

College of Mental Health Counseling

Code of Ethics and Practice

These are affirmative declarations required by the College for the practice of counseling. The College has authorized other Professional Counselling Associations to use the Code of Ethics and modified versions as a requirement for their members.

The following are affirmative declarations required by students and members of the College for the practice of counseling. These principles are from the College manual "Effective Counseling Skills" by Daniel Keeran, MSW, at <http://www.amazon.com/Effective-Counseling-Skills-therapeutic-statements/dp/1442177993>

1. I will make every effort when appropriate (e.g. except when the client is in crisis) to complete a comprehensive Personal History at the beginning of the counseling relationship;
2. If I do not have the skill level to provide the help needed, I will refer a client to other qualified professionals;
3. I will preserve the client's right to confidentiality and will not release any identifying information verbally or in writing without the client's signed permission (excepting the threat of suicide, homicide or suspected child abuse or when required by a court of law);
4. I will not engage in any relationship with the client other than the counselor-client relationship;
5. I will not touch a client or convey any message that might be interpreted as expressing sexual feelings for the client;
6. I will avoid leading statements or suggestions to the client of possible causes (such as childhood sexual abuse) of current difficulties but will allow insight and recovery of memories to come from the client;
7. I will inform the client that mental images that emerge during hypnosis or guided imagery may not be memories of actual events;
8. I will provide a safe, private setting for counseling;
9. I will not require a client to pay a fee for counseling services but only for the scheduled time;
10. I will provide an ability-to-pay fee alternative and will not refuse a client who is unable to pay;
11. I will not introduce spiritual concepts unless I am previously known to the client as providing spiritual or pastoral counseling;
12. I will make every effort to relate to the client intentionally for a predictable therapeutic outcome;
13. I will provide a means for evaluation of progress so that the client is not misled or taken advantage of;
14. I will be careful to properly assess, prevent, and document the possibility and potential of suicidal or homicidal behaviour by a client;
15. I will immediately (within 24 hours) report the sexual or physical abuse of a child to the police or other authorized persons;

16. I will not give a client the false hope that the counseling relationship can be anything more than that, or that it can be permanent;
17. I will take direct steps to inform the potential victim of homicidal threats made by a client;
18. I will not use hypnosis or guided imagery as part of the treatment for a client who has been hospitalized for psychosis or major depression;
19. I will not devalue the competence of another practitioner in the presence of a client but will direct any complaints to the appropriate professional disciplinary body;
20. I will avoid expressing anger or reacting emotionally to the client;
21. I will not advise a couple to separate or to end their relationship but will allow each party to make his or her own decision;
22. I will not pressure a client to remain in a counseling relationship against the client's expressed desire to terminate and will support their decision;
23. I am committed to my own personal growth and recovery as essential to being an effective counselor;
24. I will not provide counseling while under the influence of alcohol or other substance that could impact negatively on the client;
25. I am committed to continuing professional education and to expanding my repertoire of counseling skills and my understanding of counseling practice.