

CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC PSYCHOLOGISTS OF INDIA

CODE OF ETHICAL PRACTICE



I. Introduction

Code of Ethical Practice (hereinafter referred to as Ethics Code) of the Conference of Catholic Psychologists of India (hereinafter referred to as CCPI) is a framework that suggests guiding principles and professional standards for the practice of psychology by its members. It has as its primary goal the welfare and protection of the individuals and groups with whom members work. The Ethics Code consists of an Introduction, Basic Principles and Norms and Guidelines.

Membership in the CCPI commits members and affiliates to adhere to the Ethics Code.

Procedures for filing, investigating and resolving complaints of unethical conduct are described in the Rules and Procedures of the CCPI Ethics Committee (to be formulated). CCPI may impose sanctions on its members for violations of the norms and guidelines of the Ethics Code, including termination of CCPI membership, and notify relevant individuals and institutions of its action.

II. Basic Principles

Psychological practice of members of the CCPI is guided by a commitment to the core values of compassion and competence. Related issues are consent, confidentiality, and conduct.

1. Compassion

Compassion involves being kind hearted, benevolent and caring towards others who may be suffering in different ways and in varying degrees. It entails possessing and expressing empathetic identification with all people, regardless of culture, ethnicity, religion and other differences, as being made of the same human clay as oneself. Members show warmth and concern in ways that do not demean clients by being either possessive or ingratiating. They do not allow their prejudices to negatively affect their relationship with clients.

2. Competence

Compassion and competence intertwine. Members who care for their clients need to have adequate knowledge and skills to help clients ease their psychological pain and grow. To do this, members commit themselves to acquiring, developing and maintaining competence in providing psychological services.

3. Confidentiality

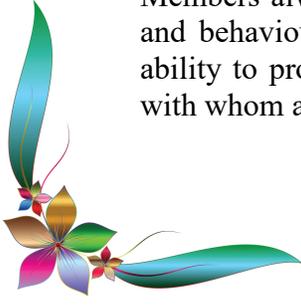
Confidentiality involves not divulging private information without clients' permission as well as informing clients of any limits to confidentiality. Members have an ethical responsibility to keep client records and recordings of sessions safe and confidential.

4. Consent

Consent refers to the right of clients to be informed about what the psychological services offered involve and to consent knowingly and without undue pressure to participate in these services.

5. Conduct

Members always and everywhere respect clients and their rights, and refrain from relationships and behaviours that could reasonably be expected to impair their objectivity, competence and ability to provide effective service to their clients or risk exploitation of or harm to the person with whom a professional relationship exists. They respect and maintain professional boundaries.





III. Norms and Guidelines

1. Compassion

1.1 Members avoid financial exploitation of clients. They do not to take advantage of clients for purposes of financial gain and charge only legitimate fees for service activities.

1.2 Members render service to individuals and communities in crisis, without regard to financial remuneration, when necessary.

2. Competence

2.1 Competence demands that members are knowledgeable about the practical and research literature on the process and outcomes of using different helping strategies for specific situations and problems.

2.2 Members provide only those services, use only those techniques and conduct research for which they are qualified by education, training, or professional experience.

2.3 Members disclose their qualifications when requested and avoid making false and misleading statements about training, qualifications, experience and the likely outcomes of using psychological services.

2.4 Members appropriately document their professional and scientific work.

3. Consent

3.1 Members provide appropriate information before hand about the nature of the services they provide and of research they conduct and appropriate information later about results and conclusions. They do this using language that is reasonably understandable to the recipients.

3.2 If members are precluded by organizational roles from providing such information to particular individuals or groups, they so inform those individuals or groups at the outset of the service.

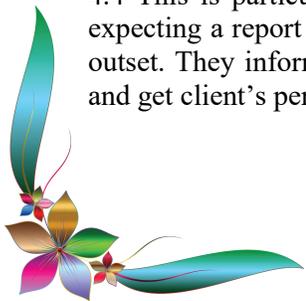
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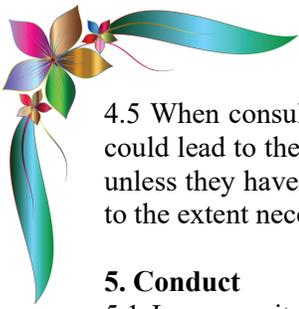
4.1 Members safeguard the welfare and anonymity of clients. They secure clients' permission before sharing in a public forum any personally identifiable information gained from them in the course of providing psychological services.

4.2 Members discuss confidential information obtained in clinical or consulting relationships, or evaluative data concerning individual or organizational clients only for appropriate professional purposes and only with persons concerned with such matters.

4.3 When members agree to provide psychological services to a person or entity at the request of a third party, members clarify to the extent feasible, at the outset of the service, the nature of the relationship with each party. This clarification includes the role of the member, the probable use of the services provided or information obtained, and the fact that there may be limits to confidentiality.

4.4 This is particularly applicable in situation where religious superiors have referred a client and are expecting a report or evaluation. Members inform the client about possible limits to confidentiality at the outset. They inform the client about the kind of information they will share with the concerned superior and get client's permission to do so.





4.5 When consulting with colleagues, (1) members do not share confidential information that reasonably could lead to the identification of a client or organization with which they have a confidential relationship unless they have obtained prior consent of the person or organization, and (2) they share information only to the extent necessary to achieve the purposes of the consultation.

5. Conduct

5.1 In many situations, it may not be feasible or reasonable for members to avoid social or other non-professional contact with clients. In such situations members use due discretion.

5.2 Whenever feasible, members refrain from taking on professional obligations when pre-existing relationships might reasonably impair or interfere with their functions as psychologists, or might harm or exploit their clients.

5.3 Members avoid all forms of emotional and sexual exploitation of their current or past clients. They do not use clients to meet their own needs for closeness, intimacy or sex.

5.4 Members do not take advantage of their clients for personal or organizational gains.

5.5 Members do not abandon clients. They make reasonable efforts to plan for facilitating care in the event that psychological services are interrupted for any reason.

5.6 Members make adequate provisions to help clients who may have been adversely affected by therapeutic approaches used in the course of treatment.

5.7 Members terminate a professional relationship when it becomes reasonably clear that the client no longer needs the service, is not benefiting, or is being harmed by continued service.

6. Education and Training

6.1 Members who are responsible for education and training programmes seek to ensure that the programmes are competently designed, provide the proper experiences, and meet the goals for which claims were made by the programme.

6.2 Members responsible for education and training programmes seek to ensure that there is accurate description of the programme content, training goals and objectives, and requirements that must be met for satisfactory completion of the programme.

6.3 In academic and supervisory relationships, members establish appropriate process for providing feedback to students and supervisees.

7. Research

7.1 Members design, conduct, and report research in accordance with recognized standards of scientific competence and ethical research.

7.2 Members obtain from institutions or organizations appropriate approval before conducting research with their members, and they provide accurate information about their research proposals.

7.3 Using language that is reasonably understandable to participants, members inform participants of the nature of the research, that they are free to participate or to decline to participate or to withdraw from the research, and they get appropriate informed consent from participants.

