

Ethics is defined by Webster as the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment; this system or code of morals of a particular person, religion, group, profession, etc. <http://www.thebodyworker.com/ethicsprinciples.htm>

Since each person is unique with their own experiences and beliefs, ethics can be difficult to define. *There is no concrete answer.* As a professional, we are responsible for the comfort and safety of our clients. We can serve them best when we understand their needs and rights. We can serve them best when we have examined ourselves and worked through our own issues. We can serve them best when we focus on the development of ourselves. We can only guide the client to places that we have been willing to go ourselves. The healing process can begin only when we realize that we are just facilitators in the process itself. The healing is the responsibility of the client alone. They must be given the information to determine what is right for them and what they are going through.

Informed Consent Clients need to be able to make a decision as to whether they want you to work on them and what they want you to do. This is informed consent. They must be given enough information, such as : what are the goals and purpose of the session, what are the possible consequences of the treatment, what risks are involved, what are the possible benefits of a treatment, how much time will the treatment take, how much money will the treatment cost and how will it be paid for. With this information, a client will be able to determine if they want the treatment for themselves or do they refuse the treatment.

Right of Refusal Clients have the right to refuse the service for any reason at any time. If they determine that the session should be stopped right in the middle, their needs must be respected. Be aware that a session interrupted before completed may also cause a problem in the financial agreement. Does the client owe for the whole time? This same right also applies for the practitioner. You can end a session at any time, for any reason. The bottom line is to work on only people who are nurturing to you and do not drain your energy. If your mother just died of lung cancer it may not be advisable to work on someone who smokes.

Confidentiality A client's information, both written and verbal belongs to the client. Conversations that occur during a session, should not be repeated or included in the chart notes unless it is describing their physical condition. A client may also not want to be approached outside the treatment clinic. If you see a client walking down the street and stop and say hello, this may violate their right of confidentiality, as they may not want it be known that they are seeking treatment.

Boundaries A Boundary is a space within a perimeter that may be a physical, emotional or mental space. The emotional (mental) space is determined by past experiences, values and morals. The physical space is the actual physical limits of

space that is needed by each person to feel safe and secure. Boundaries can be communicated by verbal conversations or body language. Some people, especially those with a history of abuse of some sort, may not be aware of their boundaries let alone able to maintain their boundary. Boundaries may be determined before a session to ensure the clients comfort.

Boundaries are often difficult to determine. What may be good for one person, may not be appropriate for another. It is important to explore boundaries and constantly readjust limits to accommodate each individual. When boundaries are crossed, respect may be lost in the relationship. There are a main types of boundaries we deal with include: Legal boundaries, professional boundaries, and personal boundaries.

Legal boundaries are those that of course deal with the law and the rules and regulations that are set up by each state, city or county. Your *scope of practice* is defined legally. Your scope of practice is the limits or boundaries that apply to your practice. This may include areas you can work on and what you can or cannot do. This will determine if you can do things like make diagnosis, do physical adjustments, work in the mouth or other body cavity and sell vitamins and other related items. The laws vary so much that it is impossible to discuss here. Make sure you contact your local authorities to determine what your legal boundaries are and that you work within the law.

Professional boundaries are determined by many things such as your type of practice, your business rules and practices.

Personal boundaries are just that... everything that determines your safety zone. They may be influenced by past experiences, beliefs and values. Boundary violations usually begin quietly, little by little, and without many problems. When you go through the process of looking at your values and needs and set your framework, boundary violations can be minimized. Recognizing your own boundaries will be based on your values and needs. There is no right or wrong here - only what is what is important to you.

Boundary violations usually begin quietly, little by little, and without many problems. **Healthy Boundaries and Professionalism in a Group Setting:** In addition to observing personal and professional boundaries as mentioned above, the therapist/facilitator must be able to provide balanced and measured attention to all individuals in a group setting, respecting the needs and intentions of each individual without sacrificing service and attention to the larger group. Care must be taken to not allow one person's journey to interfere with, overtly threaten or monopolize the group's time while simultaneously caring for that same individual in a responsible and compassionate manner. The therapist/facilitator must have the tools necessary to assist a participant in successfully releasing and leaving an acutely overwhelming episode of release/discovery while

suggesting immediate resources or the facilitation of initial support as appropriate to the situation should it be necessary for any individual to leave the room.

Transference occurs when the client makes the professional relationship, personal. Indications of transference are things like the client brings you additional gifts or asks to see you for lunch or outside the treatment. Personal conversation can also be an indicator. What you do depends on each situation. This can occur when a client is lacking in sufficient resources to take care of themselves. Unresolved needs, feelings and issues are transferred to the helper or caretaker.

Counter-transference occurs when the therapist is unable to separate the therapeutic relationship from their personal feelings surrounding the client. Some of examples of this is when a therapist feels inadequate if the client is not making progress or excessive thinking about the client after the treatment is over. This occurs usually when the therapist plays the helper or fixer role. We begin thinking that we can get rid of the person's pain when we really don't do anything but facilitate the clients growth for their own healing of pain. We begin to think that *only* we can fix the problem and we have all the correct answers.