Ethical and Boundary Issues in Addiction Treatment

William L. White
Chestnut Health Systems
Introduction

- Background
- Boundaries of Competence
Presentation Goals

- Explore Ethical Ambiguities and Complexities
- Heighten Ethical/Boundary Sensitivities
- Enhance Ethical/Boundary Decision-making Skills within Service Relationships
Presentation Resources

- Handouts
- White-Popovits Text: Critical Incidents: Ethical Issues in The Prevention and Treatment of Addiction
Frameworks of Evaluation

- Legal/Illegal--The problem of legal reductionism
  --Exclusive focus on rules and legalities may actually decrease ethical sensitivity/practice
- Moral/Immoral
  --The problem of cultural/religious relativity
Frameworks of Evaluation

- Professionally Appropriate/Inappropriate
- Culturally Appropriate/Inappropriate
- Ethical/Unethical
  -- Fiduciary
  -- Iatrogenic
Ethics and Law

- Ethical and legal
- Ethical and illegal
- Ethical and alegal
- Unethical and legal
- Unethical and illegal
- Unethical and alegal
Role Transitions

- Service Consumers as Volunteers, Staff Members, Board Members
- Recovery Coaches/Mentors/Support Specialists
- Potential Ethical Issues in Role Transitions
  - Negligent hiring
  - Inadequate Orientation, Training, & Supervision
  - Performance Standards
  - Role Ambiguity/Role Conflict
From Treatment to Recovery Management

Ethical Implications
--Nature of Service Relationship
--Duration of Service Relationship
--Unchartered Ethical Territory
A Model of Ethical Decision-making

1. Who will benefit? Who will be or could be harmed?

2. Are there any universal or cultural-specific values that apply to this situation?

3. What laws, policies, guidelines or historical practices exist that apply to this situation?
Critical Incident Worksheet

Critical Incident #

I. Whose interests are involved; who can be harmed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interests and Vulnerabilities</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Minimal / None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client / Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Worker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
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<td>Professional Field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community / Public Safety</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Universal Values (Sample)

- Autonomy (enhance freedom)
- Beneficence (help others)
- Nonmaleficence (don’t hurt anyone)
- Fidelity (keep your promises)
- Discretion (respect privacy)
- Loyalty (don’t abandon)
- Justice (be fair)
Cultural Values (Sample)

- Umoja (Unity)
- Kujichagulia (Self-Determination)
- Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)
- Ujamma (Cooperative Economics)
- Nia (Purpose)
- Kuumba (Creativity)
- Imani (Faith) --Maulana Karenga, 1988
Arenas of Ethical/Unethical Conduct

- Personal Conduct
- Conduct in Business Practices
- Professional Conduct
- Conduct in Relationship with Service Consumers
- Conduct in Professional Peer Relationships
- Conducted related to Threats to Public Safety
Personal Conduct

- Personal Privacy versus Professional Duties and Obligations
- Defining “Nexus”
Personal Conduct

- Most troublesome areas
  - ATOD use
  - Violating community standards of law/morality
  - Use of knowledge from professional role for personal gain
  - Self-care
  - Lapse/Relapse
Business Practices

- Historical Definition of Ethics as Clinical Ethics
- Private addiction treatment in the 1890s and 1990s: Two Case Studies on the Global Consequences of Ethical Misconduct
Professional Conduct

- Ethical Issues in
  - Intra-professional Conduct
  - Inter-professional Conduct
  - Trans-professional Conduct
Professional Conduct

- Most Troublesome Areas
  - Representation of Credentials
  - Boundaries of Competence
  - Secondary Employment
  - Proprietary Information/Products
  - Public Statements
  - Personal Appearance
Conduct Related to Public Safety

- What is our legal responsibility? versus What is our ethical responsibility?
- Troublesome areas:
  - Reports of physical/sexual abuse (Duty to Report)
  - Threats of violence (Duty to Warn)
  - Impaired workers in safety-sensitive positions (Duty to Intervene)
Ethical Issues in Special Roles

