

Foundations of Professionalism in Polarity Therapy Practice

APTA Code of Ethics

APTA acknowledges the American Psychological Association for permission to use portions of content and elements of format of the Ethical Principles for Psychologists to develop the American Polarity Therapy Association Code of Professional Ethics; permission was granted by the APA Administrative Officer for Ethics.

This Code of Professional Ethics (Code) is intended to serve polarity practitioners and instructors who are members of the American Polarity Therapy Association (APTA) in matters of professional conduct. It provides these practitioners and instructors, as well as the general public, a guide for determining the propriety of these professionals' conduct. The Code applies to all APTA members regardless of their form of practice as administrators, clinical practitioners, student and general members, instructors, or researchers (hereinafter referred to as practitioners). While the statements of ethical principles apply to all APTA members, specific circumstances determine their appropriate application.

The interpretations expressed in this Code are not to be considered all inclusive of situations that could develop under a specific principle of the Code. This Code also is subject to change as the dynamics of professional practice change and as new patterns of educational and therapeutic health care delivery are developed and accepted by the professional community and the public at large. Input related to current interpretations, or situations requiring interpretation, is encouraged from APTA members.

Membership in The American Polarity Therapy Association commits the member to abide by these principles. Polarity practitioners cooperate with the Committee on Professional Ethics and Conduct and the Board of Directors of the American Polarity Therapy Association by responding to inquiries concerning alleged ethical violations in a prompt and thorough manner.

Preamble

Polarity practitioners respect the dignity and the worth of all individuals and endeavor to promote human rights. They are committed to furthering knowledge of human behavior, to fostering people's understanding of themselves and others, and to using this knowledge to promote human well-being. While striving for these goals, they conscientiously protect the welfare of their clients, students, and research participants (hereinafter referred to as consumers). They use professional skills only for purposes consistent with these values, and do not knowingly allow their misuse by others. While establishing for themselves freedom of inquiry and communication, polarity practitioners and instructors accept the responsibility engendered by this freedom: competence, diligent and nonprejudicial application of skills, and concern for the best interests of consumers, colleagues, and society at large.

To uphold these ideals, polarity practitioners pledge themselves to the following ethical principles:

1. Responsibility
2. Competence
3. Confidentiality
4. Consumer Welfare
5. Moral and Legal Standards
6. Professional Relationships
7. Public Statements.

Principle 1

Responsibility

In providing services, polarity practitioners maintain the highest standards of their profession. They accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions and make every effort to ensure that services are used appropriately.

a. Polarity practitioners recognize and accept a profound social responsibility because their suggestions and professional actions may have a significant impact on the lives of others. They recognize personal, social, organizational, economic, or political circumstances that may contribute to an inequality in power between themselves and consumers, or other circumstances that might result in misuse of their influence.

b. Polarity practitioners recognize a primary obligation to assist others to acquire knowledge and skill. They maintain high standards of scholarship by presenting information accurately, thoroughly, and objectively while attempting to prevent misuse, suppression, or distortion of research findings and the body of polarity knowledge.

c. Polarity practitioners participate in activities which contribute to the improvement of their community and address the health and well-being of the public. They strive to promote cooperation among providers of physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, and legal services relevant to health and well-being.

Principle 2

Competence

In the best interests of the public and the profession, it is the responsibility of all polarity practitioners to maintain high standards of competence. Polarity practitioners recognize the limitations of polarity, and therefore do not diagnose, prescribe, or treat physical or mental conditions. They also acknowledge the limitations of their competence as well as of their techniques. They only provide services and techniques for which they are qualified by training and experience. In addition, they keep abreast of current scientific, social, and professional information relevant to the services they provide.

