



Code of Ethics and Professional Practice

1. Welfare of the client

1.1. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the people and groups with whom they work. When conflicts of interest arise between clients and psychotherapists' employing institutions, psychotherapists clarify the nature and direction of their loyalties and responsibilities and keep all parties informed of their commitments.

Psychoanalytic psychotherapists fully inform clients as to the purpose and nature of any evaluative treatment, educational, or training procedure, and they openly acknowledge that clients, students, trainees, or participants in research have freedom of choice with regard to participation. Coercion of people to participate or to remain in receipt of services is unethical.

1.2. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists are continually cognizant of their own needs and of their potentially influential position towards persons such as clients, students, and trainees. They avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons.

1.3. Psychoanalytic psychotherapist should be continually aware of their conscious and unconscious motivations to enter and continue in their profession and practice. Generally, practitioners are required to maintain their ability to perform competently, and to take the necessary steps to do so. This includes notably keeping abreast of current clinical and theoretical advances in the field. In particular, each practitioner is expected to maintain a programme of ongoing professional development.

1.4. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists make every effort to avoid dual relationships that could impair their professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation. Examples of such dual relationships include, but are not limited to, professional treatment of or research with employees, students, supervisees, close friends, or relatives. Sexual intimacies with any such clients, students, trainees and research participants are unethical.

1.5. The psychoanalytic psychotherapist must refrain from practicing if his/her physical or psychological condition is seriously impaired, for example, as a result of alcohol, drugs, illness, or personal stress. In such a situation, the practitioner must ensure appropriate referring-on of their clients and seek professional and/or psychotherapeutic help as appropriate.

1.6.. When a psychoanalytic psychotherapist agrees to provide services to a client at the request of a third party, the psychoanalytic psychotherapist assumes the responsibility of clarifying the nature of the relationships to all parties concerned.

1.7. Professional relationships between psychoanalytic psychotherapist and patient begin with their first contact and continue during the treatment and then in post-analytic phase. The Code of Ethics guides the practitioners' conduct towards their patients during the treatment and three years after its termination.



1.8. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists have the right to choose techniques of treatment and its setting. They should inform patients that the therapy is a kind of dialogue and that all feelings and wishes are to be put into words. In order to help the patient in this modality verbal communication is used, as well as non-verbal communication that can be translated into verbal one.

1.9. During a session the patients have a right to express verbally all their thoughts and feelings. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists should explore patient's thoughts about – and feelings towards – them. Patient's right to express any feelings should not be constrained by inadequate or improper use of interpretations; it should not be labelled pathological. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists have a right to use other appropriate means to counteract offensive behaviour from patient's part and to set boundaries of therapeutic work.

1.10. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists engage in therapeutic relationships with patients and facilitate these relationships through a psychoanalytic methodology. Patients have a right to verbalize their reactions to the relationships. The aim of this unrestricted verbalization is to explore patient's defences as they express themselves in therapy.

1.11. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists should use diagnostic sessions to explore patient's request and decide if they can be helpful to the patient.

1.12. The psychoanalytic psychotherapist must consider whether his/her own method of practicing is appropriate for the particular patient and the patient's particular presenting symptoms and profile. At this stage the practitioner should refer on appropriately if this appears to be in the client's best interest and will benefit the client.

Psychoanalytic psychotherapists terminate a clinical or consulting relationship whenever the client requires. They offer to help the client locate alternative sources of assistance.

1.13. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists have the right to refuse a patient if they consider the latter's request unrealistic or harmful for the patient, for themselves or for general public.

1.14. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists should actively counteract ideas and actions that humiliate patient's dignity in respect to their ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or socioeconomic status.



2. Moral and Legal Standards

2.1. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists' moral and ethical standards of behaviour are a personal matter to the same degree as they are for any other citizen, except where these may compromise the fulfilment of their professional responsibilities or reduce the public trust in psychotherapy & psychotherapists. Regarding their own personal behaviour, psychoanalytic psychotherapists are sensitive to prevailing community standards and to the possible impact that conformity to or deviation from these standards may have upon the quality of their performance as professionals. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists are also aware of the possible impact of their public behaviour upon the ability of colleagues to perform their professional duties.

