

# ETHICAL ISSUES

Beverly H. Bullock, LCSW  
Developer

# Ethical Issues



## Competencies and Learning Objectives

1. Trainee will be exposed the meaning of ethics, including the components involved in ethical decision making.
2. Trainees will understand the importance of cultural differences in their work with families.
3. Trainees will understand the origins of their own values and how those values affect their work with families.
  1. Given the definition of values, trainees will identify their own values and how they originated.
  2. Given their own values, trainees will recognize how those values may influence their work with families.

# Ethical Issues



## Competencies and Learning Objectives

4. Trainees will become familiar with the concept of confidentiality.
  - a. Given the definition of confidentiality, trainees will identify its limits and how it can be broken in very subtle ways.
  - b. Given the definition of informed consent, trainees will be able to explain it to clients in their work with families.
  - c. Given a sample Code of Ethics, trainees will recognize its key components and explain its necessity in certain professions (i.e., nursing, social work, etc.).

# Ethical Issues



## Competencies and Learning Objectives

5. Trainees will become familiar with setting boundaries, to include self-disclosure, in their work with families.
  - a. Given examples of situations, trainees will demonstrate how to address situations in which boundaries could be breached.
  - b. Given the definition of self-disclosure, trainees will distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate self-disclosure in client settings
6. Trainees will be able to identify other issues which result in ethical dilemmas.
  - a. Dual Relationships
  - b. Special Favors
  - c. Giving and Receiving Gifts
  - d. Self-Determination

# Ethical Issues



All professions , who provide some form of human services, have a Code of Ethics

The following slides provide websites for viewing the Code of Ethics for Nursing, Human Services, Counseling, and Social Work.

# Ethical Issues



## Websites:

Nursing Code of Ethics

<https://www.nursingworld.org/>

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>

Human Services

<https://www.nationalhumanservices.org/ethical-standards-for-hs-professionals>

Social Work Code of Ethics

<https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics>

Counseling Code of Ethics

<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

# Ethical Issues

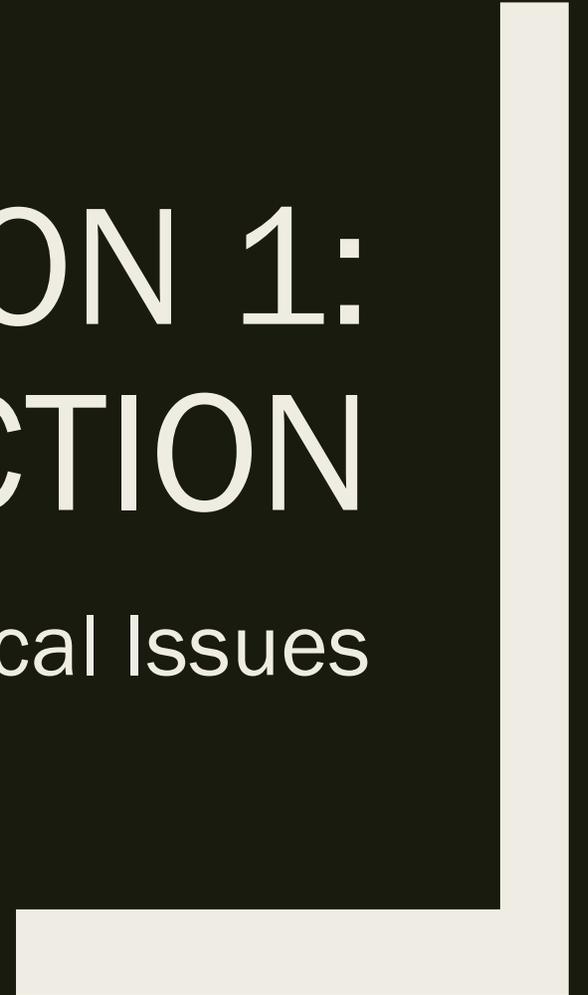


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1. Egan, G. (2002). The skilled helper: A problem-management approach to helping. (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). United States: Wadsworth. <https://www.hippa.com/>
2. National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2005). Code of ethical conduct and statement of commitment. (Updated, May 2011). Retrieved April 24, 2012. Available: [On-line] [http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical\\_conduct](http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical_conduct)
3. Mayer, L. M. (2005). "Professional boundaries in dual relationships: A social work dilemma." Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics, 2(2). Retrieved March 22, 2006.
4. Rosenthal, H. (2003). Human Services Dictionary. New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge.

# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Ethical Issues



# Introduction



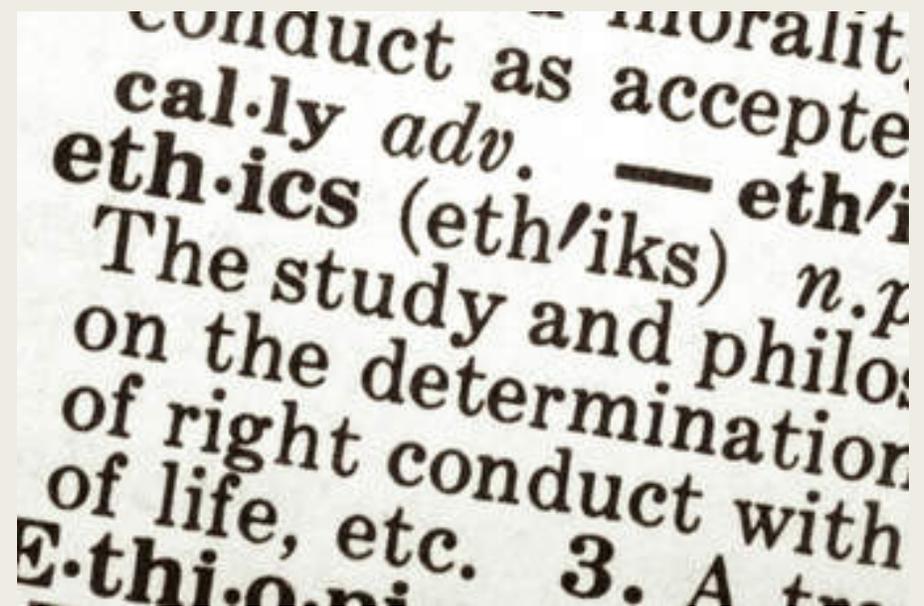
**So, what is ethics? Look it up!**



# Introduction



Ethics is a framework for determining what is right and wrong and how specific situations should be handled.



# Introduction

*Write down as many ethical issues you can think of.*

*Don't worry if you have just a few. We will learn them today!*



# Introduction

The following slides consist of a glossary of terms that will help you better understand ethics. **Write down examples**, in your own words, that help you understand each definition.





# Introduction

## Glossary of Terms:

**BIAS:** Prejudice or unfair attitude.

**BOUNDARY:** The limit or extent of a system; the point where one system ends and another begins.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Ethical stance suggesting that no information given to you by the client is divulged; keeping information given by the client private.

*Write down examples, in your own words, that help you understand each definition.*

# Introduction

## Glossary of Terms:

**CULTURE:** Traditions, special interests that are identified in a certain population; shared values, behaviors, and symbols of a specific set of people that are transmitted from one generation to the next.

**DISCRIMINATION:** Treating persons differently because of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, etc.

**ETHICAL DILEMMAS:** Situations in which ethical guidelines conflict.

*Write down examples, in your own words, that help you understand each definition.*

# Introduction

## Glossary of Terms:

**FEE SPLITTING:** Unethical practice to which a provider receives a fee for making a referral.

**INFORMED CONSENT:** Making clients aware of their rights and responsibilities in accepting services, including the limits of confidentiality.

**INVOLUNTARY SERVICE:** Providing services to someone who does not willingly request or want the service.

*Write down examples, in your own words, that help you understand each definition.*

# Introduction

## Glossary of Terms:

**JUSTICE:** Notion that the helper is fair and provides equal treatment to clients regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, or economic status.

**MALPRACTICE:** Bad, unethical practice which could harm a client - violates ethical guidelines.

**MORALS:** Behavioral guidelines and manners set by society.

*Write down examples, in your own words, that help you understand each definition.*

# Introduction

## Glossary of Terms:

**PREJUDICE:** An irrational attitude of hostility directed against an individual, a group, a race, or its supposed characteristics.

**PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATION:** Licensed mental health professionals cannot reveal information in court that clients have conveyed in a confidential session without client's permission. Varies from state to state. Does not apply to malpractice, child abuse, homicidal/suicidal issues. Human services workers unlicensed would not have privileged communication.

