Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions
Corey, Corey, and Callanan
Chapter 1
Psychology 475
Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling
Listen to the audio lecture while viewing these slides

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling
Professional Ethics

• Professional organizations have established codes of ethics that provide broad guidelines for substance abuse counselors.

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling
Problems a counselor may encounter when striving towards an ethically responsible practice

• Issues cannot be handled solely by ethics codes.
• Codes lack clarity and precision.
• Learning the ethics will not prepare counselors for ethical practice.

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling
More problems

• Ethics codes are designed more to protect professionals than to protect clients.
• Conflicts sometimes emerge within ethics codes.
• Ethics codes tend to be reactive rather than proactive.

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling
More problems

• Personal values may conflict with a specific standard.
• Codes may conflict with institutional polices and practices.

Herlihy and Corey (1966) suggest the code of ethics fulfill three objectives:

• 1. To educate professionals about sound ethical conduct.
• 2. Ethical standards provide a mechanism for professional accountability.
• 3. Code of ethics serve as a catalyst for improving practice.
Ethics: Codes and the Law

- Law: The minimum standards society will tolerate; these standards are enforced by government.

Professional Monitoring of Practice

Ethical Decision Making

- Key terms:
  - Values: beliefs and attitudes that provide direction to everyday living.
  - Ethics: beliefs we hold about what constitutes right conduct.
  - Morality: perspectives of right and proper conduct.

More key terms

- Ethics: represents aspirational goals, or the maximum or ideal standards set by the profession, and they are enforced by professionals associations, national certification boards, and government boards that regulate professions.

More key terms

- Ethical conduct: the combination of knowledge and a clear conception of the philosophical principles and underlying ethical codes.
- Community Standards (or mores): vary on a interdisciplinary, theoretical, and geographical basis.

Levels of Ethical Practice

- Mandatory Ethics: Counselors merely act in compliance with minimal standards.
- Aspirational Ethics: the highest standards of conduct to which professional counselors can aspire.
Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Principle Ethics and Virtue Ethics

• Principle Ethics
• Virtue Ethics

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Four Core Virtues

• Prudence
• Integrity
• Respectfulness
• Benevolence

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Characteristics of Virtuous Professionals

• Motivated to do what is right
• Possess vision and discernment
• Possess self-awareness
• Understand the mores of their community

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

Basic Moral Principles

• Basic Moral Principles that form the foundation of functioning at the highest ethical level as a professional
  • Autonomy: promotion of self-determination
  • Nonmaleficence: avoiding harm

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

More moral principles

• Beneficence: promoting good for others
• Justice: fairness
• Fidelity: honor their commitments
• Veracity: truthfulness

Psyc 475 – Professional Ethics in Addictions Counseling

When making ethical decisions ask yourself:

• “What values should I rely on?”
• “What values do I hold?”
• “How do my values affect my work with clients?”
• “Why do I hold certain values?”
Feminist Model
Hill, Glaser, and Harden (1995):
1. Recognize a problem
2. Defining the problem
3. Developing solutions
4. Choose a solution
5. Reviewing the process
6. Implementing and evaluating
7. Continuing reflection

Social Constructivism Model:
A. Obtain information
B. Assess the nature of the relationship
C. Consult valued colleagues
D. Negotiate when there is a disagreement
E. Respond in a way that allows for a reasonable consensus

Authors model:
1. Identify problem
2. Identify potential issues involved
3. Review relevant ethics codes
4. Know applicable laws and regulations
5. Obtain consultation

Authors model continued
6. Consider possible and probable courses of action
7. Enumerate consequences of various decisions
8. Decide on what appears to be the best course of action