- a. Polarity practitioners accurately represent their level of competence, education, training, and experience. Only those polarity credentials conferred under authorization of the APTA Bylaws and Standards for Practice are used as evidence of APTA-approved qualifications. Polarity practitioners do not represent general membership in APTA as evidence of polarity competence, education, training, or experience.
- b. Polarity practitioners carefully prepare the instruction that they give to consumers to reflect current and accurate information based on the body of polarity knowledge.
- c. Polarity practitioners recognize the need for and obtain continuing education and remain open to the development and use of new procedures, to changes in values, and to changes in the interpretation of the body of polarity knowledge. Practitioners comply with all applicable APTA requirement for continuing education.
- d. Polarity practitioners recognize and respect differences among people, such as those which may be associated with health condition, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious or spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic variables. They acquire training, experience, or consultation as necessary to ensure competent and affirming service to such persons or refer such persons for competent services elsewhere.
- e. Polarity practitioners recognize that their own personal problems may interfere with their professional effectiveness. Therefore, they refrain from initiating any professional activity, which, due to their personal problems, is likely to result in inadequate performance or harm to a consumer or colleague. Should practitioners become aware of their personal problem while engaged in such activity, they obtain competent professional consultation to determine whether they should suspend, terminate, or limit the scope of their professional activities.

Principle 3

Confidentiality

Polarity practitioners have a primary obligation to respect the confidentiality of information obtained from persons in the course of their work. They reveal such information to others only with the consent of the person or the person's legal representative, except in those unusual circumstances in which not to do so would result in clear danger to the person or to others. Where appropriate, practitioners inform consumers of the legal limits of confidentiality.

- a. Information obtained in clinical or consulting relationships, or evaluative data concerning consumers, employees, and others, is discussed only for professional consultation or supervision purposes and only with persons providing such consultation or supervision services or those approved by the client. Written and oral reports present only data pertinent to the purpose of the evaluation, and every effort is made to avoid invasion of privacy.
- b. Practitioners who present personal information obtained during the course of professional work in writings, lectures, or other public forums either obtain adequate prior consent to do so or disguise all identifying information.
- c. Practitioners make provisions for maintaining confidentiality in the storage and disposal of records.

d. When working with minors or other persons who are unable to give voluntary, informed consent, practitioners take special care to protect these persons' best interests.

Principle 4

Consumer Welfare

Polarity practitioners respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the people and groups with whom they work. When conflicts of interest arise between practitioners and consumers or employers, practitioners clarify the nature and direction of their loyalties and responsibilities and keep all parties informed of their commitments. Practitioners fully inform consumers of the purpose and nature of an evaluative, educational, therapeutic, or training procedure. They also freely acknowledge that consumers have freedom of choice with regard to participation.

a. Practitioners are continually aware of their own needs and of their potentially influential position in relation to persons such as consumers and subordinates. They avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons. Practitioners make every effort to avoid dual relationships of any kind that could impair their professional judgement or increase the risk of exploitation. Practitioners are aware that the intensity of a therapeutic relationship may activate sexual and other needs and desires on the part of both the consumer and the practitioner while weakening the objectivity necessary for control. Sexual activity with a client is unethical.

b. When a practitioner agrees to provide services to a client, the practitioner assumes the responsibility of clarifying the nature of the relationships of all parties involved, including any third party involved.

c. Where the demands of any other organization require practitioners to violate the Code, the practitioners clarify the nature of the conflict between the demands and the Code, inform all parties of practitioners' ethical responsibilities, and take appropriate action in keeping with the Code.

d. Practitioners make financial arrangements in advance that safeguard the best interests of and are clearly understood by the consumers of their services. Practitioners are encouraged to contribute a portion of their services to work for which they receive little or no financial return.

e. Practitioners formulate a plan for achieving evaluative, educational, and therapeutic goals which they communicate to the consumers of their services. They carry out this plan with diligence, modify it as necessary, and make every effort to accomplish the goals which have been agreed upon by consumers of their services.

f. Practitioners terminate a clinical, educational, or consulting relationship when it is reasonably clear that the consumer is not benefiting from it. They offer to help the consumer locate alternative sources of assistance.