2.2. As employees or employers, psychoanalytic psychotherapists do not engage in or condone any practices that are inhumane or that result in illegal or unjustifiable actions. Such practices include, but are not limited to, those based on considerations of race, handicap, age, gender, sexual preference, religion, or national origin, in practice, in hiring, promotion, or training.

2.3. In their professional roles, psychoanalytic psychotherapists avoid any action that will violate or diminish the human, legal and civil rights of clients or others who may be affected.

2.4. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists do not exploit their professional relationships with clients, supervisees, students, employees or research participants. Practitioners are required to maintain appropriate boundaries within these professional relationships, taking care not to exploit their clients, current or past, financially, sexually, or emotionally.

2.5. When psychoanalytic psychotherapists know of an ethical violation by another psychotherapist, and it seems appropriate, they informally attempt to resolve the issue by bringing the behaviour to the attention of the psychotherapist. If the misconduct is of a minor nature and/or appears to be due to lack of sensitivity, knowledge, or experience, such an informal solution is usually appropriate. Such informal corrective efforts are made with sensitivity to any rights to confidentiality involved. If the violation does not seem amenable to an informal solution, or is of a more serious nature, psychoanalytic psychotherapists bring it to the attention of the appropriate institution, association or committee on professional ethics and conduct.

3. Agreement and Frame of Treatment

3.1. The interests of patients' and both the safety of the public and of the psychoanalytic psychotherapist determine professional conduct.

3.2. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists clarify in advance with their clients all matters that might pertain to their working together. They avoid relationships that may limit their objectivity or create a conflict of interest.

3.3 Agreement defines therapeutic relationships as mutual enterprise in which professional knowledge and skills of psychoanalytic psychotherapist are used for the understanding of the patients' conscious and unconscious motivation in order to resolve their problems.



3.4. The preliminary agreement includes matters such as the length and frequency of sessions, their place and time, the fees and terms of payment. Other points of agreement are discussed when necessary in the process of treatment: for instance, cancelling sessions, payment for missed sessions, etc.

3.5. Psychoanalytic treatment is based upon patient's informed consent and participation in the process.

3.6. Professional ethics forbids any kind of patient's exploitation for the benefit of the psychoanalytic psychotherapist. It is unethical for psychoanalytic psychotherapists to have aggressive or sexual physical contact with patients even with their consent.

3.7. Patients cannot be treated against their will or without their consent. This holds true for children; in these cases their parents' or caretakers' consent is also required. The psychoanalytic psychotherapist has a separate agreement with a child. The child's rights cannot be violated by the psychoanalytic psychotherapist having an agreement with the parents without the child's consent.

4. Confidentiality and Notes

4.1. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists have a primary obligation to respect the confidentiality of information obtained from persons in the course of their work.

4.2. Revelation of any patient's confidences without their written consent is a serious violation of professional ethics. If the psychoanalytic psychotherapist has to use a patient's material for presentations, scientific papers, etc., the identity of the patient must be sufficiently disguised. The only exception is the case when psychoanalytic psychotherapists consider keeping confidentiality potentially dangerous for the patient, other people or the general public. Psychoanalytic psychotherapist should try to keep balance between confidentiality and public safety.

4.3. Patients should be informed about the confidentiality of their material and conditions when it can be broken.

4.4 Confidentiality is kept for an unlimited period. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists make provisions for maintaining confidentiality in the storage and disposal of records, and in the event of their own unavailability.

4.5. When working with minors or other persons who are unable to give their voluntary informed consent, psychoanalytic psychotherapists take special care to protect the best interests of these person's and consult others involved appropriately.



5. Structuring the relationship with the client

5.1. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists are paid by the patient only for the work done and for the time spent. The fee is agreed in an open discussion with patient and should be mutually acceptable.

