

EFPP Institutional Ethical Code Guidelines

Preamble

Ethics addresses the process of reflecting on values and on the relationships between different values. The aim of ethics is to guide and help people to make choices and to evaluate their own and others actions. Ethics do not provide ready answers, but they offer tools for thinking and processing.

The standards and values of psychoanalytical organizations and individuals that function in them are ruled by *principles* belonging to the field of normative ethics, these principles are:

- inviolability
- autonomy and
- dignity of the individual/organization

These principles are the base of human rights to be respected in any rational society or organization. They create a *sense of morality* in which the desire and the right to know becomes accepted as well as the right to think and the freedom of thought. These principles derive from considering the subject/organization as an end in itself and not as a means. This sense of morality can make one feel recognized as a 'linked being/a 'linked organization to a greater whole and is a necessary condition for mutual respect from each other member.

Together with these principles comes a *sense of organizational responsibility*. Ethical responsibility means not only the sense of belonging to the organization, but the obligation to behave/ act ethically within it.

Ethical guidelines create an ethical culture

EFPP as an organization of a psychoanalytic professionals, sets out its *ethical culture* and governance on the basis of the following ethical guidelines. These guidelines are limited in time and may evolve under the influence of organizational, professional or social factors. The ethical guidelines are intended to think and act in a responsible way.

The Ethical guidelines of the EFPP are at the service of:

- constructively handling - respectful and considering the dignity of others - the tensions inside and between organizations
- preventing them from slipping into arbitrariness or violence.

The guidelines below are intended to set a frame to protect and foster a sense of belonging and sense of morality and are the impetus towards progressing to a mature psychoanalytic psychotherapeutic organization.

General Ethical Institutional Principles

EFPP and its affiliated organizations commit themselves to insure ethical and professional standards are maintained in the professional practice of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. The EFPP acts with the intention that its ethical principles should primarily regulate cooperation and relations between the membership organizations.

EFPP identifies with European *values of openness, tolerance and respect for diversity*. Its ethos is informed by these values and one of the federations aims is to foster a culture of diverse modalities rooted in psychoanalytic theory and practice as well as the culture of psychoanalytic traditions. This ethical code reflects humanitarian values, psychoanalytic values and professional responsibilities and obligations.

- a. *Humanitarian values*: respect for diversity, equality, freedom of speech, openness to listening, respect for dignity, tolerance for difference.
- b. *Psychoanalytic values*: general obligation to respect an organizational clinical ethical code regulating the professional exchange between therapists and patients – open mindedness, respectfulness, reflexivity, dignity and integrity, moral stance, legal frame, confidentiality.
- c. *Professional obligations*: each EFPP organization shall respect and stay within this general obligation of maintaining ethical standards. Members shall take reasonable measures to ensure that all professional activities and training facilities are maintaining ethical and professional standards and criteria. Each organization shall establish, maintain and make available to interested parties a code of ethics (or similarly named set of ethical rules).
- d. *Professional development*: the explicit intention to learn and to evolve as a professional organization and training institution.

Institutional Ethical Issues

The following institutional ethical principles are the basis of an ethical and moral climate and EFPP stands for their implementation in all its affiliated networks.

a. Respect

To maintain a culture of respect within each organization, EFPP follows the ethical principles of:

- The right for inviolability: any organization is worthy and shall be respected.
- The right for autonomy: it sets limits to our own actions as a function of the other's and demands respect for organizational references, choices and ideas. This principle is related to establishing connections between reasons and consequences.
- The right for dignity: illegitimacy of discriminating on the basis of factors outside the individual or organizational will, as well as on the basis of beliefs, opinions, and decisions.
- The right for recognition: discrimination and the consequent destruction of autonomy creates asymmetrical links which give one of the linked members the capacity to decide on behalf of the others, thus transforming them into helpless subjects without rights.

b. Integrity

Organizations with integrity create standards to provide the cultural cohesion for professional responsibility and competence. They help approaching organisational problems and dilemmas in a rational and transparent way. In EFPP integrity entails an internalised set of core values and principles that function as ethical guidelines for all the member organisations. (It is about organizations and their governance).

