

CODE OF ETHICS



ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIAN COUNSELORS

- I. Protection and Safeguard of the client
 - A. First, Do No Harm
 1. Christian counselors acknowledge that the first rule of professional - ministerial ethical conduct is: do no harm to those served.
 2. We avoid every manner of harm and exploitation in all client-congregant relations.
 3. Christian counselors are also aware of their psychosocial and spiritual influence and the inherent power imbalance of helping relationships — power dynamics that can harm without harmful intent.
 - B. Avoidance of Client Harm, Intended or Not
 1. Christian counselors strictly avoid all behavior or suggestion of practice that harms or reasonably could harm clients, client families, client social systems and representatives, students, trainees, supervisees, employees, colleagues, and third-party payors and authorizers.
 - C. Managing Client Conflicts
 1. Christian counselors acknowledge that client conflicts are unavoidable. In fact, conflict and resistance are often a central dynamic of the helping process.
 2. We will attempt to resolve all counseling conflicts in the client's best interest.
 3. Counselors tempted to respond in harmful ways to clients shall seek out consultative and restorative help.
 4. If self-control is not accomplished — and client harm is not avoided — counselors shall terminate counseling relations and make referral in the client's best interest.
 - D. Action Regarding Clients Harmed by Other Helpers
 1. Christian counselors take proper action against the harmful behavior of other counselors and pastors.
 2. We will act assertively to challenge or expose abusers and protect clients against harm wherever it is found, taking care to honor and support client decision-making regarding curative action against violators.

E. Managing Problems with Managed Care

1. Managed care has greatly expanded its influence in health and mental health service delivery.
2. Widespread problems in client-provider-managed care relations are now being reported: breach of confidentiality, client abandonment, failure to maintain continuity of care, incompetent care, restriction of therapist choice and access, and even infliction of emotional distress.
3. Christian counselors acknowledge these legal-ethical problems, and will avoid and work to correct any unethical entanglement and unintended client harm due to managed care relations.

F. Refusal to Participate in the Harmful Actions of Clients

1. Christian counselors refuse to participate in, condone, advocate for, or assist the harmful actions of clients, especially those that imperil human life from conception to death. This includes suicidal, homicidal, or assaultive-abusive harm done to self or others — the protection of human life is always a priority value. We will not abandon clients who do or intend harm, and will terminate helping relations only in the most compelling circumstances, and will continue to serve clients in these troubles as far as it is possible.

G. Application to Abortion

1. Christian counselors refuse to participate in, condone, advocate for, or assist the abortion activities of clients.
2. All counselors will consider and inform clients of alternative means to abortion and, as far as it is possible, will continue to serve clients through the abortion crisis.

H. Application to Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

1. Christian counselors refuse to participate in, condone, advocate for, or assist clients in active forms of euthanasia and assisted suicide.
2. We may agree to and support the wish not to prolong life by artificial means, and will often advocate for hospice care, greater application of medicine, and other means to reduce pain and suffering.
3. We will not deliver, nor advocate for, nor support the use of deadly drugs by patients or clients who want them.

I. Sexual Misconduct Forbidden

1. All forms of sexual misconduct, and every kind of sexual exploitation, deception, abuse, or harassment in pastoral, professional or lay relationships are unethical.
2. This includes relations where the sexual involvement is invited or informed consent presumably exists — such apparent consent is illusory and illegitimate.
3. Forbidden sexual activities and deceptions include, but are not limited to, direct sexual touch or contact; seductive sexual speech or non-verbal behavior; solicitation of sexual or romantic relations; erotic contact or behavior as a response to the sexual invitation or seductive behavior of clients; unnecessary questioning and/or excessive probing into the client's sexual history and practices; advocacy of the healing value of counselor-client sexual relations; secretive sexual communications and anonymous virtual interaction via the Internet or other electronic means; sexual harassment by comments, touch, or promises/threats of special action; and sexual misconduct as defined by all applicable laws, ethics, and church, organizational, or practice policies.

