

INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

As a warm-up to stimulate certain brain cells, let us first talk about:

WHAT ARE ETHICS?

Morals - principles of right and wrong - rules of conduct - values - integrity - conscience. A system of moral principles governing the appropriate conduct for a person or group.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF PSYCHOLOGISTS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

American Psychological Association , 2010

There are five General Principles, which are aspirational in nature, and 10 Ethical Standards. The intent of the General Principles is to guide and inspire toward the highest ethical ideals and should not form the basis for imposing sanctions.

General Principles (with examples)

1. Beneficence (kindness) & Non-maleficence (do no harm) - Psychologists strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm
2. Fidelity and Responsibility - Establish relationships of trust with whom one works
3. Integrity - Seek to promote accuracy, honesty and truthfulness
4. Justice - Exercise reasonable judgment and take precautions to ensure that potential biases, the boundaries of competence and the limitations of expertise do not lead to or condone unjust practices
5. Respect - Respect the dignity and worth of all people, and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality and self-determination

Ethical Standards (with examples)

1. Resolving Ethical Issues - Such as conflicts between ethics and organizational demands
2. Competence - Provide services within the boundaries of competence
3. Human Relations - Do not engage in unfair discrimination
4. Privacy and Confidentiality - Protect confidential information
5. Advertising and Other Public Statements - Avoidance of false or deceptive statements
6. Record Keeping and Fees - Accuracy in reports to payors
7. Education and Training - Psychologists do not engage in sexual relationships with students and those in supervision
8. Research and Publication - Informed consent to research
9. Assessment - Opinions are based on information sufficient to substantiate findings
10. Psychotherapy - Informed consent is obtained about the nature and anticipated course of therapy, fees, involvement of third parties and limits of confidentiality