**SANCTION:** Penalty for violating ethical principle.

*Write down examples, in your own words, that help you understand each definition.*

# Introduction

## Glossary of Terms:

**SELF-DISCLOSURE:** Making decision about what to reveal about yourself to others.

**STEREOTYPE:** Belief that members of certain groups always or generally behave in specific ways.

**VALUES:** Assumptions, convictions, or beliefs about the manner in which people should behave and the principles that should govern behavior; the worth of something.

*Write down examples, in your own words, that help you understand each definition.*

# Introduction

**Codes of ethics provide guidance;  
help us make decisions about  
which course of action to take.**

# Introduction

**Personal values** are the bedrock of ethics as they guide what a person considers good/bad or desirable/undesirable. Values create the foundation for personal and societal judgment and action. It is important then before discussing ethics to have a clear understanding of the personal values that guide us.

# Introduction

## What are your personal values?

They include biases, passion, and social issues that may present strong feelings, i.e., abortion

Write them  
down.



# Introduction

Let's test your knowledge so far...



# Introduction

**True or False:**

Ethics is a framework for determining what is right and wrong and how specific situations should be handled.

# Introduction

**TRUE!**

Ethics is a framework for determining what is right and wrong and how specific situations should be handled.

Ethics becomes very important in helping us deal with ethical dilemmas.

# Introduction

**True or False:**

Personal values do not guide ethical behavior.

# Introduction

**FALSE!**

Personal values are the bedrock of ethics as they guide what a person considers good/bad or desirable/undesirable.

**You need a clear understanding of your personal values.**

# SECTION 2: ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Ethical Issues



# Ethical Dilemmas

**Ethical Dilemmas** - Ethical or moral dilemmas are situations real or imagined where a person *must* choose between courses of action, all of which are morally unacceptable.

Example: The question of whether it is right to steal food in order to feed one's starving family.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Examples of Ethical Dilemmas

- Confidentiality
- Culture & Values
- Boundaries
- Dual Relationships
- Special Favors
- Giving or Receiving Gifts
- Right to Self-determination

# Ethical Dilemmas

**Confidentiality** is an ethical stance suggesting that no information given to you by the client is divulged; keeping information given by the client private.

**BUT! When can confidentiality be breached?** Write down as many as you can think of!

# Ethical Dilemmas

**Confidentiality can be breached for the following reasons:**

- When sexual, physical, or mental abuse, or neglect of a child is suspected, either by something observed or by something the child says.
- If the individual tells you that they are suicidal or homicidal.
- If the individual gives you written permission to disclose the information.
- If there is a court order for you to disclose the information.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality and Informed Consent

Informed consent involves the worker's responsibility to inform the client of the limits of confidentiality.

The worker should fully explain the limits of confidentiality to the client, including the need for agencies to:

1. Document interaction with clients
2. How the documentation is used
3. Where it is kept in the agency

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality

Sometimes, confidentiality can be broken in subtle ways.

### Case 1

Hank and Sam are in the break room where they are discussing the case of one of Sam's clients who is using illegal drugs. They are not aware of other people who are around them.

Are Hank and Sam breaching confidentiality?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality

**Yes!** It is very possible that they may be overheard by someone who is also in the lounge. This person may even know Sam's client.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality

Sometimes, confidentiality can be broken in subtle ways.

### Case 2

Wanda is a 18 year-old mother with a one-year-old and an infant. She has been struggling without family support for some time. Wanda's mother calls you to discuss her concerns about her. As you talk with her, you are so comfortable with her that you begin to share information about Wanda's behavior.

Does this conversation breach confidentiality?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality

**Yes!** If you do not have a Release of Information, specifically giving you permission to talk with Wanda's mother, it is a breach of confidentiality. You may, however, listen to what Wanda's mother tells you, but you cannot give her any information about Wanda.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality

Sometimes, confidentiality can be broken in subtle ways.

### Case 3

Mary has been visiting with the McDonald family for several weeks. She has become increasingly concerned about bruises she sees on Kevin's face. She decides to call Child Protective Services (CPS) to discuss her concerns.

Is this a breach of confidentiality?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality

**NO!** This is not a breach of confidentiality. As a mandated reporter, you are obligated to contact Child Protective Services (CPS) if you suspect child abuse or neglect.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## **Confidentiality and Technology**

With the evolution of technology, it presents more ways for workers to breach confidentiality.

**List all of the technology you use in your current job.**

# Ethical Dilemmas

## **Confidentiality and Technology**

Technology offers opportunities for improving the quality and efficiency of care for those we work with. But it can also cause some ethical dilemmas.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality and Technology

What do you do...

