www.breaking-the-silence.org.uk

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Company No. 5093277

BACP Membership: 213956

The British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy’s (2002) ethical framework

As a BACP member, we work in accordance with the Ethical Framework. We commit to complying with the Framework it is the main point of reference for decisions in professional conduct hearings.

The BACP ethical framework lists values, principles and moral qualities intended to support our counsellors by assisting us in ethical dilemmas. We have built the Ethical Framework into our practice - by adopting the statement of ethics, we commit ourselves to the challenge of being ethical, even where it involves challenging decisions and acts of bravery (BACP, 2002).

**What ethical principles will your counsellor uphold?**

There are six key principles that express the general ethical commitment of a counsellor:

1. Fidelity: to honour the trust the client has placed in the practitioner respecting the sanctity of confidentiality, agreements and promises.
2. Autonomy: to respect the clients’ right to be the sovereign in the counselling relationship so it may translate to all aspects of their lives.
3. Beneficence: To work within one’s competency for the promotion of the clients well-being and best interests.
4. Non-maleficence: To commit to avoiding harm to clients through financial, sexual or emotional exploitation whilst holding appropriate insurance to cover challenges of malpractice.
5. Justice: Respecting individuality and providing a service that is accessible and of equal standard.
6. Self-respect: The application of the principles above on oneself

**Our commitment to clients**

As a client you will be able to participate freely as you work with your counsellor towards your desired goals. This requires you as a client being able to trust your counsellor with your wellbeing and sensitive personal information. Therefore, as members or rof BACP, we take being trustworthy as a serious ethical commitment. We have agreed that we will:

**1. Put clients first by:**

a. making clients our primary concern while we are working with them

b. providing an appropriate standard of service to our clients

**2. Work to professional standards by:**

a. working within our competence

b. keeping our skills and knowledge up to date

c. collaborating with colleagues to improve the quality of what is being offered to clients

d. ensuring that our wellbeing is sufficient to sustain the quality of the work

e. keeping accurate and appropriate records

**3. Show respect by:**

a. valuing each client as a unique person

b. protecting client confidentiality and privacy

c. agreeing with clients on how we will work together

d. working in partnership with clients

**4. Build an appropriate relationship with clients by:**

a. communicating clearly what clients have a right to expect from us

b. communicating any benefits, costs and commitments that clients may reasonably expect

c. respecting the boundaries between our work with clients and what lies outside that work

d. not exploiting or abusing clients

e. listening out for how clients experience our working together

**5. Maintain integrity by:**

a. being honest about the work

b. communicating our qualifications, experience and working methods accurately

c. working ethically and with careful consideration of how we fulfil our legal obligations

**6. Demonstrate accountability and candour by:**

a. being willing to discuss with clients openly and honestly any known risks involved in the work and how best to work towards our clients’ desired outcomes by communicating any benefits, costs and commitments that clients may reasonably expect

b. ensuring that clients are promptly informed about anything that has occurred which places the client at risk of harm or causes harm in our work together, whether or not clients are aware of it, and quickly taking action to limit or repair any harm as far as possible

c. reviewing our work with clients in supervision

d. monitoring how clients experience our work together and the effects of our work with them.

Although most people’s experiences of counselling and psychotherapy are good and helpful, sometimes things can go wrong.

Perhaps something just doesn’t seem right about your therapy, or you’re not sure what you’re experiencing in your therapy session is usual.

Maybe your therapist behaves or speaks in a way that feels uncomfortable to you. Or you may think your therapist has behaved unethically and you don’t know what you can do about it.

If you feel awkward about raising your concerns with your therapist, you can contact the CEO of Meridian, Shamim Khan or any member of the Board of Trustees:

What to do if you want to complain

Complaints can be made by e-mail and post. E-mail is preferred, and will enable us to respond more quickly.

* By email to Shamim Khan at merdiancentre@hotmail.co.uk

Or if you choose to speak to another Trustee:

* By post to our registered address: Meridian Centre, 61 St Paul’s Road, Bradford, BD8 7LS

If you’re dissatisfied with the help you’ve received, the BACP's Get help with counselling concerns service can provide information, guidance or reassurance. They will help you make sense of what you think has gone wrong and discuss what to do next.

You can:

call the BACP on 01455 883300 option 2,

07811 762114 or 07811 762256

email gethelp@bacp.co.uk

Anything you say will be confidential and you can speak with the BACP anonymously if you prefer.

Hopefully they will be able to help you explore and talk about your concerns to help you move forward in a positive way.