Ideals of organizational integrity must be shown to be practical and affordable in terms of

- standard and criteria transparency (EFPP bylaws),
- professional support (e.g., national/international networking) and
- the right for idiosyncratic organizational professional identity.

Codes of ethics by themselves are not a good indicator of an organization's commitment to ethics. For a code of ethics to be effective, it needs to be part of a broader moral climate.

Moral climate can be construed as comprising shared perceptions of prevailing organizational norms established for addressing issues with a moral component. A moral climate in EFPP involves ethical commitments that are value-based and are embodied in the character of the organizational members and the organization's routines. EFPP takes the moral point of view with respect to organizational actions in accordance with the following principles:

- commitment to moral values for EFPP (as stated above),
- a view of EFPP as a social union rather than merely a mean for achieving individual goals,
- management according to a set of substantive moral principles (including those of fairness) and a set of procedures that avoid bias and give the delegates a voice in the rules governing the EFPP,
- determining individual responsibility of the delegates as representatives of their organizations,
- the EFPP board recognizes that the interests of various member-associations have intrinsic value,
- aiming to create an environment nourished by listening to otherness, in which different opinions and questioning is encouraged and exclusionary groupthink is avoided.

A number of factors could act as obstacles, leading to groupthink. These factors include overestimation of the group, close-mindedness, pressures toward uniformity and unanimity, the stereotyping of outsiders, self-censorship, direct pressure on dissenters, mind guards and the narcissistic illusion of invulnerability.

Integrity is recognized as a core ethical value of the board. Integrity means that the board's decisions are consistent with espoused moral values, and that the members of the board are honest and trustworthy. This display of integrity in the board's behaviour can lead to building the trust and respect of the delegates.

c. Balance of Power

To ensure an equitable balance of power, EFPP is guided by the ethical principles of democracy and equity as follows:

Democratic procedures regarding the establishing and preserving the setting of democratic values and practice. In doing so:

- The interests of one member organization should not take priority over the interests of all others.
- When a situation arises in which it appears that the interests of one group of member organizations must be sacrificed for the interests of another, that decision cannot be made solely on the grounds that there is a greater number in one group than in another.

Equal opportunities to fairness and equity in a democratic culture of a professional organization in terms of:

- accountability of the elected board to the delegates by hierarchic transparency,
- exchange of information through feedback,
- freedom to disseminate information,
- boards commitment to the goal of the democratic process itself,
- recognition and legitimacy of elected authority,
- establishing and preserving the legitimacy of the board by producing decision outcomes that represent the interests of the delegates,
- insuring the adequate representation of members

d. Ethical Leadership

The role of the organization's board

Ethical leadership demonstrates the will and ability to strategically position, design and sustain an organisation successfully, to develop the members-organisations competence and to direct human and organisational energy in pursuit of performance and achievement that stand the ethical test of effectiveness and efficiency. Working in such a way, the Board aims:

- to facilitate and encourage **open and honest communication**, particularly in discussions that concern decision making processes,
- to value the individual's viewpoint and the feedback that results from shared decision making,
- to facilitate and encourage transformational processes and evolution of the membership organizations e.g., by moderating emerging conflicts,
- to create **intellectual stimulation** as this provides a climate that supports delegates in questioning their own values, beliefs and expectations. It also enables delegates to make their own decisions about what is "right" and "wrong": The board is instrumental in getting delegates to re-examine assumptions that may inhibit creativity and innovation,
- to provide a **caring climate** by remaining optimistic about likely outcomes despite setbacks that may occur, constantly providing encouragement and feedback to delegates,
- to be concerned about the larger picture and the development of the organization.

e. Procedure of implementation

In order to implement these ethical principles in EFPP, we would like to suggest the following steps:

1. Bring it in the board and decide about the next steps
2. Presentation of the Code of organizational Ethics to the delegates
3. Discussion to reach commitment (diversity over the countries, ideal or "law")
4. Feedback and adaptation (processual implementation, respecting limitations)
5. Installing an ethics-committee
6. Periodic time slots for ethics issues in delegates' meetings and at conferences

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