J. Sexual Relations with Former Clients Forbidden

1. All sexual relations as defined in this code with former clients are unethical.
2. Furthermore, we do not terminate and refer clients or parishioners, even at first contact, in order to pursue sexual or romantic relations.

K. Counseling with Marital/Sexual Partners

1. Christian counselors do not counsel, but make appropriate referral, with current or former sexual and/or marital partners.

L. Dual and Multiple Relationships

1. Dual relationships involve the breakdown of proper professional or ministerial boundaries.
2. A dual relationship is where two or more roles are mixed in a manner that can harm the counseling relationship.
3. Examples include counseling plus personal, fraternal, business, financial, or sexual and romantic relations.
4. Some dual relationships are not unethical — it is client exploitation that is wrong, not the dual relationship itself.

5. Based on an absolute application that harms membership bonds in the Body of Christ, we oppose the ethical-legal view that all dual relationships are per se harmful and therefore invalid on their face.
6. Many dual relations are wrong and indefensible, but some dual relationships are worthwhile and defensible (as indicated in this code below).

M. The Rule of Dual Relationships

1. While in therapy, or when counseling relations are imminent, or for an appropriate time after termination of counseling, Christian counselors do not engage in dual relations with counselees.
2. Some dual relationships are always avoided—sexual or romantic relations, and counseling close friends, family members, employees, or supervisees.
3. Other dual relationships should be presumed troublesome and avoided wherever possible.

N. Proving an Exception to the Rule

1. The Christian counselor has the burden of proving a justified dual relationship by showing:
 - a. Informed consent, including discussion of how the counseling relationship might be harmed as other relations proceed, and
 - b. lack of harm or exploitation to the client.

O. Counseling with Family, Friends, and Acquaintances

1. Christian counselors do not provide counseling to close family or friends.
2. We presume that dual relations with other family members, acquaintances, and fraternal, club, association, or group members are potentially troublesome and best avoided, otherwise requiring justification.

P. Business and Economic Relations

1. Christian counselors avoid partnerships, employment relations, and close business associations with clients.
2. Barter relations are normally avoided as potentially troublesome, and require justification; therefore if done, barter is a rare and not a common occurrence.
3. Unless justified by compelling necessity, customer relations with clients are normally avoided.

Q. Counseling with Fellow Church Members

1. Christian counselors do not provide counseling to fellow church members with whom they have close personal, business, or shared ministry relations.
2. We presume that dual relations with any other church members who are clients are potentially troublesome and best avoided, otherwise requiring justification.
3. Pastors and church staff helpers will take all reasonable precautions to limit the adverse impact of any dual relationships.

R. Termination to Engage in Dual Relations Prohibited

1. Christian counselors do not terminate counseling to engage in dual relationships of any kind.
2. Some counselors and their former clients will agree that any future counseling will be done by someone else if, after legitimate termination, they decide to pursue another form of relationship.

II. Competence in Christian Counseling

A. Honoring the Call to Competent Christian Counseling

1. Christian counselors maintain the highest standards of competence with integrity.
2. We know and respect the boundaries of competence in ourselves and others, especially those under our supervision.
3. We make only truthful, realistic statements about our identity, education, experience, credentials, and about counseling goals and process, avoiding exaggerated and sensational claims and do not offer services or work beyond the limits of our competence.

B. Aiding and Abetting Unauthorized Practice

1. Christian counselors do not aid and abet the practice of unlicensed, untrained, unqualified, or unethical counseling.
2. Professional clinicians do not aid professional practice by unlicensed, non-credentialed, and untrained counselors, nor do professional clinicians or pastoral counselors support lay helping by anyone who is not trained or is unwilling to work under direct supervision.

C. Duties to Consult and/or Refer

1. Christian counselors consult with and/or refer to more competent colleagues or supervisors when these limits of counseling competence are reached:
 - a. When facing issues not dealt with before or not experienced in handling,
 - b. When clients need further help outside the scope of our training and practice,
 - c. When either counselor or clients are feeling stuck or confused about counseling and neither is clear what to do about it, or
 - d. When counselees are deteriorating or making no realistic gain over a number of sessions.
2. Christian counselors shall honor the client's goals and confidential privacy interests in all consultations and referrals.