5.2. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists don't pay – and are not paid – commission when they refer patients to other specialists/colleagues, or receive referrals.

5.3. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists are required to disclose their qualifications when requested, and not to claim, or imply, qualifications they do not possess.

5.4. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists are required to disclose their terms and conditions and (when appropriate) their method of practice, at the outset of psychotherapy.

5.5. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists must give adequate notice of any changes in the scheduling of treatment, and of planned breaks.

6. Professional Competence

6.1. The maintenance of high standards of competence is a responsibility shared by all psychoanalytic psychotherapists in the interest of the public and the profession as a whole. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists recognise the boundaries of their competence and the limitations of their techniques. They only provide services and use techniques for which they are qualified by training and experience. In those areas in which recognised standards do not yet exist, psychoanalytic psychotherapists take whatever precautions are necessary to protect the welfare of their clients. They maintain knowledge of current health, scientific and professional information related to the services they provide.

6.2. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists recognize the many orientations present in the psychoanalytic field of practice and theory. They also recognize other psychotherapeutic modalities. They are keen to broaden their knowledge and skills by being interested by new theories, techniques and knowledge in their own modality and in other humanistic and scientific approaches.

6.3. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists recognise the need for continuing professional education and personal development and are open to new procedures and changes in expectations and values over time.

6.4. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists continually strive to improve their professional competence, participate in conferences, assemblies, workshops and seminars on psychotherapy and psychoanalysis.

6.5. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists are responsible for their work and shouldn't go beyond the limits of their competence. In case of retirement, illness or termination of a treatment they can delegate their functions only to those specialists whose professional training and experience make them competent enough to perform them.



6.6. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists practice in their country in accordance with existing rules and regulations concerning their profession, title and level of legal competence.

6.7. If psychoanalytic psychotherapists are not competent enough in diagnosis, therapeutic methodology or any other issues connected to a patient's health protection, their professional responsibility and moral duty are to consult colleagues from allied specializations. Systematic consultations should be provided to – and taken from – the colleagues for the patient's benefit, not for psychoanalytic psychotherapist's benefit. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists should not refuse to provide professional help to their colleagues.

6.8. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists recognise differences among people, such as those that may be associated with age, sex, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds or the special needs of those who might have been specifically disadvantaged. They obtain suitable training, experience, or advice to assure competent and appropriate service when relating to all such persons.

6.9. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists who are responsible for decisions involving individuals or policies based on test research results need to have an understanding of psychological or educational measurement, validation problems, and test research.

6.10. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists recognise that personal problems and conflicts may interfere with professional effectiveness. Accordingly they refrain from undertaking any activity in which their personal problems are likely to lead to inadequate performance or harm to a client, colleague, student, or research participant. If engaged in such activity when they become aware of their personal problems, they seek competent professional assistance to determine whether they should suspend, terminate, or limit the scope of their professional activities.

6.11. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists should avail of supervision and use any possibilities to get supervision when it can improve quality of treatment and its results. During psychoanalytic training candidates are responsible for quality and quantity of their personal analysis and supervision in accordance with ECPA standards of training.

6.12. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists entering into new fields of activity ensure that they have completed all the training and professional requirements related to that field of activity prior to practising, and that their activity in this new field is of the highest possible standard. They ensure that there is no dilution of, confusion or conflict with any current activity.



7. Advertising and Public Statements

7.1. Public statements, announcements of services, advertising, and promotional activities of psychoanalytic psychotherapists serve the purpose of helping the public make informed judgments and choices. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists represent accurately and objectively their professional qualifications, affiliations, and functions, as well as those of the institutions or organisations with which they or their statements may be associated. In public statements providing psychotherapeutic information or professional opinions or providing information about the availability of techniques, products, publications, and services, psychoanalytic psychotherapists base their statements on generally acceptable findings and techniques with full recognition of the limits and uncertainties of such evidence.

