrator, Moderator, and/or the Chair of the Communications Committee will notify the member to discuss the issue. If the email is posted, the Forum Administrator, Moderator, and/or the Chair of the Communications Committee reserves the right to remove such a post and/or to send a notice of the reason for the removal.

As stated in the policy, the Forum administrator/moderator will have the authority to remove individuals who violate this policy from any Forum. Such a decision may be appealed directly to the Chairperson of the CPA Communications Committee who may choose to take action or refer the matter to the CPA Board.

The Chair of the CPA Communications Committee may refer violations to the CPA Bylaws or Social Media/Forum Policy to the CPA Membership Committee for their determination in regards to member discipline, removal, or non-renewal of membership. Such decisions can always be appealed to the CPA Board who is the final authority on all membership decisions.

\*[1] Elements of this policy were adapted from the APA Social Media/Forum Policy found at: <https://www.apa.org/about/social-media-policy.aspx>