1. What do you do with confidential information that you no longer need?
2. How can you be sure that your faxed information reaches the intended source?
3. How do you ensure that your emails are secure?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality and Technology

There are strategies which can enhance the ability to keep things confidential.

- Shedding no longer needed confidential material
- Encrypted emails
- Disclaimer for faxes & emails

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Confidentiality and Technology

The following is an example of a disclaimer from a child care center email signature.

*“This email is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is private, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, retransmission, conversion to hard copy, copying, reproduction, circulation, publication, dissemination or other use of this information by persons or entities other than the intended recipient is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from any computer, disk drive, diskette, or other storage device or media.”*

# Ethical Dilemmas

Let's test your knowledge so far...



# Ethical Dilemmas

## Fill in the Blank

The individual's responsibility to inform the client of the limits of confidentiality is known as \_\_\_\_\_.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Fill in the Blank

The individual's responsibility to inform the client of the limits of confidentiality is known as **informed consent**.

# Ethical Dilemmas

True or False?

The increased advancements in technology creates more challenges for confidentiality.

# Ethical Dilemmas

**TRUE!**

Technology and its on-going advancements makes keeping individuals information confidential very challenging.

As professionals, we need to be prudent about our documentation and how it is used and viewed.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## HIPAA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

In 1996, the US government created a national standards for electronic health care transactions and code sets, unique health identifiers, and security. These laws are designed to protect clients as they interact with different agencies.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## HIPAA: Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

HIPAA directly affects healthcare providers all across the nation. It will be a culture change and alter the way the healthcare sector does business. It also affects the health insurance business, and the people healthcare practitioners do business with.

<https://www.hipaa.com/>

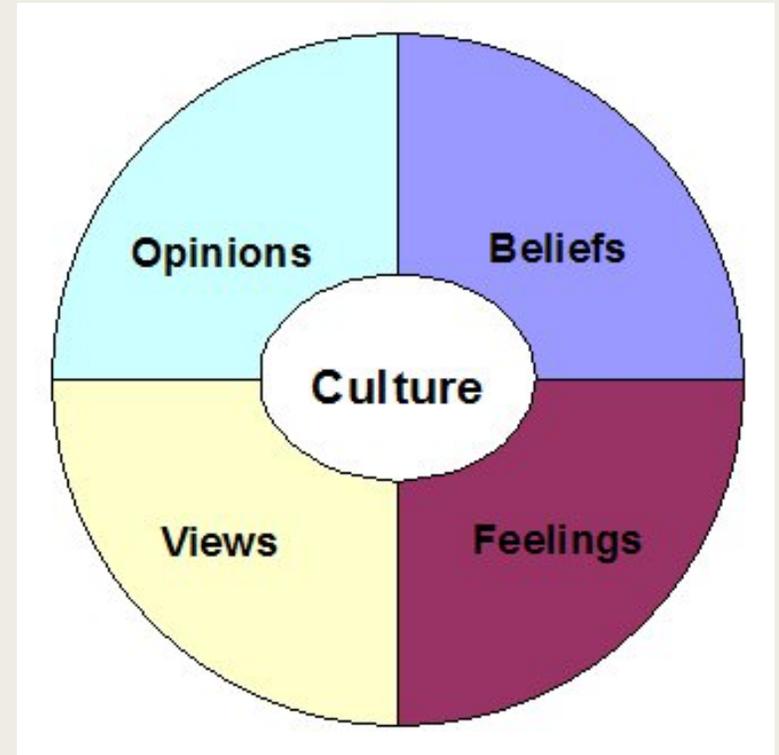
**Do the HIPPA laws apply to your agency? Make sure you know your responsibilities.**

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Culture and Values

The broad definition of culture includes different races, ethnic groups, age, gender, being a single parent, and even family customs.

What are some of the challenges you may face in working with a family whose culture is different from your?



# Ethical Dilemmas

## Culture and Values (cont.)

If you named....

- \*language barriers
- \*difference in values/opinions
- \*not understanding customs and norms

Think about the challenges in working with clients whose culture is different from yours.

# Ethical Dilemmas



## Culture and Values

Values are “one’s beliefs of how something is or how someone should behave, or the worth given to something.”

So, from where do values come?

