

Psychosynthesis Aotearoa New Zealand Australia

CODE OF ETHICS

INTRODUCTION

This Code applies to all clinical members of Psychosynthesis Aotearoa New Zealand Australia ('PANZA') who practise as counsellors and/or psychotherapists.

The practice guidelines included in this Code are neither prescriptive nor intended to operate as rules. Through the PANZA Complaints Process, sanctions may be imposed upon a Member who is found to have acted in breach of the Code of Ethics.

It is expected that all members will:

- Be mindful of and accountable for the ethical basis of their practice.
- Be aware of the legal and ethical requirements that apply to their professional practice.
- Keep up to date with developments in ethical practice and monitor their own practices against those developments.
- Review all ethical dilemmas they encounter in their work in supervision or with colleagues.
- Make themselves aware of the place of indigenous peoples, specifically awareness of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti O Waitangi in New Zealand and the work of Reconciliation in Australia, and any other similar documents in the place they are practising.
- Heartfully attend to the systemic relationships between environmental, cultural, social, community and individuals that affect the well-being of part and whole, and recognise that principles of 'right relating' apply throughout the system.
- Acknowledge the shadow aspects of psychospiritual work, in themselves and in those who are drawn to this form, while grounding the work in embodiment, holding a number of layers of reality concurrently.

In this Code the word Member refers to Clinical Members. Trainee Members are covered by the Code of Ethics and Complaints Procedure of their training body.

In this Code the word 'client' refers to all those with whom the member has a professional relationship, including supervisees, trainees in training groups and participants in community groups or in an organisational setting. In an organisational setting they may also be the organisation or a representative of the organisation (e.g. manager) who contracts on behalf of individuals or groups. In those circumstances there may be multiple clients to whom the Code applies.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

Psychosynthesis is described as a psychospiritual psychology, integrating Western analytic depth psychology and Eastern meditative ‘height’ psychology. Through the exploration and integration of consciousness, we are assisted to develop an authentic sense of who we are and who we can be.

In Aotearoa/ New Zealand, Psychosynthesis sits within the context of Te Tiriti O Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi, so recognises the place and role of *tangata whenua*. As an evolutionary psychospiritual psychology, it is highly relevant to our present day need and desire to discover and express the best in human consciousness for the well-being and healing of person and planet. Psychosynthesis holds a holistic perspective and is applicable to individuals, groups and any systemic, organisational context.

Basic to the code are five principles underlying all ethical issues:

- Autonomy – freedom from external control or influence; independence
- Beneficence – acting in the best interests of the client
- Non-maleficence – avoiding ways that inflict evil or cause harm to others, or cause avoidable or intentional harm or the risk of harm
- Justice – including awareness of social justice, with fair and equitable treatment of clients e.g. under Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi to Tangata Whenua, Pakeha and Tauwiwi in Aotearoa/NZ, and the Reconciliation process in Australia.
- Interdependence – commitment to maintain relationships of reciprocity and respect with all living beings and the natural environment.

The following values guide members in their professional practice:

1. Each client is a unique individual who has an innate evolutionary drive toward maturity and creative self-expression and is able to make decisions and take charge of their life.
2. The interests and well being of each client are paramount within a context that acknowledges and preserves the sanctity and interconnection of all life and living systems.
3. Each client is valued for their individuality. Members will work with clients in ways that are meaningful to the client’s life with reference to race, creed, nationality, cultural background, age, gender, ability, socio-economic status and sexual orientation.
4. Each client has the right to privacy and confidentiality.
5. Members will act with integrity, respect and good faith in their dealings with clients and colleagues.
6. Members will aspire to high professional standards and behave in ways that uphold the integrity of their profession.

1 CLIENT AUTONOMY

1.1 Value Statement

Each client is a unique individual who has an innate evolutionary drive toward maturity and creative self-expression and is able to make decisions and take charge of their life.

1.2 Principles

This means that members will foster autonomy in clients by applying the principles of freedom of choice and informed consent assisting them to awareness of their individual responsibilities in the emergent, more-than-human context.

1.3 Practice Guidelines

- a) The client is informed of what is involved in the therapeutic, training or consulting relationship and the member's ways of working, and freely consents to participate.
- b) The client's right to refuse or withdraw consent at any time is respected.
- c) Participation in research or the recording of sessions requires informed consent.

2 CLIENT WELLBEING

2.1 Value Statement

The interests and well being of each client are paramount within a context that acknowledges and preserves the sanctity and interconnection of all life and living systems.

2.2 Principles

This means that members will:

- a) Honour the trust placed in them by clients.
- b) Provide a safe working environment and take actions to protect clients from harm.
- c) Take responsibility for establishing and maintaining the professional boundaries between themselves and the client.
- d) Recognise the power differential implicit in every practitioner/client relationship and manage that appropriately.