D. Consultation Practice

1. When counseling help is needed, and with client consent, consultation may be attempted first, when in the client's best interest and to improve helper's knowledge and skill where some competence exists.
2. Counselors shall take all reasonable action to apply consultative help to the case in order to gain/maintain ground toward client objectives.
3. The consultant shall maintain a balanced concern for the client discussed and the practice/education needs of the consultee, directing the counselor-consultee to further training or special resources, if needed.

E. Referral Practice

1. Referral shall be made in situations where client need is beyond the counselor's ability or scope of practice or when consultation is inappropriate, unavailable, or unsuccessful.
2. Referrals should be done only after the client is provided with informed choices among referral sources.
3. As much as possible, counselors referred to shall honor prior commitments between client and referring counselor or church.

F. Seek Christian Help, If Available

1. When consulting or referring, Christian counselors seek out the best Christian help at a higher level of knowledge, skill, and expertise.

2. If Christian help is not available, or when professional skill is more important than the professional's beliefs, Christian counselors shall use the entire network of professional services available.

G. Avoid Counsel Against Professional Treatment

1. Christian counselors do not counsel or advice against professional counseling, medical or psychiatric treatment, the use of medications, legal counsel, or other forms of professional service merely because we believe such practice is per se wrong or because the provider may not be a Christian.

H. Duties to Study and Maintain Expertise

1. Christian counselors keep abreast of and, whenever possible, contribute to new knowledge, issues, and resources in Christian counseling and our respective fields.
2. We maintain an active program of study, continuing education, and personal/professional growth to improve helping effectiveness and ethical practice.
3. We seek out specialized training, supervision, and/or advanced certification if we choose to gain expertise and before we practice and advertise in recognized specialty areas of counseling and clinical practice.

I. Maintaining Integrity in Work, Reports, and Relationships

1. Christian counselors maintain the highest standards of integrity in all their work, in professional reports, and in all professional relationships.
2. We delegate to employees, supervisees, and other subordinates only that work these persons can competently perform, meeting the client's best interest and done with appropriate supervision.

J. Protective Action When Personal Problems Interfere

1. Christian counselors acknowledge that sin, illnesses, mental disorders, interpersonal crises, distress, and self-deception still influence us personally — and that these problems can adversely affect our clients and parishioners.
2. When personal problems flare to a level that harm to one's clients is realized or is highly likely, the Christian counselor will refrain from or reduce those particular professional-ministerial activities that are or could be harmful.
3. During such times, the counselor will seek out and use those reparative resources that will allow for problem resolution and a return to a fully-functioning ministry, if possible.

III. Informed Consent in Christian Counseling

A. Securing Informed Consent

1. Christian counselors secure client consent for all counseling and related services.
2. This includes the video/audio-taping of client sessions, the use of supervisory and consultative help, the application of special procedures and evaluations, and the communication of client data with other professionals and institutions.
3. Christian counselors take care that
 - a. The client has the capacity to give consent;
 - b. We have discussed counseling together and the client reasonably understands the nature and process of counseling; the costs, time, and work required; the limits of counseling; and any appropriate alternatives; and
 - c. The client freely gives consent to counseling, without coercion or undue influence.

B. Consent for the Structure and Process of Counseling

1. Christian counselors respect the need for informed consent regarding the structure and process of counseling.
2. Early in counseling, counselor and client should discuss and agree upon these issues:
 - a. The nature of and course of therapy;
 - b. Client issues and goals;
 - c. Potential problems and reasonable alternatives to counseling;
 - d. Counselor status and credentials;
 - e. Confidentiality and its limits;
 - f. Fees and financial procedures;
 - g. Limitations about time and access to the counselor, including directions in emergency situations;
 - h. And procedures for resolution of disputes and misunderstandings.

3. If the counselor is supervised, that fact shall be disclosed and the supervisor's name and role indicated to the client.