- Prevention/Education
- Early Intervention (EAP, SAP)
- Crisis Intervention
- Outreach / Case Management
- Training
- Community Consultation
- Research
- Staff involved in Residential Supervision, Transportation, and Recreation
- MIS staff
Conduct in Relationships with Service Consumers

- Definition of Client
- Coerced Treatment
- Informed Consent
- Labeling: The Ethics of Diagnosis
Definition of “Client”

- Once a Client, Always a Client
  - Based on view that professional helpers never lose their power to exploit this relationship
  - Criticized as paternalistic

- Time Zone of Greatest Vulnerability
  - Time standards in ethics/legal standards often use 2-5 years from point of last service contact
Conduct in Relationships with Service Consumers

- Confidentiality
- Respect for Religious/Political Beliefs
- Autonomy versus Paternalism
- Experimental/invasive Treatment Techniques
- Documentation
- Responsibility to Terminate
Boundary

Boundary Issues: Decisions that increase or decrease intimacy in the service relationship.

Detachment Enmeshment

Abuse Abuse
Functions of Boundaries

- Protect the consumer and service provider physically/emotionally/legally
- Protect the agency and the profession
- Provide structure and consistency within which therapeutic work can occur
- Minimize misinterpretations and misunderstandings
- Maintain focus on the purpose of the relationship
Boundary Issues in Context

- Who (Nature of Client)
  - Chronological Age, Developmental Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Culture, Degree of Incapacitation, etc.

- Who (Nature of Service Provider)
  - Age, Gender, Role, etc.
Boundary Issues in Context

- When (time of day, timing within relationship)
- Where (geographical/cultural space)
- What (actions)
- Why (purpose/rationale)
Boundary Issues
Cultural Context

- Relationship entry/exit
- Communication
- Touch
- Time and place
- Dual relationships
Boundary Issues: Organizational Context

- Organizational Boundary Management
  - Worker Depletion in Enmeshed Organizational Families
  - Worker Isolation in Disengaged Organizational Families

- Role Stressors
  - Role Overload, Role Ambiguity, Role-person Mismatch, Role Integrity Conflict, Inadequate Role Feedback, Role Deprivation
Boundary
Zones of Safety/Vulnerability

Zone of Safety

Always
Okay

Zone of Vulnerability

Sometimes
Okay

Zone of Abuse

Never
Okay
Milgrom’s Boundaries in Professional Relationships

- Always Okay
- Sometimes Okay
- Never Okay
- (See Checklist)
Boundary Issues

- Self-Disclosure
- Casual Encounters
- Therapeutic Bias
- Social Relationships
- Mutual Aid Relationships
- Financial Transactions
- Gifts
Self-Disclosure

- Is it clinically effective/ineffective?
- Is it ethical/unethical?
- Guidelines
  - Purpose
  - Timing
  - Duration
  - Intensity
  - Effect
Boundary Issues

- Pre-existing Relationships
  - Treatment of Family Members
  - Other Sources of Therapeutic Bias
- Verbal Intimacy
- Physical Touch
- Sexual Intimacy
Warning Signs of Disengagement

- Objectification of service consumers
- High rates of missed appointments/drop-outs
- Increased conflict with (complaints from) service consumers
- Physical disengagement, e.g., decreased face-to-face contact
Warning Signs of Enmeshment

- Escalation of physical/emotional contact (time)
- Signs of possessiveness/dependence
- Isolation of consumer in conflict with service plan
- De-professionalization of place
- Tandem boundary excesses, e.g., self-disclosure, gifts, etc.
- Resistance to bring to supervision
- “Guru” status (See work on “therapeutic cults”)
Zone of Vulnerability Strategies

- Zone recognition
- Increased structure/support
  - Team service delivery
  - Peer supervision
  - Increased clinical supervision
  - Increased documentation
- Monitoring time in zone
Organizational Strategies for Elevating Ethical Conduct

- Standards Development
- Personnel Evaluation
- Critical Incident Review Training
- Clinical/Administrative Supervision & Modeling
- Ethics Committee
- Ethics Resources (Literature)
- Local Ethics Consultant