OVERVIEW

Ethics are necessary for all counselors in all settings and in all specialties.
OVERVIEW

Ethical behavior is the framework upon which professional counseling practice is built.
OVERVIEW

Counselors are expected to be knowledgeable of their code of ethics and standards for professional behavior.
OVERVIEW

Counselors must be able to consistently apply their code of ethics to the complex issues they encounter in their daily practice.
OVERVIEW

It is important for counselors to not only do things right but to also do the right thing.
DEFINITION

System of values and moral principles

Recognized rules of conduct for a particular group

Accepted actions of a particular group or culture
DEFINITION

Rightness and wrongness of certain actions and motives

Science of moral duty

Code of behavior considered correct by a particular group or profession
DEFINITION

Moral fitness of a decision or course of action

Motivation based on ideas of right and wrong

Responsibilities held in common by a specific group
DEFINITION

Rules for appropriate conduct adopted by an individual or group

Rules and principles that govern actions, conduct and behavior

Character of a community
FOUNDATION

DOING THINGS RIGHT
What is Legal?

DOING THE RIGHT THING
What is Ethical?
FOUNDATION

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Efficiency

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Effectiveness
FOUNDATION

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Focus on Skills, Tasks, Process

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Focus on Attitude, Relationships, People
FOUNDATION

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Rules and Regulations

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Values and Principles
FOUNDATION

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Head (Thinking)

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Heart (Feeling)
FOUNDATIONS

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Compliance, Procedure, Treatment, Sympathy

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Integrity, Character, Care, Empathy
FOUNDATIONS

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Providing a Service

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Providing Support
FOUNDATION

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Tolerance

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Affirmation, Acceptance, Nurturance, Advocacy
FOUNDATION

DOING THINGS RIGHT
Political Correctness

DOING THE RIGHT THING
Respectful Behavior
BASICS

Core Values of Counseling Profession

Enhancing Human Development

Honoring Diversity in Support of the Person’s Worth, Dignity, Potential, and Uniqueness

Promoting Social Justice
BASICS

Core Values of Counseling Profession

Causing No Harm to the Client

Safeguarding the Integrity of the Counselor/Client Relationship

Practicing in a Competent and Ethical Manner
BASICS

Core Values of Counseling Profession

Being Loyal, Reliable, and Trustworthy

Honoring Commitments and Fulfilling Obligations
BASICS

Core Values of Counseling Profession

Allowing the Client Freedom of Choice and Action

Contributing to the Welfare of the Client

Treating the Client Fairly
BASICS

Core Values of Counseling Profession

Allowing Clients to Make Their Own Decisions and to Act on Their Own Values

Being Truthful and Honest with the Client
BASICS

Common Ethical Themes

Do No Harm
Informed Consent
Diversity Awareness
Multicultural Skills
Social Justice
Advocacy
BASICS

Common Ethical Themes

Dignity of the Person
Integrity
Trustworthiness
Competence
Congruence
Not Imposing Personal Values
Common Ethical Themes

- Integrity of the Relationship
- Avoiding Conflicts of Interest
- Research Based Treatment
- Continuing Education
- Client Confidentiality
“If you are not personally free to be yourself in the most important of all human activities... the expression of love... then life itself loses its meaning.”

Harvey Milk

“I do not think homosexuality is a choice... It’s in one’s nature. The choice is whether one expresses one’s nature truthfully or spends the rest of one’s life lying about it.”

Marlo Thomas
“I can never be what I ought to be until you are allowed to be what you ought to be.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“All young people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, deserve a safe and supportive environment in which to achieve their full potential.”

Harvey Milk
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Multicultural awareness and understanding

Cultural sensitivity

Respecting diversity and differences
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Minimizing bias

Recognizing social and historical prejudices

Promoting social justice
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Counselors must recognize that culture affects the manner in which clients’ problems are defined

-ACA Code of Ethics
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Clients’ socioeconomic and cultural experiences must be considered when diagnosing mental disorders

-ACA Code of Ethics
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Nondiscrimination

Counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on...

-ACA Code of Ethics
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Nondiscrimination

...age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, or immigration status

-ACA Code of Ethics
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Respecting Differences

Counselors will actively attempt to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the clients with whom they work...