Principle 5

Moral and Legal Standards

Practitioners' moral standards of behavior are a personal matter to the same degree they are for any other citizen, except as these may compromise the fulfillment of their professional responsibilities or reduce the public trust in polarity and polarity practitioners. Practitioners also are aware of the possible impact of their public behavior upon the professional practice of their colleagues. Practitioners comply with the laws and regulations which govern the practice or instruction of polarity, as well as the limits of confidentiality.

a. Polarity practitioners are aware of the fact that their personal values may affect the selection and presentation of instructional material. They recognize and respect the diverse attitudes that consumers may have toward various topics.

b. As employers and employees, practitioners do not engage in behavior or condone practices that are abusive or that result in illegal or discriminatory actions. Such practices include but are not limited to those based on considerations of race, handicap, age, gender, sexual preference, religion, or national origin in hiring, promotion, or training.

c. In their professional roles, practitioners avoid any action that will violate or diminish the legal rights of consumers or of others who may be affected by their actions.

d. Practitioners act in accord with APTA standards and guidelines related to practice, instruction, and the conduct of research.

e. In the ordinary course of events, practitioners adhere to relevant governmental laws and institutional regulations. When federal, state, provincial, organizational, or institutional laws, regulations, or practices are in conflict with the APTA Code and Standards, practitioners make known their commitment to the APTA Code and Standards and, wherever possible, work toward a resolution of the conflict. Practitioners are concerned with the development of such legal and quasi-legal regulations as best serve the public interest, and they work toward changing existing regulations that are not beneficial to the public interest.

Principle 6

Professional Relationships

Practitioners act with due regard for the needs, special competencies, and obligations of their colleagues in polarity and other professions. They respect the prerogatives and obligations of the institutions and organizations with which these other colleagues are associated.

a. Practitioners understand the areas of competence of related professions. They make full use of all the professional, technical, and administrative resources that serve the best interests of consumers. The absence of formal relationships with other professional workers does not relieve practitioners of the responsibility of securing for consumers of their services the best possible professional service, nor does it relieve them of the obligation to exercise foresight, diligence, and tact in obtaining the complementary or alternative assistance needed by consumers.

b. Practitioners take into account the traditions and practices of other professional groups with whom they work, and cooperate respectfully with such groups. If a practitioner is contacted by a person who is already receiving similar services from another professional, the practitioner carefully considers that professional relationship and proceeds with caution and sensitivity to the therapeutic issues as well as the consumer's welfare. The practitioner discusses these issues with the consumer so as to minimize the risk of confusion and conflict.

c. Practitioners who employ or supervise other professional or professionals-in-training accept the obligation to facilitate the further professional development of these individuals. They provide appropriate working conditions, timely evaluations, constructive consultation, and experience opportunities.

d. Practitioners do not exploit their professional relationships with consumers, supervisees, or employees, sexually or otherwise. Practitioners do not condone or engage in sexual harassment.

e. When conducting research in institutions or organizations, practitioners secure appropriate authorization to conduct such research. They are aware of their obligations to future researchers and ensure that host institutions receive adequate information about the research and proper acknowledgment of their contributions.

f. Publication credit is assigned to those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their professional contributions. Major contributions of a professional nature made by several persons to a common project are recognized by joint authorship, with the individual who made the principal contribution listed first. Minor contributions of a professional nature and extensive clerical or similar nonprofessional assistance may be acknowledged in footnotes or in an introductory statement. Acknowledgment through specific citations is made for unpublished as well as published material that has directly influenced the research or writing. Practitioners and instructors who compile and edit material of others for publication publish the material in the name of the originating group, if appropriate, with their own name appearing as chairperson or editor. All contributors are to be acknowledged and named.

g. In some circumstances, when practitioners know of an ethical violation by another polarity practitioner they may personally attempt to resolve the issue by bringing the behavior to the direct attention of the individual. If the misconduct is of a minor nature that appears to be due to lack of sensitivity, knowledge, or experience, such a personally derived solution may be appropriate. Such direct, personal corrective efforts are made with sensitivity to any rights of confidentiality involved. If the violation does not seem amenable to or is not resolved by a direct, personally derived solution, or is of a more serious nature, practitioners must bring it to the attention of the Committee on Professional Ethics and Conduct.