C. Consent from Parent or Client Representative

1. Christian counselors obtain consent from parents or the client's legally authorized representative when clients are minors or adults who are legally incapable of giving consent.

D. Documentation of Consent

1. Christian counselors will document client consent in writing by professional service contract or consent form, the standard now required in most professional therapy relations, or by casenote at the very least.

E. Consent for Biblical-Spiritual Practices in Counseling

1. Christian counselors do not presume that all clients want or will be receptive to explicit spiritual interventions in counseling.
2. We obtain consent that honors client choice, receptivity to these practices, and the timing and manner in which these things are introduced: prayer for and with clients, Bible reading and reference, spiritual meditation, the use of biblical and religious imagery, assistance with spiritual formation and discipline, and other common spiritual practices.

F. Special Consent for More Difficult Interventions

1. Close or special consent is obtained for more difficult and controversial practices.
2. These include, but are not limited to: deliverance and spiritual warfare activities; cult deprogramming work; recovering memories and treatment of past abuse or trauma; use of hypnosis and any kind of induction of altered states; authorizing (by MDs) medications, electro-convulsive therapy, or patient restraints; use of aversive, involuntary, or experimental therapies; engaging in reparative therapy with homosexual persons; and counseling around abortion and end-of-life issues.
3. These interventions require a more detailed discussion with patient-clients or client representatives of the procedures, risks, and treatment alternatives, and we secure detailed written agreement for the procedure.

IV. Confidentiality, Privacy, and Privileged Communication

A. Maintaining Client Confidentiality

1. Christian counselors maintain client confidentiality to the fullest extent allowed by law, professional ethics, and church or organizational rules.
2. Confidential client communications include all verbal, written, telephonic, audio or video-taped, or electronic communications arising within the helping relationship. Apart from the exceptions below, Christian counselors shall not disclose confidential client communications without first discussing the intended disclosure and securing written consent from the client or client representative.

B. Discussing the Limits of Confidentiality and Privilege

1. Clients should be informed about both the counselor's commitment to confidentiality and its limits before engaging in counseling.
2. Christian counselors avoid stating or implying that confidentiality is guaranteed or absolute.
3. We will discuss the limits of confidentiality and privacy with clients at the outset of counseling.

C. Asserting Confidentiality or Privilege Following Demands for Disclosure

1. Protecting confidential communications, including the assertion of privilege in the face of legal or court demands, shall be the first response of counselors to demands or requests for client communications and records.

D. Disclosure of Confidential Client Communications

1. Christian counselors disclose only that client information they have written permission from the client to disclose or that which is required by legal or ethical mandates.
2. The counselor shall maintain confidentiality of client information and shall limit disclosures only to those people having a direct professional interest in the case.
3. In the face of a subpoena, counselors shall neither deny nor immediately comply with disclosure demands, but will assert privilege in order to give the client time to consult with a lawyer to direct disclosures.

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- E. Protecting Persons from Deadly Harm: The Rule of Mandatory Disclosure
 - 1. Christian counselors accept (do not apply) the limits of confidentiality when human life is imperiled or abused.
 - 2. We will take appropriate action, including necessary disclosures of confidential information, to protect life in the face of client threats of suicide, homicide, and/or the abuse of children, elders, and dependent persons.

 - F. The Duty to Protect Others
 - 1. The duty to take protective action is triggered when the counselor
 - a. Has reasonable suspicion, as stated in your state statute, that a minor child (under 18 years), elder person (65 years and older), or dependent adult (regardless of age) has been harmed by the client; or
 - b. Has direct client admissions of serious and imminent suicidal threats; or
 - c. Has direct client admissions of harmful acts or threatened action that is serious, imminent, and attainable against a clearly identified third person or group of persons.

 - G. Guidelines to Ethical Disclosure and Protective Action
 - 1. Action to protect life, whether your client or a third-person, shall be that which is reasonably necessary to stop or forestall deadly or harmful action in the present situation.
 - 2. This could involve hospitalizing the client, intensifying clinical intervention to the degree necessary to reasonably protect against harmful action, consultation and referral with other professionals, or disclosure of harm or threats to law enforcement, protective services, identifiable third-persons, and/or family members able to help with protective action.