Values can come from our family’s beliefs, our life experiences, and/or education. Life experiences and education can create a change in our values.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Culture and Values

### Case 1

*Mrs. Wilson is a 70-year old who is raising her infant great-granddaughter because her granddaughter is on drugs and her daughter is mentally ill. Mrs. Wilson has raised 10 children of her own and feels that she knows how to handle infant care. She believes in allowing the baby to cry because she does not want to “spoil” her. She also sees no problem with mixing a little regular milk in the baby’s formula, although the literature about infant care recommends against this.*

What are the cultural or value issues?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Culture and Values

In the case of Mrs. Wilson illustrates the “generation gap” when grandparents are raising their grandchildren. The culture of raising children was very different when she raised her children. Since she felt as though she did a good job with her children, she may not be open to learning something new or to change.

Listening to her stories about raising children, praising her efforts at raising her grandchildren, and providing some education about the latest strategies for raising children may be helpful.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Culture and Values

### Case 2

Maria is a 21-year old Hispanic mother of a 2-year-old baby. She speaks very broken English and has a poor understanding of the English language. She has not been taking her child to the doctor for routine checkups or when he has been sick. From what you can understand from her broken English, she does not believe in doctors since her mother died following a surgical procedure, and she blames herself for talking her mother into having the surgery.

What are the culture or value issues in this case?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Culture and Values

In the case of Maria, the cultural barrier of language can produce difficulties with communication. This difficulty may result in misunderstanding, i.e., she may not have understood why her mother's surgery was not successful. The lack of trust for doctors may impact her willingness to get medical care for her child

Again, listening to Maria and trying to understand her reasoning will be helpful.

# Ethical Dilemmas

Let's test your knowledge so far...



# Ethical Dilemmas

## Multiple-Choice

Values come from:

- a. Our parents/families
- b. Our experiences
- c. Our education
- d. All of the above

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Culture and Values

d. All of the above

Values do come from parents/families, our experiences and our education. It is important to be aware of your values so that you do not put your values onto the client.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries

What are boundaries?

It refers to the limit or extent of a system; the point where one system ends and another begins.

How does this definition relate to our clients?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries

It's the understanding of roles and functioning.

For example, if adults represent one system and children represent another system, there is a “natural boundary” between the two systems.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries

Boundaries are often defined by roles.

So, what are the roles of parents?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries

Boundaries are often defined by roles.

So, what are the roles of parents?

If you thought of: financial provider, nurturer, problem solver, protector, role model, decision maker, disciplinarian, you are correct.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries



Children also have roles.

What roles do children have?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries



Children also have roles.

What roles do children have?

If you thought of abiding by parents' rules, performing their best in school, and showing parents love and respect, you are correct.

But, what happens when these boundaries are violated?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries

When boundaries are violated...

- parents depend on their children for nurturing;
- parents who allow their children to be their confidant;
- children who make decisions in the family;
- “Parentified;” children;
- parents who have sexual relations with their children

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries

Strategies for helping families and children when there are boundary violations:

- Parentified child: help parent with decision making skills; give parents examples of activities that they can do with their child which are appropriate; help child do more child-like activities, i.e., playing with other children
- Parents who use children as confidant: help parents develop adult relationships; help parent improve their self image; have parents set limits with children, i.e., bedtime, sleeping arrangements in their own room
- Parents who expect nurturance from their children: help parents develop adult relationships; help parents discover their strengths; help parents learn to nurture themselves

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries & Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure can affect boundary issues. For example, the information that a client learns about the worker helps them formulate an opinion about the worker.

Think about what you would want the client to know about you, or what information would be helpful for the client to know.

The next two slides have a “Self-Disclosure Quiz.”

# Ethical Dilemmas

## SELF-DISCLOSURE QUIZ

Read each statement and decide if you should disclose the following information:

	Yes	No	?
My relationship with my significant other			
Whether or not I have children			
The ages of my children, if applicable			
My age			
How much money I make			
My experience with children/families			
How I was raised			
My relationship with my significant other			

# Ethical Dilemmas

## SELF-DISCLOSURE QUIZ

Read each statement and decide if you should disclose the following information:

	Yes	No	?
My abuse/ACES history			
How I learned to cope with abuse, if applicable			
My substance abuse history			
Positive ways I've learned to cope with stress			
Ways to cope with loss			
My current abusive relationship			
Helpful parenting tips I've learned			

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries and Self-Disclosure

How did you do?

Even though some of these questions have a definite “yes” or “no” answer, for others, it depends on the setting, the relationship, the policies of the agency, how it affects the client, and if it is helpful.

