

Board Certified in Problem Gambling: BCPG CODE OF ETHICS

Principle 1: Non-Discrimination – *The BCPG values diversity. I, as a BCPG, will not discriminate against clients or professionals based on racial or ethnic background, religion/spiritual beliefs, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, political beliefs, treatment history, criminal justice history/status, or mental/physical disability and other cultural identities that are important to the client and I will:*

- Avoid bringing personal or professional issues into the counseling relationship and guard the individual rights and personal dignity of clients through an awareness of the impact of stereotyping and discrimination.
- Strive to treat all individuals with impartiality and objectivity based solely on their personal merits and mindful of the dignity of all human persons. As such, I shall not impose my personal values on my clients.
- Relate to all clients with empathy and understanding no matter what their diagnosis or personal history and with acceptance and openness regardless of treatment history or criminal justice status or background.
- Respect the right of others to hold opinions, beliefs, and values different from my own.

Principle 2: Responsibility – *The BCPG espouses objectivity and integrity. I, as a BCPG, will maintain the highest standards of service and I will:*

- Assist in educating and helping others acquire knowledge and skills in dealing with disordered gambling.
- Accept the obligation, when supervising others, to facilitate professional development of these individuals by providing accurate and current information.
- Understand that most property in the healing professions is intellectual property and shall not present the ideas or formulations of others as if they were my own. Rather, I shall give appropriate credit to their originators both in written and spoken communication.
- Regard the use of any copyrighted material without permission or the payment of royalty to be theft.
- Maintain respect for institutional policies and management functions of agencies and institutions within which the services are being performed but will take initiative toward improving such policies when it will better serve the interest of the client.

Principle 3: Competence – *The BCPG recognizes that the profession is founded on national standards of competency which promote the best interests of society, the client, the professional and of the profession as a whole. I, as a BCPG, will recognize the need for ongoing education as a component of professional competency and I will:*

- Recognize boundaries and limitations of competencies and not offer services or use techniques outside of my professional competencies and scope.
- Maintain competence in my practice through continuing education, constantly improving my knowledge and skills in those approaches most effective with my specific clients.
- Recognize the effect of impairment on professional performance and be willing to seek appropriate treatment for myself or for a colleague. I shall support peer assistance programs in this respect.

Principle 4: Legal and Moral Standards - *The BCPG upholds the legal and accepted moral codes which pertain to professional conduct; I, as a BCPG, will be aware of and follow those laws and regulations that are relevant both personally and professionally and I will:*

- Make every attempt to be fully cognizant of all federal and state laws that pertain to the practice of counseling disordered gamblers and their families.
- Not claim either directly or by implication, professional qualifications or affiliations that I do not possess.
- Understand that the determination of a law or regulation is unjust, is not a matter of preference or opinion but a matter of rational investigation, deliberation, and dispute.
- Understand that justice extends beyond individual relationships to the community and society; therefore, I shall participate in activities that promote the health and well-being of my community and profession.

Principle 5: Client Welfare - *The BCPG understands that the primary professional responsibility and loyalty is to the welfare of the client. I, as a BCPG, will hold, as a primary guide, the client's best interests regarding public health, safety, and welfare and I will:*

- Take all measures to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of client information within the limitations of legally mandated reporting requirements and except where the client has given specific, written, informed and limited consent.
- Terminate counseling and consulting relationship when it is reasonably clear to the counselor that the client is not benefiting from the relationship.
- Take care to provide services in an environment which will ensure the privacy and safety of the client at all times and ensures the appropriateness of service delivery and discloses the code of ethics, professional loyalties, and responsibilities to all clients.
- Hold the welfare of the client paramount when making any decisions or recommendations concerning referral, treatment procedures or termination of treatment.
- Facilitate clients' self-efficacy; by encouraging them to act according to their capabilities. Avoid

doing for others what they can readily do for themselves. Likewise, I shall not insist on doing what I perceive as good without reference to what the client perceives as good and necessary.