 - H. Special Guidelines When Violence is Threatened Against Others
 - 1. Action to protect third-persons from client violence may involve or, in states that have a third-person protection (Tarasoff) duty, require disclosure of imminent harm to the intended victim, to their family or close friends, and to law enforcement.
 - 2. When child abuse or elder abuse or abuse of dependent adults exists, as defined by state law, Christian counselors shall report to child or elder protective services, or to any designated agency established for protective services.

3. We shall also attempt to defuse the situation and/or take preventive action by whatever means are available and appropriate.
 4. When clients threaten serious and imminent homicide or violence against an identifiable third-person, the Christian counselor shall inform appropriate law enforcement, and/or medical-crisis personnel, and the at-risk person or close family member of the threat, except when precluded by compelling circumstances or by state law.
 5. When the client threat is serious but not imminent, the Christian counselor shall take preventive clinical action that seeks to forestall any further escalation of threat toward violent behavior.
- I. Disclosures in Cases of Third-party Payment and Managed Care
1. Christian counselors are diligent to protect client confidences in relations with insurance and third-party payors, employee assistance programs, and managed care groups.
 2. We are cautious about demands for confidential client information that exceed the need for validation of services rendered or continued care.
 3. We do not disclose or submit session notes and details of client admissions solely on demand of third-party payors.
 4. We will narrowly disclose information that the client has given written authorization only after we have discussed and are assured that the client understands the full implications of authorizations signed or contemplated to sign.
- J. Disclosures for Supervision, Consultation, Teaching, Preaching, and Publication
1. Christian counselors do not disclose confidential client communications in any supervisory, consultation, teaching, preaching, publishing, or other activity without written or other legal authorization by the client.
 2. Counselors under supervision will disclose that fact to their clients.
 3. We will adequately disguise client identifiers by various means when presenting cases in group or in public forums.
 4. We will not presume that disguise alone is sufficient client protection, but will consider seeking client authorization when client identity is hard to conceal.

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- K. Maintaining Privacy and Preserving Written Records
 - 1. Christian counselors will preserve, store, and transfer written records of client communications in a way that protects client confidentiality and privacy rights.
 - 2. This requires, at minimum, keeping records and files in locked storage with access given only to those persons with a direct professional interest in the materials.

 - L. Maintaining Privacy in Electronic Databases
 - 1. Christian counselors take special precautions to protect client privacy rights with records stored and transferred by electronic means.
 - 2. This requires, at minimum, use of password entry into all electronic client files and/or coded files that do not use client names or easy identifiers.
 - 3. Client information transferred electronically—FAX, E-mail, or other computerized network transfer—shall be done only after the counselor determines that the process of transmission and reception of data is reasonably protected from interception and unauthorized disclosures.

 - M. Advocacy for Privacy Rights Against Intrusive Powers
 - 1. Christian counselors hear the most private and sensitive details of client lives — information that must be zealously guarded from public disclosure.
 - 2. Rapidly expanding and interlocking electronic information networks are increasingly threatening client privacy rights.
 - 3. Though federal and state laws exist to protect client privacy, these laws are weak, are routinely violated at many levels, and the record of privacy right enforcement is dismal.
 - 4. Accordingly, Christian counselors are called to wisely protect and assertively advocate for privacy protection on behalf of our clients against the pervasive intrusion of personal, corporate, governmental, even religious powers.

 - V. Ethical Practice in Christian Counseling and Evaluation
 - A. Fees and Financial Relationships in Christian Counseling
 - 1. Professional Christian counselors will set fees for services that are fair and reasonable, according to the services contracted and time performed, and with due regard for the client's ability to pay.
 - 2. We avoid all deception, confusion, and misrepresentation about fees and in our financial relationships with clients and client systems.