The next slide will present “rules for self-disclosure.”

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries and Self-Disclosure

### “Rules for Self-Disclosure”

1. The disclosure should be made to benefit the client.
2. The disclosure should be relevant and related to the client’s problem situation.
3. The disclosure should not burden the client.
4. The disclosure should not make the worker/counselor appear incompetent
5. The disclosure could serve as a way to “role model.”

# Ethical Dilemmas

Let's test your knowledge so far...



# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries and Self-Disclosure

True or False

Self-disclosure can be a very valuable tool to use for support, encouragement and role modeling. It should be used carefully, however, and only to benefit the client.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Boundaries and Self-Disclosure

### True

Since trying to decide the appropriateness of self-disclosure can be difficult, it is a good idea to talk with your supervisor or a colleague if you are concerned about your decision.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Other Dilemmas

Ethical dilemmas can occur anytime. You are aware that a dilemma exists when you feel uncomfortable with a situation and/or the decision that you may be asked to make. Your feelings and thoughts may be different than your agency's policies, or you may make an error in judgement because you want to help the client so badly that you lose your objectivity.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Other Dilemmas

- Dual Relationships
- Special Favors
- Giving and Receiving Gifts
- Right to Self-determination



# Ethical Dilemmas

## Dual Relationships

A “dual relationship” occurs when the helper enters into a personal or business relationship with the client.

For example, the client may have started a business, and the worker, in an attempt to be supportive, invests money in the client’s business. The business fails and the helper is left with the decision of what to do. This situation can jeopardize the professional relationship between the helper and the client.

Think about how you would handle the ethical dilemma.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Special Favors

Sometimes, because of your position or influence, you may be asked for special favors by people who you know or with whom you have some sort of relationship. If the favor requested is against your agency's policy, you may experience an ethical dilemma.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Special Favors

### Case Example

*Ms. Jones is the assistant director of a local day care center. She is approached by her cousin who has a 45 month old child who she wants to be cared for in the center. The child, however, is not toilet trained and the center has a policy of not accepting children age 3 and older who are not toilet trained. The cousin wants Ms. Jones to use her influence to have the child accepted at the center.*

Think about how you would handle the ethical dilemma.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Giving and Receiving Gifts

Many agencies have a policy about giving and receiving gifts. Some agencies state that there is to be no exchange of gifts. Other agencies state that the exchange depends on the amount of the gift or the circumstances. Sometimes, a dilemma occurs when the helper thinks the client will be offended if the gift is not accepted.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Giving and Receiving Gifts

### Case Example

*Mary has been assigned to the Aisa family to help with parenting issues. During the four months that Mary has worked with the family, Ms. Aisa has made wonderful progress and will probably not continue to require Mary's services. As a thank you for Mary's help, Ms. Aisa has made her a special cake that represents appreciation in her culture. Mary is aware that the cake has a special gift inside, and that it may be money or jewelry. She doesn't want to accept the cake, but she doesn't want to offend Ms. Aisa, especially since everything has been going so well.*

Think about how you would handle the ethical dilemma.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Right to Self-Determination

According to the ethical principals of human service professionals, the client has the right to self-determination. This means that the client is in charge of their own life and their decisions.

There are situations when the helper thinks the client is using poor judgement or is making a severe mistake; however, the client is still in charge of their own life.

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Right to Self-Determination

### Case Example

*Evelyn is a 34-year old mother of three children. She has always struggled with relationships, but for the last six months she has been living with Bob, who carries a diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder. When he takes his medication, he is able to work and help Evelyn with expenses. She has even been able to return to college, where is is pursuing a degree in Psychology.*

*However, Bob drinks alcohol frequently and is non-compliant with his medication when he is intoxicated. During these times, Bob becomes aggressive. Last month, she was hospitalized for two days for broken ribs and required surgery to set her broken wrist. Evelyn verbalizes a desire to stay in the relationship and makes excuses for Bob, saying he always apologizes after the beatings and says he'll never do it again. Last week he even paid for a babysitter so they could go away for the weekend to show his remorse.*

Think about how you would handle the ethical dilemma?

# Ethical Dilemmas

## Summary

Ethics is a very important issue for anyone who provides any form of human services. Ethical dilemmas can occur at any point. It is essential that helpers be aware of their biases and values and use good judgement.



# Ethical Dilemmas

## Quiz

Please respond to the following questions.