

The Foundation for Psychotherapy and Counselling

FPC Code of Ethics and Practice 2019

1. Definitions:

BACP – British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

BPC – British Psychoanalytic Council

Client – person receiving therapy from a therapist under a contract

Contract – agreement for the provision of therapy by a therapist to a patient or client

CPD – continuing professional development

CPD Guidelines – detailed CPD guidance issued by the FPC Ethics and Professional Standards Committee available online in the Members' Section of the FPC website

Ethical Principles – the principles described in 5 below

FPC Member – a therapist whose name appears in the FPC Members' Directory

Patient – person receiving therapy from a therapist under a contract

Psychodynamic/psychoanalytic psychotherapy – see 2 below.

Registrant Body – BPC, UKCP or BACP

Start-date – 2nd May 2019

Therapist – includes counsellors and psychodynamic, psychoanalytic and group-analytic psychotherapists

Therapy – psychodynamic and/or psychoanalytic psychotherapy provided by a therapist to a patient or client

UKCP – UK Council for Psychotherapy

2. Psychodynamic/psychoanalytic psychotherapy:

This Code uses a broad definition of psychodynamic/psychoanalytic psychotherapy. This definition refers to the human potential for dynamic self-alteration and is informed by the principles and concepts underlying the psychoanalytic model, including the central role of the unconscious, free association, transference, countertransference and containment. It incorporates a developmental perspective, and assumes limitations on conscious influence, ubiquity of conflict, internal representation of relationships, mental defences, and that complex meanings can be attached to experience (Fonagy, 2015). The treatment focus is upon: identification and recurrence of interpersonal themes in the therapy relationship and other interpersonal relationships; exploration of affect and attempts to avoid the experience or expression of affect; discussion of the past and its influence on the present; and exploration of fantasy life (Shedler, 2010).

3. Start-date:

The start-date for this Code of Ethics is the 2nd May 2019. With effect from this start-date, this Code replaces all previous FPC Codes of Ethics and Practice which are now superseded and without effect (except regarding members' conduct prior to the start-date).

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4. Background to introduction of this Code:

- Following important changes in the regulatory environment, the FPC Board resolved in 2016 to make registration with a registrant body an unconditional requirement of membership of FPC.
- BPC requires its registrants to comply with the BPC Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines. UKCP requires its registrants to comply with the UKCP Code of Ethics. BACP requires its registrants to accept the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions. These Codes of Ethics and the BACP Ethical Framework each have been drafted and developed by the relevant registrant body following extensive consultation, advice and discussion.
- BPC operates its own Complaints Procedure for the determination of alleged breaches of its Code of Ethics by its registrants. Similarly, UKCP operates its own Complaints and Conduct Process for complaints involving its registrants and BACP operates its own Professional Conduct Procedure for complaints involving its registrants.
- FPC no longer hears or determines complaints involving FPC members and no longer operates a complaints procedure. Any complaint involving a FPC member is now initiated, heard and determined according to the complaints procedure of the registrant body with which the FPC member is registered.
- FPC's Ethics Committee reviewed the purpose of FPC having its own Code of Ethics, now that FPC members' professional conduct regarding members of the public is regulated by their relevant registrant body and not by FPC. This Code is the outcome of that review, which included internal and external consultation processes.

5. Statement of Ethical Principles:

The responsibility to work ethically is central to the therapist's contract. This is because the patient or client is trusting the therapist with personal and sensitive information in a confidential setting in the expectation of obtaining relief from suffering. The suffering patient or client is psychologically vulnerable. To work ethically is to make the interests of the suffering patient or client the therapist's primary concern by engaging actively and critically, and as a matter of course for the duration of the contract, with the ethical principles of **Beneficence/Non-maleficence; Respect; Trust; Autonomy; and Justice.**

6. First Ethical Requirement

The Ethical Principles inform each of the BPC Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines, the UKCP Code of Ethics and the BACP Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions. Consequently, it is an ethical requirement of membership of FPC that the FPC member engage actively and critically with the Ethical Principles and their relevance to the performance of their contract, and to that end, engage actively and critically with the Code of Ethics (BPC/UKCP) or Ethical Framework (BACP) of the registrant body with which they are registered.

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7. Second Ethical Requirement

Justice and the interests of public protection require that the patient or client has a right of complaint and, where appropriate, a remedy, if their therapist practises unethically. FPC no longer operates a complaint procedure. Each of the registrant bodies operates a complaint procedure. Consequently, it is a contractual and ethical requirement of membership of FPC that the FPC member register with and in a timely manner renew their registration with one of the registrant bodies.

8. Ethical Expectations

In addition to the above requirements, and consistently with their qualification from WPF in psychodynamic/psychoanalytic psychotherapy, which is the primary criterion for eligibility for membership of FPC, FPC members are expected to:

- Engage actively and critically with the CPD Guidelines;
- Evidence their annual participation in sufficient CPD activities with a psychodynamic/psychoanalytic orientation by completion of the annual CPD online form in accordance with the CPD Guidelines referable to the relevant CPD year.

May 2019

