

International Association of Counseling Hypnotherapists

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IACH Ethics (Cont'd)

Ethics Overview

One way to think of a Code of Ethics is to use the metaphor of a lighthouse. A lighthouse doesn't draw you to it. A lighthouse warns of danger. It keeps you and your passengers (clients) safe from possible harm.

Ethics grow out of values. Ethics are actions that we take to reflect principles we value. A Code of Ethics is a visible reflection of group values that focus's on behaviours and is responsive to day to day conditions.

There are four distinct phases in the development of a Code of Ethics.

Clarification of group values

- Define the group
- Are constant
- Are internally derived
- Are concerned with virtue
- Are general
- Are stated morally
- Are judged good or bad
- Set priorities

Formulation of Ethics

- Translate values into actions
- Can change with a change in information
- Are determined by situations
- Are concerned with justice
- Are highly specific
- Are stated behaviorally
- Are judged present or absent
- Set boundaries for appropriate behaviour

Training

Training shall be incorporated into the membership process via the newsletter and on-line forums. This may include discussions and explanation of specific ethics and the group value it represents. The process allows for questions and opposing views and can includes sample ethical dilemmas designed to teach and test for understanding.

Follow-up

Training in ethics needs to be ongoing and forms one component of professional development. The IACH Ethics Committee shall develop a



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casebook for and with the membership.

Values

Kitchner (1986) presented five moral principles, or values, thought to be imperative to ethical decision making.

- Autonomy – an individual's right and freedoms of choice and action
- Non-maleficence – not willfully harming others
- Beneficence – focusing on and contributing to the welfare of the client
- Fidelity – honoring commitments
- Justice – fair treatment to include treating equals equally and unequals unequally

Based on these principles and input from members, IACH subscribes to the following values set forth as a set of beliefs we hold to be good, moral and socially responsive.

- We believe in the intrinsic worth of all people.
- We believe that all persons should have choices regarding types of therapies and healing modalities used by them and on their behalf.
- We believe that self-determination is a fundamental right.
- We believe that diversity and belonging are essential to a healthy society.
- We believe in the value of life-long learning.
- We believe that respect for self and others are an inherent right and responsibility.

Ethical Decision Making Process

Ethical codes are meant to educate members of the profession, provide accountability and improve the practice of ethical decision-making.

There are many different models that can assist Counseling Hypnotherapists, and others in the helping professions, resolve ethical dilemmas. The following are some suggestions and one such model.

Review the IACH code of ethics and other related codes.

Review counseling casebook's from your own region.

Speak with colleagues and mentors.

Know and understand legal implications and responsibilities.

If possible, take no action until you have had time to process and consult.

Ethical Decision Making Model

Identify that a problem is beginning or that one exists.

Gather as much information as possible.

Apply the IACH Code of Ethics and any pertinent local legislation.

Decide which values and ethics are involved.

Consider possible courses of action.

For each possible course list benefits, risks and probable outcomes.

Consult with colleagues if possible or the IACH Ethics Committee if necessary.

Choose a course of action.

Take action.

Evaluate and review the outcome.

IACH Code of Ethics

A. Professional Responsibility

A1. General Responsibility

- IACH members adhere to a high standard of professional competence and ethical behavior.

- IACH members seek out opportunities for continuing education.

- IACH members recognize the need for self care.

A2. Professional Competence

- IACH members limit their services to areas of professional competence based on their education and professional experience.

- IACH members adhere to requirements for provincial, state or national credentials.

- IACH members consult and refer to other professionals when the needs of the client are beyond the member's level of competence.

A3. Respect for Rights

- IACH members are respectful of legal, civic, and moral rights of others.

- IACH members conduct their practice in a way that safeguards the dignity and rights of their clients.

A4. Professional Qualifications

- IACH members present, claim, or imply only professional qualifications which they possess.

A5. Responsibility to Other Professionals

a) IACH members understand that ethical behaviour is an expectation of themselves and other professionals.

A6. Unethical Practice by Others

a) IACH members are obliged to take appropriate action when they become aware of possible unethical behaviour by another member.

A7. Harassment

a) IACH members do not engage in or condone any form of harassment.

A8. Respect for Diversity

a) IACH members respect and endeavor to understand the differences and diversity of their clients.

A9. Scope of Ethical Responsibilities

a) This code of Ethics applies to all forms of contact that a member may have while representing themselves as a Counseling Hypnotherapist. This includes teaching, public presentations or demonstrations and all forms communications media.

B. Counseling Relationships

B1. Responsibility

a) IACH members acknowledge that it is their responsibility to maintain the integrity of the counseling relationship.

B2. Confidentiality

a) Information that results from a counseling relationship and the nature of the relationship itself is to be kept confidential with the following exceptions:

(i) When a child may be in danger.

(ii) When there is evidence of a clear and imminent danger to the client or other(s).

(iii) When disclosure is required by law.