B. Disclosure of Fees and Payment History

1. Fee schedules and rules for payment shall be outlined clearly for client review at the outset of counseling.
2. Moreover, agreement about fees and payment schedules will be made as early as possible in the course of professional relations.
3. We will provide clients or their representatives with a full and accurate account of previous and current charges upon request.

C. Sliding Fee Scales Encouraged

1. Christian counselors are free, within the bounds of biblical, professional, and community standards, to set their own fees.
2. Clinicians are encouraged, however, to use sliding fee schedules, scaled to client's ability to pay, and other reduced payment methods to increase counseling accessibility to those of lesser financial means.

D. Pro Bono Work

1. Christian counselors are encouraged, beyond their fee schedule, to make a portion of their time and services available without cost or at a greatly reduced fee to those unable to pay.

E. Avoiding Self-serving Financial Relations

1. Christian counselors avoid financial practices that result or appear to result in greedy and self-serving outcomes.
2. We do not select clients or prolong therapy based on their ability to pay high fees, nor do we quickly terminate counseling with low-fee clients.
3. When making referrals, we do not divide fees with other professionals nor accept or give anything of value for making the referral.
4. We do not exaggerate problems nor refer exclusively for specialized services to get clients into special programs or institutions in which we have a proprietary interest.

F. Financial Integrity with Insurance and Third-party Payors

1. Christian counselors maintain financial integrity with client insurers and other third-party payors.
2. We do not charge third-party payors for services not rendered, nor for missed or cancelled appointments, unless specially authorized to do so.

3. We do not distort or change diagnoses to fit restricted reimbursement categories.
4. Any special benefits or reductions in client fees must also be extended in full to third-party payors.

G. Case-notes and Proper Record-keeping

1. Christian counselors maintain appropriate documentation of their counseling activities, adequate for competent recall of prior sessions and the provision of later services by oneself or others.
2. Records used in legal and other official capacities will show the quality, detail, objectivity, and timeliness of production expected by professionals who practice in these arenas.

H. Records Maintenance and Ownership

1. Records of professional activities will be created, maintained, stored, and disposed of in accordance with the law and the ethical duties of the counselor, especially maintaining client confidentiality.
2. Ordinarily, client records belong to the employing organization or to the therapist in a private or group practice.
3. However, in view of the expanding right of client record access and control and the ethic of continuity of care, clients records should follow the client.
4. Therefore, in any dispute about record access or ownership at the termination of professional employment, the records will stay with the employer if the therapist is leaving the area and his or her clients, or they should go with the therapist if he or she is staying in the area and the clients are staying with the therapist.

I. Ethics in Testing, Assessment, and Clinical Evaluation

1. Christian counselors do clinical evaluations of clients only in the context of professional relations, in the best interests of clients, and with the proper training and supervision.
2. Christian counselors avoid
 - a. Incompetent and inaccurate evaluations,
 - b. Clinically unnecessary and excessively expensive testing, and
 - c. Unauthorized practice of testing and evaluation that is the province of another clinical or counseling discipline.

3. Referral and consultation are used when evaluation is desired or necessary beyond the competence and/or role of the counselor.

J. Use of Appropriate Assessments

1. Christian counselors use tests and assessment techniques that are appropriate to the needs, resources, capabilities, and understanding of the client.
2. We apply tests skillfully and administer tests properly and safely.
3. We substantiate our findings, with knowledge of the reliability, validity, outcome results, and limits of the tests used.
4. We avoid both the misuse of testing procedures and the creation of confusion or misunderstanding by clients about testing purposes, and procedures, and findings.

K. Reporting and Interpreting Assessment Results

1. Christian counselors report testing results in a fair, understandable, and objective manner.
2. We avoid undue testing bias and honor the limits of test results, ensuring verifiable means to substantiate conclusions and recommendations.
3. We recognize the limits of test interpretation, and avoid exaggeration and absolute statements about the certainty of client diagnoses, behavior predictions, clinical judgments, and recommendations.
4. Due regard is given to the unique history, values, family dynamics, socio-cultural influences, economic realities, and spiritual maturity of the client.
5. Christian counselors will state any and all reservations about the validity of test results and present reports and recommendations in tentative language and with alternative possibilities.