2.3 Practice Guidelines

- a) Members will not engage in sexual or romantic activity with clients and will avoid sexual or romantic relationships with former clients where discussions in supervision indicate free and informed consent may be compromised.
- b) Members will not exploit the intimacy made possible by any professional relationships.
- c) Members will not facilitate any activity that might suggest, foster or reinforce sexual relationships between clients.
- d) Members will maintain clear boundaries between themselves and close friends, relatives and employees who may seek assistance from them.
- e) Members will bring to their supervisor any inclination to consider any relationship with a client other than the professional relationship.
- f) Members will refer clients when they cannot assist them and will endeavour to verify the competence and integrity of the person to whom they refer a client.
- g) Members will continue to be responsible for a client until work is either finished or a referral has been provided.
- h) Members will alert appropriate authorities and third parties in the event of a risk to client or public safety in the immediate or foreseeable future, informing the client where appropriate.
- i) Members will offer their services without favouritism when working with more than one party eg. couples.
- j) Members will take reasonable steps to ensure that clients suffer neither physical nor psychological harm during counselling/therapy, while accepting that distress may be an inevitable part of the process.

3 VALUING DIFFERENCE

3.1 Value Statement

Each client is valued for their individuality and what this brings to the whole. Members will work with clients in ways that are meaningful to the client's life with reference to race, religious and spiritual beliefs, political beliefs, nationality, cultural background, age, gender, ability, socio-economic status and sexual orientation.

3.2 Principles

This means that members will:

- a) Have respect for the uniqueness and dignity of clients and treat them with courtesy and fairness.

3.3 Practice Guidelines

- a) Members work to stay conscious of their process around their own identity issues, recognise they have biases and seek not to impose their biases on clients.
- b) Members will work within the limits of their knowledge and experience and determine in consultation with clients whether they are appropriate to deal with the clients needs and will when necessary refer the client to those with appropriate skills and abilities.
- c) Actively seek and participate in professional development opportunities relevant to working with diverse client groups.

4 PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

4.1 Value Statement

Each client has the right to privacy and confidentiality.

4.2 Principles

This means that:

- a) All communications between members and clients are confidential unless consent is given to the disclosure of particular information
- b) All private information concerning clients and their circumstances is confidential unless consent is given to the disclosure of particular information.
- c) All client work will be held in the practitioner/supervisor relationship with respectful inclusion of client information where appropriate.

4.3 Practice Guidelines

- a) Members will take steps to inform clients of the extent of and limits to the confidentiality they offer clients.
- b) Members will take reasonable steps to keep written and digital records confidential and secure.
- c) Members will establish procedures to ensure the ongoing management of client confidentiality in the event of the member's incapacity or death.
- d) Members will obtain the consent of clients prior to writing reports for third parties or will have ensured at the outset of treatment that the client knows that this is a requirement.
- e) When confidential information is passed on, it is on the basis of the minimum information to those to whom it is absolutely necessary and after seeking the client's co-operation.
- f) When a member presents a case study or illustration or description of their professional work, either orally or in written form, privacy and confidentiality will be maintained for individual clients and/or the client group or groups.
- g) Exceptions to confidentiality occur when a member:
 - Identifies a risk to client or public safety in the immediate or foreseeable future.
 - Identifies that the client's competence to make a decision is impaired
 - Is subject to legal requirements to reveal information
 - Responds to a complaint about professional practice
 - Conducts discussion about clients in supervision.

5 PROFESSIONAL VALUES

5.1 Value Statement

Members will act with integrity, respect and good faith in their dealings with clients.

5.2 Principles

This means that members will apply accepted professional standards and practices to their work with clients.

5.3 Practice Guidelines

- a) Members will represent themselves honestly and clearly in their statements to the public (marketing material, websites, public appearances etc).
- b) Members will not exploit clients for personal, professional or financial gain.
- c) Members will clarify, adjust or withdraw from any professional relationship where conflicts of interest arise.
- d) Members will ensure that a copy of the Code of Ethics is available on request.
- e) Members will refer a client who believes that a breach of professional ethics has taken place, to PANZA's Complaints Procedure.
- f) Members will engage in regular professional development in order to update their practice and understanding of working with specific clients and different client populations.
- g) Members will take to supervision any potential compromise of their professional standards where these conflict with institutional requirements (eg. in employment by an agency).
- h) Members will contribute to the policy and quality of service in the organisations they work in, using this code as a guide.

6 SELF-CARE AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES, THE PROFESSION AND THE COMMUNITY

6.1 Value Statement

Members will aspire to high professional standards and behave in ways that uphold the integrity of their profession.

6.2 Principles

This means that members:

- a) Express the values of PANZA with regard to other members, professional colleagues, and the wider community.
- b) Work to develop collegial, rather than competitive relationships.

6.3 Practice Notes

- a) Members will not solicit clients away from other members.
- b) Members will seek assistance, mediation or arbitration when conflicts with colleagues require resolution.
- c) Members will take action when they consider another member's behavior could be judged as professional misconduct or conduct unbecoming a member of PANZA.
- d) Members will co-operate with the PANZA Committee/Complaints Panel in the event that a complaint is received against them.
- e) Members will monitor their own practice, professionalism and development through regular and ongoing training and supervision.
- f) Members will practice sufficient self-care to ensure that high standards of practice are maintained.
- g) Members will represent themselves honestly and accurately with respect to their membership status, qualifications, training and competencies.