7.2. When announcing or advertising professional services, psychoanalytic psychotherapists may list the following information to describe the provider and services provided: name, highest relevant academic degree or training certificate earned from an accredited institution, date, type, award of the ECP, membership of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis organisations and professionally relevant or related bodies. They may also include address, telephone number, office hours, a brief listing of the type of psychological services offered, an appropriate presentation of fee information, foreign languages spoken, policy with regards to insurance or third party payments and other brief & pertinent information. Additional relevant or important consumer information may be included if not prohibited by other sections of these Ethical Principles.

7.3. In announcing or advertising the availability of psychotherapeutic services or publications, psychoanalytic psychotherapists do not present their affiliation with any organisation in a manner that falsely implies sponsorship or certification by that organisation. In particular and for example, psychoanalytic psychotherapists do not state European, national registration or institutional or associational status in a way to suggest that such status implies specialised professional competence or qualifications.

Public statements can include, but are not limited to, communication by means of periodical, book, list, directory, internet, television, radio, or motion picture. They do not contain (i) a false, fraudulent, misleading, or unfair statement; (ii) a misinterpretation of fact or a statement likely to mislead. (iii) a testimonial from a patient regarding the quality of a psychotherapist's services or products; (iv) a statement intended or likely to create false or unjustified expectations of favourable results; (v) a statement falsely implying unusual, unique, or one-of-a-kind abilities ; (vi) a statement intended or likely to appeal to a client's fears, anxieties, or emotions concerning the possible results of failure to obtain the offered services; (vii) a statement concerning the comparative desirability of offered services; (viii) a statement of direct solicitation of individual clients.

7.4. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists do not compensate or give anything of value to a representative of the press, radio, television, or other communication medium in anticipation of or in return for professional publicity in a news item. A paid advertisement must be identified as such, unless it is apparent from the context that it is a paid advertisement. If communicated to the public by use of radio or television an advertisement is approved for broadcast by the psychoanalytic psychotherapist. Copies of advertisements and recordings of broadcasts are retained by the psychoanalytic psychotherapist.



7.5. Announcements or advertisements of “personal growth groups,” special-interest group sessions, courses, clinics, trainings and agencies give a clear statement of purpose and a clear description of the experiences or training to be provided. The education, training, and experience of the staff members are appropriately specified and available prior to the commencement of the group, training course or services. A clear statement of fees and any contractual implications is available before participation.

7.6. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists associated with the development or promotion of psychotherapeutic techniques, products, books, or other such items offered for commercial sale make reasonable efforts to ensure that announcements and advertisements are presented in a professional, scientifically acceptable, ethical and factually informative manner.

7.7. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists do not participate for personal gain in commercial announcements or advertisements recommending to the public the purchase or use of proprietary or single-source products or services when that participation is based solely upon their identification as psychotherapists.

7.8. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists present the science and art of psychotherapy and offer their services, products, and publications fairly and accurately, avoiding misrepresentation through sensationalism, exaggeration, or superficiality. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists are guided by the primary obligation to aid the public in developing informed judgments, opinions, and choices.

7.9. A psychoanalytic psychotherapist accepts the obligation to correct others who represent his or hers professional qualifications, or associations with products or services, in a manner incompatible with these guidelines.

7.10. When personal advice is given by means of public lectures or demonstrations, newspaper or magazine articles, radio or television programs, mail, or similar media, the psychoanalytic psychotherapist utilises the most current relevant data and exercises the highest level of professional judgment.

7.11. Products that are described or presented by means of public lectures or demonstrations, newspaper or magazine articles, radio or television programs, mail, or similar media meet the same recognised standards as exist for products used in the context of a professional relationship.

8. Research, Training Activities and Publication

8.1. As practitioners, teachers, trainers and researchers, psychoanalytic psychotherapists are aware of the fact that their personal values may affect their communication, the use of techniques, selection and presentation of views or materials and the nature or implementation of research. When dealing with topics that may give offence, they recognise and respect the diverse attitudes and individual sensitivities that clients, students, trainees or subjects may have towards such matters.



