

The Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis

CODE OF ETHICS

The Society for Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis is dedicated to the clinical and scientific utilization of hypnosis at the highest professional level. The history of hypnosis and its use call for some basic principles to maintain high standards for responsible professional workers. In addition, the multi-disciplinary character of the professional membership of SCEH requires an explicit statement of the ethical guidelines to which members of SCEH are required to subscribe and adhere.

Section A: Ethical Principles

Principle I

A member of SCEH shall be a member in good standing of the recognized professional organization in his or her field (e.g., AMA, ADA, APA, NASW, etc.).

- I-1. Members not affiliated with the appropriate professional organization may be requested to obtain such membership or to show cause as to why they should not meet this required status.
- I-2. Item I-1 requires acceptance of the ethical and scientific standards of a responsible professional organization. It does not imply endorsement by SCEH of particular policies or practices of any particular organization.

Principle II

Members of SCEH shall limit their clinical and scientific use of hypnosis to the area of their competence as defined by the professional standards of their particular field.

- II-1. Professional training, qualifications, and competence, as defined by the member's professional organization and the member's own achievements in his or her professional field, shall guide the member's practices within this area.
- II-2. A member who encounters a problem in the use of hypnosis shall seek the help of qualified specialists competent to deal with this problem.
 - II-2-a. This help may be obtained either by consultation with the specialist, or by referral of the patient to the specialist.
- II-3. Members may seek to broaden the usefulness of hypnosis in their professional field in the interest of individual patients as well as in the interests of extending the professional and scientific knowledge of hypnosis.
 - II-3-a. Such extension of the use of hypnosis must be carried out with all appropriate safeguards as specified in IV.

Principle III

The clinical and scientific utilization of hypnosis is an important contribution to mankind's health. It should not be used as a source of entertainment.

- III-1. No members of SCEH shall offer their services for the purpose of public entertainment nor shall they collaborate with any person or agency engaged in public entertainment. They shall not cooperate with or participate in lectures, demonstrations or publications of lay or stage hypnotists, and shall not give courses in hypnosis to lay people.
- III-1-a. A lay person within the meaning of this code is defined as one who is not a member in good standing of a recognized therapeutic or scientific profession; a person whose sole qualification is in the use of hypnosis for entertainment, treatment or research. Paragraph III-1, therefore, makes it unethical for a member of SCEH to teach hypnosis to anyone other than SCEH members or doctoral level psychologists, physicians (M.D.'s or D.O.'s), dentists (D.D.S.'s or D.M.D.'s), and clinical social workers or psychologists listed in the National Register, with the exception of paramedical groups, i.e. nurses or technicians or students, directly involved with patient care or research and working under direct supervision of a physician, dentist or doctoral level psychologist competent in the use of hypnosis; and with the exception of students taught under the auspices of the International Society of Hypnosis or any of its constituent societies.
- III-1-b. Paragraph III-1 shall not apply to the advising and consultative function which a member, acting as a representative of SCEH, shall perform towards the mass media in order to minimize distortions, or misrepresentations, etc., and in order to assure the accurate presentation of clinical and scientific material and knowledge.
- III-2. Members, when dealing with the subject of hypnosis in any form, shall observe the professional standards of their own professional society with respect to advertising, promotion and display of their services in addition to the standards as set forth under this code.
- III-2-a. No member of SCEH shall offer their professional use of hypnosis via newspapers, radio, television or similar media.
- III-2-b. In the announcement of their services to the profession, statements of membership in SCEH, the American Boards of Hypnosis, and similar accredited affiliations, are appropriate when presented with accuracy and dignity along with their other professional credentials.
- III-2-c. Members making statements or writing an article for publication in the lay press, or appearing on radio, TV or similar media, shall behave in conformity with the requirements of their professional society and with the provisions of the code of ethics of their society. If in doubt, the Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes of SCEH should be consulted beforehand.
- III-2-d. Members shall be responsible, within the limits of their possibilities, for statements made by other agencies such as book publishers, drug manufacturing firms, etc., which deal with the members' creative products (e.g., books, films, publications), and shall use their influence and prestige to avoid exaggerations or false statements about hypnosis.

Principle IV

Members of SCEH shall make clinical and scientific use of hypnosis if it contributes to the welfare of patients and/or to the advancement of professional knowledge in the individual member's field.

