

The Association for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy in Ireland Ltd.

Code of Ethics and Practice

1. The Code of Ethics and Practice applies to those Members of the Association whose names appear on the Register of Practitioner Members and the Conditional Register. For ease of reading, the terms Psychotherapist and Psychotherapy specify Psychoanalytic Psychotherapists and Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy respectively. In turn, a psychoanalytic psychotherapist is a therapist whose practice is informed by the works of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan. This amounts to defining the psychoanalytic psychotherapist as a specialised listener who gives a particular privilege to the place of the unconscious.
2. There is a central tension in psychotherapy between autonomy and dependency and this latter may be exploited by an unscrupulous psychotherapist. A core moral responsibility involves the promotion of the client's emotional autonomy, while conscientiously managing the peculiar but necessary psychological dependency of the client on the therapist in the course of treatment.
3. In all his/her work, the psychotherapist shall value integrity, impartiality and respect for all people who come to see him/her professionally. The therapeutic 'relationship' shall not be exploitative in any way. The psychotherapist shall hold the interest and welfare of those in receipt of his/her services to be paramount at all times.
4. (a) A psychotherapist shall not make claim directly or indirectly to qualifications, affiliations and capabilities which he/she does not possess.
(b) A psychotherapist shall take steps to monitor and develop his/her own competence and to work within the limits of that competence.
(c) All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the safety of participants in psychotherapy.
(d) A psychotherapist shall ensure the confidentiality of information acquired through his/her practice and protect the privacy of individuals or organisations about whom information is known.
(e) A psychotherapist shall publish information about individuals, in oral or written form, only with their consent or where their identity is adequately disguised.

- (f) Psychotherapists shall conduct themselves in their practice in a way that does not damage the interests of the recipients of their services or undermine public confidence in their ability to carry out their duties.

Specifically they shall:

- (i) Refrain from practice when their physical or psychological condition seriously impairs their judgement.
 - (ii) Not exploit the special relationship of trust and confidence to gratify their personal desires.
 - (iii) Refrain from improper conduct that would be likely to be detrimental to the interests of the recipients of their services.
 - (iv) Neither attempt to secure or accept from those receiving their services any significant financial or material benefit beyond that which has been agreed.
 - (v) Not allow their responsibilities or standards of practice to be diminished by consideration of religion, sex, age, nationality, opinion, politics, social standing, class or other extraneous factors.
5. Where they suspect misconduct by a professional colleague which cannot be resolved or remedied after discussion with the colleague concerned, they may take steps to bring that misconduct to the attention of the Ethics Committee in accordance with the Articles of Association, doing so without malice and with no breaches of confidentiality other than necessary to the operation of the proper investigatory procedure.
6. Psychotherapists shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that those working under their direct supervision comply with this Code.

Ratified at E.G.M., 1st May, 1999.