8.2. As teachers or trainers, psychoanalytic psychotherapists recognise their primary obligation to help others acquire knowledge and skill. They maintain high standards of scholarship by presenting information objectively, fully, and accurately.

8.3. As teachers, psychoanalytic psychotherapists ensure that statements in catalogues and course outlines are accurate and not misleading, particularly in terms of subject matter to be covered, bases for evaluating progress, and the nature of course experiences.

Announcements, brochures or advertisements describing workshops, seminars, or other educational programs accurately describe the audience for which the program is intended as well as eligibility requirements, educational objectives, and nature of the materials to be covered. These announcements also accurately represent the education, training, and experience of the psychoanalytic psychotherapists presenting the programs and any fees involved.

8.4. As researchers, psychoanalytical psychotherapists accept responsibility for the selection of their research topics and methods used in investigation, analysis and reporting. They plan their research in ways to minimise the possibility that their findings will be misleading. They provide thorough discussion of the limitations of their data, especially where their work touches on social policy or might be construed to the detriment of persons in specific age, sex, ethnic, socioeconomic, or other social groups.

8.5. In conducting research in institutions or organisations psychoanalytic psychotherapists secure appropriate authorisation to conduct such research. They are aware of their obligation to future research workers and ensure that host institutions receive adequate information about the research and proper acknowledgements of their contributions.

8.6. Public announcements or advertisements soliciting research participants in which clinical services or other professional services are offered as an inducement make clear the nature of the services as well as the costs and other obligations to be accepted by participants in the research.

8.7. In publishing reports of their work, they never suppress disconfirming data, and they acknowledge the existence of alternative hypotheses and explanations of their findings. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists take credit only for the work they have actually done. They clarify in advance with all appropriate persons and agencies the expectations for sharing and utilising research data.

8.8. Publication credit is assigned to those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their professional contributions. Major contributions of a professional character made by several persons to a common project are recognised by joint authorship with the individual who made the principle contribution listed first. Minor contributions of a professional character and extensive clerical or similar non-professional assistance may be acknowledged in footnotes or in an introductory statement. Acknowledgement through specific citations is made for unpublished as well as published material that has directly influenced the research or writing. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists who compile and edit material of others for publication publish the material in the name of the originating group, if appropriate, with their own name appearing as chairperson or editor. All contributors are acknowledged and named.



9. Assessment Techniques

9.1. In the development, publication, and utilisation of psychotherapeutic or psychological assessment techniques, psychoanalytic psychotherapists make every effort to promote the welfare and best interests of the client. They guard against the misuse of assessment results. They respect the client's right to know the results, the interpretations made, and the bases for their conclusions and recommendations. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists make every effort to maintain the security of tests and other assessment techniques within the limits of legal mandates. They strive to ensure the appropriate use of assessment techniques by others.

9.2. In using assessment techniques, psychoanalytic psychotherapists respect the right of clients to have full explanations of the nature and purpose of the techniques in language the clients can understand, unless an explicit exception to this right has been agreed upon in advance. When the explanations are to be provided by others, psychoanalytic psychotherapists establish procedures for ensuring the adequacy of these explanations.

9.3. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists responsible for the development and standardisation of psychological tests and other assessment techniques utilise established scientific procedures and observe the relevant EAP ECPP, national, and institutional or organisational standards.

9.4. In reporting assessment results, psychoanalytic psychotherapists indicate any reservations that exist regarding the validity or reliability because of the circumstances of the assessment or the inappropriateness of the norms for the person tested. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists strive to ensure that the results of assessments and their interpretations are not misused by others.

9.5. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists recognise that assessment results may become obsolete and do not represent a complete picture of the assessed. They make every effort to avoid and prevent the misuse of obsolete measures or incomplete assessments.

9.6. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists offering scoring and interpretation services are able to produce appropriate evidence for the validity of the programs and procedures used in arriving at interpretations. The public offering of an interpretation service is considered a professional-to-professional consultation. Psychotherapists make every effort to avoid misuse of assessment reports.