IV-1. The standards of professional relationships which guide physicians, dentists, psychologists or clinical social workers within their professional fields shall prevail in the use of all special therapeutic techniques.

IV-2. Research investigations utilizing hypnosis shall maintain the strongest safeguards for the well-being of the subject.

IV-2-a. Proper safeguards shall be maintained whenever a human subject is exposed to stress. The problem should be of sufficient importance to justify such a procedure and adequate facilities during and after the procedure should be available to assure the well-being of the subject. When there is doubt as to the appropriateness of the stress exposure, members shall consult with one or more colleagues or specialists or with the Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes before undertaking the procedure.

Section B: Violation of Ethical Principles

Procedure to be followed:

1. Any person, whether a member of SCEH or not, may initiate a charge of ethical violation.
 - a. A non-professional individual may also initiate a charge through the offices of a professionally qualified person.
2. The charge must be submitted, in writing, to the chair of SCEH's Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes who will set in motion the preliminary investigation and whose committee shall act within the provisions of Article XIV – Problems of Ethics, Sections 1, 2, and 3, SCEH Bylaws, before submitting its recommendations to the Executive Council.
 - a. The Committee on Ethics' preliminary investigation may lead to a report either that the complaint does not merit further attention, or that the charge merits further exploration.
3. The Executive Council may accordingly dismiss the complaint and order that all reference to it be deleted from the records or direct that a notation about it be made in the minutes of the Executive Council. If it does not dismiss the complaint, it must direct the Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes to make a full review of the charges.
4. When directed by the Executive Council to make a full review of the charges, the Committee of Ethics and Professional Attitudes shall:
 - a. In writing, inform the member who has been charged with an ethical violation of the complaint and the specific charges upon which the complaint is made, and solicit the member's response to the charges in question.
 - b. Appoint a sub-committee to hold a hearing. Neither the charged member nor the complainant may act as members of the sub-committee concerned with the particular complaint.
 - c. Set a time for a hearing and advise the member and the complainant by written notice, sent by certified mail at least ten (10) days in advance of the hearing. The hearing must be held within sixty (60) days after the Executive Council has directed the Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes to proceed with the hearing, except in cases of extreme hardship. In such a case, sufficient and convincing proof must be submitted with the request for postponement.

5. The Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes' hearing shall be conducted in a spirit of professional inquiry, directed toward obtaining as accurate a statement of the facts as possible.
 - a. The member shall have the privilege of appearing in person to defend himself or herself, or may select a representative to do so, or may present a written defense. If the choice is a written defense, then this document must be available to the sub-committee of the Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes at least one day before the date set for the hearing.
 - b. The charged member shall have the right, at said hearing, to cross examine the person or persons who have initiated the complaint and any witnesses who may appear against the member. He or she shall also have the right to present witnesses.
 - c. The complainant shall not have the right of direct examination, but shall direct questions only through the sub-committee members.
 - d. A full record shall be made by a stenographer or recording device and a transcript made of the proceedings. The charged member shall be provided with a copy of the transcript at cost, or without charge. The question as to whether the transcript shall be provided at cost or without charge shall be decided by the Executive Council.
 - e. The Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes shall submit its report and recommendations to the Executive Council no later than sixty (60) days following the hearing. Their recommendations may be: (1) dismissal of charges because of insufficient evidence or unsubstantiated evidence, (2) censure or warning, (3) suspension of member for a period of up to one [1] year, (4) an order that the member submit a resignation and in the event of failure or refusal to do so, that the member be expelled from SCEH, (5) expulsion of member.
6. The Executive Council shall review the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Ethics and Professional Attitudes and reach a decision.
 - a. If the decision is for censure or warning, this may be a matter for Executive Council record alone or the Executive Council may decide to inform the membership of SCEH as in "6b."
 - b. If the decision is for suspension, resignation, or expulsion, then each member of SCEH shall be individually informed of the action of the Executive Council in the next regular mailing which is distributed to all members of SCEH, as a privileged communication, available only to them as members.
 - c. A member found guilty of the charges, or any part thereof, shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Council, which shall review such appeal as soon as is feasible following its receipt. Such notice of appeal must be submitted in writing within sixty (60) days after the decision has been communicated and if not submitted by the member in writing within such a period of time, the right of appeal shall be lost.
 - d. A member found guilty of violation of any of the ethical principles adopted and subscribed to by all members of SCEH shall be advised in writing of the right to appeal.

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