L. Working with Couples, Families, and Groups

1. Christian counselors often work with multiple persons in session — marriage couples, families or parts of families, and small groups — and should know when these forms of counseling are preferred over or used as an adjunct to individual counseling.
2. In these relationships we will identify a primary client — the group as a unit or the individual members — and will discuss with our client(s) how our differing roles, counseling goals, and confidentiality and consent issues are affected by these dynamics.

M. Safety and Integrity in Family and Group Counseling

1. Christian counselors will maintain their role as fair, unbiased, and effective helpers in all marital, family, and group work.
2. We will remain accessible to all persons, avoiding enmeshed (problematic) alliances and taking sides unjustly.
3. As group or family counseling leaders, Christian counselors respect the boundary between constructive confrontation and verbal abuse, and will take reasonable precautions to protect client members from any physical, psychological, or verbal abuse from other members of a family or group.

N. Confidentiality in Family and Group Counseling

1. Christian counselors do not promise or guarantee confidentiality in family and group counseling, but rather explain the problems and limits of keeping confidences in these modes of therapy.
2. We communicate the importance of confidentiality and encourage family or group members to honor it, including discussion of consequences for its breach.
3. Christian counselors do not share confidences by one family or group member to the others without permission or prior agreement, unless maintaining the secret will likely lead to grave and serious harm to a family member or someone else.

O. Avoiding and Resolving Role Conflicts

1. If/when Christian counselors are asked to perform conflicting roles with possible unethical consequences (i.e.: pressure to keep "secrets" or called to testify as an adverse witness in a client's divorce), we will clarify our therapeutic, neutral, and meditative role and/or decline to serve in a conflicted capacity, if possible.
2. Some counselors will contract for professional neutrality at the beginning of professional relations, securing client agreement not to have oneself or one's records subpoenaed or deposed in any legal proceeding.

P. Working with Persons of Different Faiths, Religions, and Values

1. Christian counselors do not withhold services to anyone of a different faith, religion, denomination, or value system.
2. We work to understand the client's belief system and always maintain respect for the client.

3. We strive to understand when faith and values issues are important to the client and foster values-informed client decision-making in counseling.
4. We share our own faith only as a function of legitimate self-disclosure and when appropriate to client need, always maintaining a humility that exposes and never imposes the way of Christ.

Q. Action if Value Differences Interfere with Counseling

1. Christian counselors work to resolve problems — always in the client's best interest — when differences between counselor and client values becomes too great, adversely affecting counseling.
2. This may include discussion of the issue as a therapeutic matter, renegotiation of the counseling agreement, consultation with a supervisor or trusted colleague or, as a last resort, referral to another counselor if the differences cannot be reduced or bridged.

R. Continuity of Care and Service Interruption

1. Christian counselors maintain continuity of care for all patients and clients.
2. We avoid interruptions in service to clients that are too lengthy or disruptive.
3. Care is taken to refer clients and network to provide emergency services when faced with counselor vacations, illnesses, job changes, financial hardships, or any other reason services are interrupted or limited.

S. Avoiding Abandonment and Improper Counseling Termination

1. Christian counselors do not abandon clients.
2. To the extent the counselor is able, client services are never abruptly cut-off or ended without giving notice and adequately preparing the client for termination or referral.

T. Ethical Termination of Counseling

1. Discussion and action toward counseling termination and/or referral is indicated when
 - a. Counseling goals have been achieved;
 - b. When the client no longer wants or does not return to counseling;
 - c. When the client is no longer benefitting from counseling; or
 - d. When counseling is harmful to the client.

2. Christian counselors shall discuss termination and/or referral with clients, offer referral if wanted or appropriate, and facilitate termination in the client's best interest.
3. If crisis events alter, even end counseling prematurely the counselor, if it is safe and proper, should follow-through with the client to ensure proper termination and referral.