B3. Duty to Warn

a) If a member becomes aware of a clients intention to harm they are obliged to inform the threatened person of the threat.

B4. Client's Rights of Informed Consent

a) IACH members are responsible for informing and ensuring that clients understand and consent to all facets of the Counseling Hypnotherapy process. This includes techniques, potential risks and benefits, limitations, fees, record keeping and limits to confidentiality.

B5. Children

a) IACH members will only provide services to children who are able provide informed consent or with the consent of their legal guardian.

B6. Persons with Diminished Capacity

a) IACH members will only provide services to those able to provide informed consent.

B7. Records

a) IACH members maintain records consistent with legal, regulatory, agency or institutional requirements that apply to them.

b) IACH member's records provide adequate details to follow the sequence, nature and scope of their service.

c) All records, in any form, are to be kept confidential except when:

(1) The client provides written consent for sharing of records.

(2) When required by law.

d) IACH members understand that the client has the right to access their records.

B8. Dual and Conflicting Relationships

a) IACH members avoid dual relationships with clients.

b) When a dual relationship can not be avoided IACH members take appropriate action(s) to ensure no exploitation occurs.

B9. Consulting and Referral

a) IACH members may consult with other professionals regarding a client, however the identity of the client may only be revealed with the consent of the client.

B10. Relationships with Former Clients

a) IACH members are to ensure that if a relationship, of any kind, occurs after termination of the counseling relationship that any and all issues and relational dynamics that were present during the counseling relationship have been fully resolved and terminated.

b) IACH members need to be aware that they are responsible for these relationships and must exercise caution. Consultation is advised.

B11. Sexual Relationships

a) IACH members are to avoid any type of sexual relationship and or contact with a current client.

b) Sexual relationships with former clients are to be avoided for a period of 1 year. Consultation is strongly advised.

B12. Working with Family and/or Other Related Groups

a) When an IACH member provides services to family or related groups it is the members' responsibility to clarify their role and relationship with each individual. If a conflict arises the IACH member must re-clarify, adjust or withdraw services appropriately.

B13. Group Work

a) An IACH member may only undertake group work if it is within the scope of their training and experience.

b) The IACH member is responsible for the physical and emotional safety of all individuals in the group and therefore should screen potential group members.

B14. Multiple Helpers

a) If an IACH member discovers that a client is seeing another counselor or related professional the IACH member should discuss the relationship with the client.

b) It may be helpful to, with the clients consent, inform and discuss the issues with the other helper.

c) If the client is found to be seeing a physician, psychologist or psychiatrist for a related issue the IACH member must discuss this with the client and obtain consent to share with the other helper of the scope of treatments being received.

B15. Computer Use

a) The use of computer technology in the practice of counseling hypnotherapy does not lessen the IACH member's obligations to the client or to adherence to the Code of Ethics .

B16. Referrals

a) When an IACH member make a referral for any reason it is their responsibility to ensure the appropriateness of the referral.

B17. Termination

a) The counseling relationship is ideally terminated in consultation with the client. However there are many reasons to terminate such a relationship and in all cases it is the IACH members' responsibility to facilitate as much closure as is feasible, depending on the circumstances of the termination.

C. Research and Publication – Under Construction

C1. Researcher Responsibility

C2. Research Subjects' Welfare

C3. Voluntary Participation

C4. Informed Consent

C5. Confidentiality

C6. Further Research

C7. Research Sponsors

C8. Reporting Results

C9. Research Contributions

C10. Publication Submissions

D. Counseling Hypnotherapist Education, Training and Supervision

D1. General Responsibility

a) IACH members who teach counseling hypnotherapy or supervise counseling hypnotherapy students adhere to IACH ethics and standards of practice.

D2. Professional Competence

a) IACH members limit their teaching and supervision to within the boundaries of their own education and experience.

D3. Orientation to the IACH Code of Ethics

a) IACH members who teach or supervise are responsible for making their students and supervisees aware of the IACH Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

D4. Clarity in Roles and Responsibilities

a) IACH members who take on the role of supervising counseling hypnotherapy students are responsible for advising those students of their respective roles and obligations.

D5. Welfare of Clients

a) IACH members who supervise students take action to ensure the safety and welfare of the clients during the student's period of practice.

D6. Boundaries

a) IACH members, when in a teaching or supervisory role, will establish and maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries with students.

D7. Necessity to Inform

a) IACH member in a teaching or supervisory role are responsible for informing their students or supervisees of any circumstances that could result in a breach of confidentiality.

D8. Facilitating Professional Development and Self-Awareness

a) IACH members who teach, train or supervise work actively to facilitate a student's self-efficacy, self-development and self-awareness.

D9. Personal Professional Development

a) IACH members who are in teaching or supervisory roles are responsible for the safety and welfare of their students. Professional experiences that require self-disclosure or emotional engagement must be managed in a way that is consistent with the level of care a client would expect. This includes gaining informed consent and respecting confidentiality.