Principle 7

Public Statements

Public statements, announcements of services, advertisements, and promotional activities of polarity practitioners serve the purpose of helping the public make informed judgements and choices. Practitioners represent accurately and objectively their professional qualifications, affiliations, and functions, as well as those of the schools or organizations with which they or the statements may be associated. In public statements providing health information or professional opinions or providing information about the availability of polarity products, publications, and services, practitioners base their statements on the body of professionally accepted polarity knowledge and techniques, with full recognition of the limits and uncertainties of such evidence.

a. When announcing or advertising professional services, practitioners may list the following information to describe the provider and services provided: name, professional education and training, relevant academic degrees, date, type, and level of competence, certification, or licensure, diplomate status, APTA general membership status, address, telephone number, office hours, a brief listing of the type of services offered, and an appropriate presentation of fee information. Additional relevant or important consumer information may be included if not prohibited by other sections of the Code.

b. In announcing or advertising the availability of polarity products, publications, or services, practitioners do not present their affiliation with any organization in a manner that falsely implies sponsorship or certification by that organization. In particular and for example, practitioners do not state APTA general membership status in a way to suggest that such status implies specialized professional competence or qualifications. Public statements include, but are not limited to, communication by means of periodical, book, list, directory, television, radio, or motion picture. They do not contain any false, fraudulent, misleading, deceptive, or unfair statement; any misinterpretation of fact or statement likely to mislead or deceive because in context it makes only a partial disclosure of relevant facts; a statement intended or likely to create false or unjustified expectations of favorable results.

c. Practitioners do not compensate or give anything of value to a representative of the press, radio, television, or other communication medium in anticipation of or in return for professional publicity in a news item. A paid advertisement must be identified as such, unless it is apparent from the context that it is a paid advertisement. If communicated to the public by use of radio or television, an advertisement is prerecorded and approved for broadcast by the practitioner, and a recording of the actual transmission is retained by the practitioner.

d. Announcements or advertisements of individual, family, and group services or instruction, schools, and agencies give a clear statement of purpose and a clear description of the experiences provided. The education, training, and experience of the state members are appropriately specified.

e. Practitioners associated with the development or promotion of polarity and/or health building devices, books, or other products offered for commercial sale make reasonable efforts to ensure that announcements and advertisements are presented in a professional and factually informative manner.

f. Practitioners present the art and science of polarity and offer their services, products, and publications fairly and accurately, avoiding misrepresentation through sensationalism, exaggeration, or superficiality. Practitioners are guided by the primary obligation to aid the public in developing informed judgements, opinions, and choices.

g. Practitioners ensure that workshop, seminar, and class descriptions and course outlines are accurate and not misleading, particularly in terms of subject matter to be covered, bases for evaluating progress, and the nature of course experiences. Announcements, brochures, or advertisements describing educational programs accurately describe the audience for which the program is intended as well as eligibility requirements, educational objectives, and nature of the materials to be covered. These announcements also accurately represent the education, training, and experience of the instructors presenting the programs and any fees involved.

h. Public announcements or advertisements soliciting research participants in which clinical services or other professional services are offered as an inducement make clear the nature of the services as well as the costs and other obligations to be accepted by the participants in the research.

i. Practitioners accept the obligation to correct others who represent a practitioner's professional qualifications, or associations with products or services, in a manner incompatible with the Code.

j. Individual evaluative and therapeutic services are provided only in the context of a professional relationship. When personal advice is given by means of public lectures or demonstrations, newspaper or magazine articles, radio or television programs, mail, or similar media, the practitioner uses the most current relevant data and exercises the highest level of professional judgement.