-ACA Code of Ethics
Respecting Differences

...including learning how the counselor's own cultural, ethnic, and racial identity impacts his or her values and beliefs about the counseling process

-ACA Code of Ethics
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Cultural Competence

Counselors should have a knowledge base of their clients’ cultures and obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression.
Cultural Competence

Counselors must be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients’ cultures and to differences among people and cultural groups.
Sensitivity

Counselors must be able to communicate information in ways that are developmentally and culturally appropriate.
DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

Sensitivity

Counselors should select appropriate techniques, approaches, activities, and assessment tools with sensitivity to culturally diverse populations.
Sensitivity

Counselors recognize historical and social prejudices in the misdiagnosis and pathologizing of certain individuals and groups and the role of mental health professionals in perpetuating these prejudices through diagnosis and treatment.

-ACA Code of Ethics
Social Justice

Counselors should promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of their clients.
Social Justice

Counselors advocate at individual, group, institutional, and societal levels to address potential barriers and obstacles that inhibit access and the growth and development of clients

-ACA Code of Ethics
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Client Centered

Focusing on the Client
Avoiding Self Interest

Their Needs...
Not Yours
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Not Imposing Values

Counselors should be aware of their own values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors and avoid imposing values that are inconsistent with counseling goals

-ACA Code of Ethics
The responsibility of the counselor is to assist clients in making the most appropriate choices for themselves without the counselor imposing his/her values.
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Not Imposing Values

The focus of ethical practice is always on the client’s own feelings and thoughts, not on those of the counselor.
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Not Imposing Values

Practitioners are expected to give unconditional positive regard

Practitioners are expected to be non-judgmental

Practitioners are expected to be empathetic
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Not Imposing Values

The counselor accepts the client unconditionally and non-judgmentally.

The client is free to explore all thoughts and feelings, positive or negative, without danger of rejection or condemnation.
Impairment

Therapeutic impairment occurs when there is a significant negative impact on a counselor’s professional functioning which compromises client care or poses the potential for harm to the client.

-ACA Code of Ethics
Counselors should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance...
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Impairment

Counselors should not allow their cultural biases, limited knowledge, or personal discomfort to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility.
Counselors may be impaired due to...

- Substance abuse
- Chemical dependency
- Mental illness
- Personal crisis or trauma
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Impairment

Counselors may be impaired due to...

Insufficient knowledge, skill, or training regarding the client’s particular issue

Burnout from the stress of a heavy or demanding workload
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Impairment

Counselors may be impaired due to...

Vicarious trauma or counter transference

Unresolved emotional or attitudinal issues
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Impairment

Counselors may be impaired due to...

Discomfort with client’s background, values, attitudes, and lifestyle
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Referrals

If counselors determine an inability to be of professional assistance to clients, they avoid entering or continuing counseling relationships.

-ACA Code of Ethics
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Referrals

Counselors are knowledgeable about culturally and clinically appropriate referral resources and suggest these alternatives.

- ACA Code of Ethics
When counselors transfer or refer clients to other practitioners, they ensure that appropriate clinical and administrative processes are completed and open communication is maintained with both clients and practitioners.

-ACA Code of Ethics
Counselors do not abandon or neglect clients in counseling.

Counselors assist in making appropriate arrangements for the continuation of treatment, when necessary.

-ACA Code of Ethics
Referrals

While making a referral, counselors must avoid communicating...

Judgment, Abandonment, Rejection, Disdain, Disgust, Condemnation
Referrals

Counselors have a professional obligation to monitor their effectiveness and ensure their competency through continuing education.
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Referrals

Counselors must be intentional about gaining new knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, and skills pertaining to working with diverse populations.
Therefore, counselors should be especially cognizant of those areas for which they repeatedly make referrals as an indication of an area or issue requiring the counselor’s further education and expanded competency.
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Competence

Counselors should provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, and certification.
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Competence

When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, counselors should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps...
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Competence

...including appropriate education, research, training, consultation, and supervision, to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm
Counselors continually monitor their effectiveness as professionals and take steps to improve when necessary.

-ACA Code of Ethics
Competence

Counselors respect the diversity of clients and seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients, especially when the counselor’s values are inconsistent with the client’s goals or are discriminatory in nature.

-ACA Code of Ethics
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Case Study

Julea Ward
Counseling Student
East Michigan State University

Jennifer Keaton
Counseling Student
Augusta State University
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Case Study

We are grateful to the court for recognizing how potentially dangerous it would be for a counselor to allow her personal beliefs to get in the way of her ethical obligation to promote the well-being of all students, including LGTBQ youth.

-American Counseling Association
PROFESSIONAL CONGRUENCE

Case Study

If a counselor cannot respect the dignity and promote the welfare of her LGBTQ clients and uphold the ACA Code of Ethics, she is not a competent counselor.