9.7. Psychoanalytic psychotherapists do not encourage or promote the use of psychotherapeutic or psychological assessment techniques by inappropriately trained or otherwise unqualified persons through teaching, sponsorship, or supervision.



10. Applied Research

10.1. The decision to undertake research rests upon a considered judgment by the individual psychoanalytic psychotherapist about how best to contribute to human science and human welfare. Having made the decision to conduct research, the psychotherapist considers alternative directions in which research energies and resources might be invested. On the basis of this consideration, the psychoanalytic psychotherapist carries out the investigation with respect and concern for the dignity and welfare of the people who participate and with cognizance of regulations and professional standards governing the conduct of research with human participants.

10.2. In planning a study, the psychoanalytic psychotherapist who carries out the investigation (the investigator) has the responsibility to make a careful evaluation of its ethical acceptability. To the extent that the weighing of scientific and human values suggests a compromise of any principle, the investigator incurs a correspondingly serious obligation to seek ethical advice and observe stringent safeguards to protect the rights of human participants.

10.3. Considering whether a participant in a planned study will be a “subject at risk” or a “subject at minimal risk”, according to recognised standards, is of primary ethical concern to the investigator.

10.4. The investigator always retains the responsibility for ensuring ethical practice in research. The investigator is also responsible for the ethical treatment of research participants by collaborators, assistants, students, and employees, all of whom, however, incur similar obligations.

10.5. Except in minimal-risk research, the investigator establishes a clear and fair agreement with research participants, prior to their participation, that clarifies the obligation and responsibilities of each. The investigator has the obligation to honour all promises and commitments in that agreement. The investigator informs the participants of all aspects of the research that might reasonably be expected to influence willingness to participate and explains all other aspects of the research about which the participants inquire. Failure to make full disclosure prior to obtaining informed consent requires additional safeguards to protect the welfare and the dignity of the research participants. Research with children or with participants who have impairments that would limit understanding and/or communication requires special safeguarding procedures.

10.6. Methodological requirements of a study may make the use of concealment necessary. Before conducting such a study, the investigator has a special responsibility to (i) determine whether the use of such techniques is justified by the study’s prospective scientific, educational, or implied value; (ii) determine whether alternative procedures are available that do not use concealment; and (iii) ensure that the participants are provided with sufficient explanation as soon as possible.

There exists a presumption not to use such techniques.



10.7. The investigator respects the individual's freedom to decline to participate in or withdraw from the research at any time. The obligation to protect this freedom requires careful thought and consideration when the investigator is in a position of authority or influence over the participant. Such positions of authority include, but are not limited to, situations in which research participation is required as part of employment or in which the participant is a student, client, or employee of the investigator. The rights of the individual predominate over the needs of the investigator to complete the research.

10.8. The investigator protects the participant from physical and mental discomfort, harm, and danger that may arise from research procedures. If risks of such consequences exist, the investigator informs the participant of that fact.

Research procedures likely to cause serious or lasting harm to a participant are not used unless the failure to use these procedures might expose the participant to risk of greater harm, or unless the research has great potential benefit and fully informed and voluntary consent is obtained from each participant. The participant should be informed of procedures for contacting the investigator within a reasonable time period following participation, should stress, potential harm, or related questions or concerns arise. Consent obtained from the participant does not limit their legal rights or reduce the investigator's legal responsibilities.

10.9. After the data are collected, the investigator provides the participant with information about the nature of the study and attempts to remove any misconceptions that may have arisen. Where scientific or humane values justify delaying or withholding this information, the investigator incurs a special responsibility to monitor the research and to ensure that there are no damaging consequences for the participant.

10.10. Where research procedures result in undesirable consequences for the individual participant, the investigator has the responsibility to detect and remove or correct these consequences, including long-term effects.

10.11. Information obtained about a research participant during the course of an investigation is confidential unless otherwise agreed upon in advance. When the possibility exists that others may obtain access to such information, this possibility, together with the plans for protecting confidentiality, is explained to the participant as part of the procedure for obtaining informed consent.