Principle 6: Client Relationship - *The BCPG values the integrity of the counseling relationship and respects the fundamental human right of all individuals to self-determination and to make decisions that they consider in their own best interest. I, as a BCPG will be open and clear about the nature, extent, probable effectiveness, and cost of those services to allow each individual to make an informed decision of their care and I will:*

- Inform the client and obtain the client's agreement in areas likely to affect the client's participation, including the recording of an interview, the use of interview material for training purposes, and/or observation of an interview by another person.
- Not engage in professional relationships or commitments that conflict with family members, friends, close associates, or others whose welfare might be jeopardized by such a dual relationship.
- Not exploit relationships with current or former clients for personal gain, including social or business relationships.
- Not, under any circumstances, engage in sexual behavior with current or former clients and not accept as a client anyone with whom I have engaged in sexual behavior.
- Because a relationship begins with a power differential, I shall not exploit relationships with current or former clients for personal gain, including social or business relationships.
- Not accept substantial gifts from clients, other treatment organizations, or the providers of materials or services used in my practice.

Principle 7: Confidentiality - *The BCPG embraces the duty of protecting the client's rights under confidentiality. I, as a BCPG, will not disclose confidential information acquired in teaching, practice, or investigation without appropriately executed consent and I will:*

- Provide the client their rights regarding confidentiality, in writing, as part of informing the client in any areas likely to affect the client's confidentiality. This includes the recording of the clinical interview, the use of material for insurance purposes, and the use of material for training or observation by another party.
- Make appropriate provisions for the maintenance of confidentiality and the ultimate disposition of confidential records. I shall ensure that the data obtained is necessary and appropriate to services being provided and secured by the available security methodology.
- Adhere to all federal and state laws regarding confidentiality and the counselor's responsibility to lawfully report information in specific circumstances to the appropriate authorities.
- Understand that the right of confidentiality cannot always be upheld if it serves to protect abuse, neglect, or exploitation of any person or leaves another at risk of bodily harm.
- Use clinical and other material in teaching and/or writing only when there is no identifying information about the parties involved.

Principle 8: Remuneration - *The BCPG supports financial arrangements in professional practice that are in accord with standards that safeguard the best interests of the client, of the counselor and of the profession. I, as a BCPG, will:*

- Carefully consider the ability of the client to meet the financial cost in establishing rates for professional services.
- Not send or receive any commission or rebate or any other form of remuneration for referral of clients for professional services nor will I engage in fee splitting.
- Not use my personal relationship with clients to promote personal gain or profit of my agency or commercial enterprise of any kind.

Principle 9: Preventing Harm - *The BCPG understands that every decision and action has an ethical implication leading either to benefit or harm. I, as a BCPG, will carefully consider whether any decisions or actions has the potential to produce harm of a physical, psychological, financial, legal, or spiritual nature before implementing them and I will:*

- Refrain from using any methods that could be considered coercive such as threats, negative labeling, and attempts to provoke shame or humiliation.
- Make no requests of clients that are not necessary as part of the agreed treatment plan.
- Terminate the professional relationship when it is reasonably clear that the client is not benefiting from the relationship/treatment.
- Understand an obligation to protect individuals, institutions, and the profession from harm that might be done by the unethical behavior of others. Consequently, I am aware of the appropriate process for resolving concerns about the potentially unethical or harmful behavior another individual, institution, or agency informally through bringing the concern to the attention of the individual, institution or agency or through formal processes such as reporting to appropriate committees on professional ethics, licensing or credentialing boards or institutional authorities (so long as reporting does not violate any issues of confidentiality).

Principle 10: Societal Obligations - *The BCPG advocates for changes in public policy and legislation to afford opportunity and choice for all persons whose lives are impaired by pathological gambling and I, as a BCPG, will:*

- Actively engage, to the best of my ability, in the legislative processes, educational institutions, and the public to change public policy and legislation to make possible opportunities and choice of service for all human beings of any ethnic or social background whose lives are impaired by problem and disordered gambling.