-American Counseling Association
Case Study

While we are all free to hold our personal beliefs, a counselor must practice according to professional ethics that require her not to impose her beliefs on her clients.

-American Counseling Association
Case Study

When LGBTQ youth are being bullied or thinking about committing suicide, we want them to be speaking with trained counselors who will help them, not harm them.

-American Counseling Association
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Scientific Basis

Counselors use techniques, procedures, and modalities that are grounded in theory and have an empirical or scientific foundation

-ACA Code of Ethics
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Scientific Basis

Counselors have a responsibility to the public to engage in counseling practices that are based on rigorous research methodologies.

-ACA Code of Ethics
Scientific Basis

Counselors who use non-scientific methods must label their techniques or procedures as “unproven” or “developing” and explain the potential risks and ethical considerations of using such techniques or procedures and take steps to protect clients from possible harm.

-ACA Code of Ethics
Unethical Therapy

Questionable practices regarding treatment for homosexual clients

Attempting to change a client’s sexual orientation
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Unethical Therapy

Reparative Therapy
Conversion Therapy
Re-Orientation Therapy
Transformational Therapy
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Unethical Therapy

Reparative or conversion therapy is not effective

No empirical scientific support exists for this approach

Can be harmful to clients
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Unethical Therapy

Practitioners who conduct this type of therapy view same-sex attractions and behaviors as abnormal and unnatural and, therefore, in need of "curing"
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Unethical Therapy

The belief that same-sex attraction and behavior is abnormal and in need of treatment is in opposition to the position taken by...

ACA... NASW... APA... AMA...
Unethical Therapy

All professional counseling, social work, psychology, mental health, and medical groups oppose portrayals of lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals as mentally ill due to their sexual orientation.
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Unethical Therapy

Homosexuality is not a mental disorder in need of being changed

The ethical codes of all helping professions oppose the promotion of reparative therapy as a cure for individuals who are homosexual
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Unethical Therapy

No scientific evidence published in psychological peer-reviewed journals that conversion therapy is effective in changing an individual's sexual orientation from same-sex attractions to opposite-sex attractions.
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Unethical Therapy

No longitudinal studies conducted to follow the outcomes for those individuals who have engaged in this type of treatment
Research published in peer-reviewed journals indicates that conversion therapies may harm clients.
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Case Study

Dr. Robert Spitzer
Prominent Psychiatrist
Father of Modern Psychiatry
Columbia University Professor

Major author of modern classification of mental disorders
Dr. Robert Spitzer

In 1973, he spearheaded removal of homosexuality as a mental disorder from APA’s DSM
In 2001, he introduced Reparative Therapy as a viable technique to cure gay clients.
TREATMENT MODALITIES

Case Study

"I believe I owe the gay community an apology for my study making unproven claims of the efficacy of reparative therapy."
"I apologize to any gay person who wasted time and energy undergoing some form of reparative therapy because they believed that I had proven that reparative therapy works with some individuals."
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Client Privacy

Clients are guaranteed the protection of confidentiality within the boundaries of the professional relationship.
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Client Privacy

Counselors respect their clients’ right to privacy and avoid illegal and unwarranted disclosures of confidential information

-ACA Code of Ethics
Client Privacy

Counselors should protect the confidentiality of all information obtained in the course of professional service, except for compelling professional reasons.
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Exceptions

- Client waiver
- Duty to warn
- Danger to self and others
- Serious and foreseeable harm
CLIENT
CONFIDENTIALITY

Coming Out

Keep in mind that the person has made him or herself vulnerable.
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Coming Out

Don’t judge

Don’t express shock or dismay

Don’t act awkward or uncomfortable
Coming Out

Simply listen to the person

Offer support, acceptance, understanding, and comfort
CLIENT
CONFIDENTIALITY

Coming Out

Let them know that you heard what they said

Show that you care about them
If someone voluntarily comes out to you, he or she is putting a lot of trust in you and has displayed a lot of courage.
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Coming Out

Acknowledge their courage and trust

Be trustworthy

Maintain confidentiality
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Coming Out

Protect your client’s privacy

Do not reveal your client’s sexual orientation to anyone
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Advocacy

Are you an LGBT Advocate?

Is your Counseling Practice LGBT-Affirming?

Are you an LGBT-Friendly Counselor?
Advocacy

Do you provide a safe, affirming, and supportive space for your client?
CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

Message to Your Clients

You will be treated with dignity and respect

You will not be judged or condemned

You can trust me
Message to Your Clients

You can be yourself with me

You do not have to hide who you are or guard your speech

You can speak freely about aspects of your life
THANK YOU
QUEER CAFE