

# Code of Ethics of the International Association of Core Energetics pending approval 6/20 incorporating suggested changes

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## Preamble

We, the people that come into the Core Energetics community from very different backgrounds, assert our common values as seekers of the integration of body, mind, emotions and spirit.

We, who are rooted in the teachings of Wilhelm Reich, John Pierrakos and Eva Pierrakos, understand and seek to bring about whenever possible the knowledge of science and intuition, to get the best from structures and organizations and to respect self-determination. We also recognize our need for help to deal with our biases, limitations or blind spots. It is from our desire to be better and to do better that we offer this Code of Ethics.

All Core Energetics Institutes and Certified Practitioners wish to improve the experience of the human condition. We do this with an intention toward the welfare of clients, students and communities and without discrimination due to race, age, creed, sexual orientation or gender identity.

This ethical code is a guideline to ensure and support professional development and competence in our field. It must be augmented by following the laws of our state, region and country.

## Code

In order to promote and expand the honorable, professional training and practice of Core Energetics, the following guidelines must be followed:

- 1) Every Institute must teach about the following **Ethical Concepts**:
  - a) Confidentiality: legal protection of anonymity.
  - b) Boundaries: limits in roles and relationships.
  - c) Avoiding Harm: avoid creating physical or mental damage.
  - d) Sexual Boundaries: no inappropriate touch or relationships.
  - e) Integrity: grounded in the value of doing your best for clients and student.
  - f) Power Differential: the inherently greater influence that helping professionals have, as compared to the people they help.
  - g) Dual Relationship: multiple roles and or relationship between the practitioner and the client. Avoid dual exploitative relationship.
  - h) Termination of Services: ending of services, referral when appropriate.

- i) Personal Responsibility: duty to support maturation and individuation. Awareness.
- j) Ethical responsibilities to colleagues: avoid competition and splitting.

2) **Competence:**

- Every student must meet the requirements of their program in order to practice.
- The experience of Core Energetics, clinical supervision and continuing education produces a good Certified Practitioner. Faculty and Certified Practitioners are encouraged to participate in the evolutionary process and clinical supervision.
- Certified Practitioners should consider the benefits of a continuing education experience every year. Participation in International Conventions is one desirable way to accomplish this.
- Certified Practitioners provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their education, training, license, certification, consultation received, supervised experience or other relevant professional experience.
- Certified Practitioners should provide services in substantive areas or use intervention techniques that are new to them, only after engaging in appropriate study, training, consultation and clinical supervision from people that are competent in those interventions and techniques.
- When generally recognized standards do not exist with respect to an emerging area of practice, Practitioners should exercise careful judgment and take responsible steps (including appropriate education, research, training, consultation and clinical supervision) to ensure the competence of their work and to protect clients from harm.
- Practitioners seek appropriate assistance for their personal problems or conflicts that may impair their work performance or judgment, such as substance abuse and mental health issues.
- Institutes will require a form to be signed at graduation that will attest to the willingness of Certified Practitioner to follow these ethical guidelines.

3) **Human Relationship:**

A greater responsibility for maintaining the values of integrity and respect is placed on Directors of Institutes, Teachers/Faculty/Assistants and Certified Practitioners.

- a) Sexual Harassment is strictly forbidden.
- b) Sexual Relationship between students and faculty is forbidden.
- c) Sexual Relationship between clients and practitioners is forbidden. Practitioners should under no circumstances engage in sexual activities, inappropriate sexual communication through any media or in person, or sexual contact with clients, whether such contact is consensual or coerced. The same principles apply to relatives of clients.
- d) Practitioners should not provide services to individuals with whom they have had a prior sexual relationship.

- e) Personal relationship between students and faculty is discouraged, unless it predates participation in the Institute, in which case it must be openly discussed with the class and the community.
- f) Dual relationships: practitioners/faculty/assistants are aware of their influential position with respect to students and clients, and they avoid dual relationships that could impair professional judgment. When a dual relationship exists, practitioners/faculty/assistants take appropriate professional precautions to ensure that judgment is not impaired, and no exploitation occurs. One way to exercise precaution is for the practitioner to partake in supervision and discuss the dual relationship.
- g) Sexual Relationship with clients must not be participated in or pursued until at least 3 years after sessions have concluded and clinical relationship terminated. However, it is recommended that sexual relationships should never be pursued or participated in with former clients. If such a relationship occurs after all the above requirements are fulfilled, it is the responsibility of the practitioner to assure there is no exploitation of the former client.

**4) Confidentiality:**

Faculty/Practitioners respect the right of students/clients to confidentiality and make every effort to protect clients and student's anonymity. Practitioners may not disclose student/client confidences except:

- a) as mandated by law;
- b) to prevent a clear and immediate danger to a person;
- c) where the practitioner is a defendant in civil, criminal or disciplinary action arising from services. In the case of an ethical complaint, the information is to be shared with a designated person or committee and treated with privacy. However, it stops being confidential, due to the need to gather information relevant to the complaint; student or complainant will be informed of this.
- d) when the client has given written consent to release information.

**5) Ethical Procedures:**

- Practitioners consult with, refer to, and cooperate with other practitioners and Institutes to the full extent needed to serve the best interests of students and clients.
- Practitioners are mindful about their own ethical, professional conduct as well that of their colleagues.
- When appropriate, they consult with colleagues in order to avoid unethical conduct.
- Because of its direct negative influence on the community as well as the field, practitioners are urged to report alleged unethical behavior through appropriate and prescribed channels. Practitioners are ethically bound to cooperate with this professional association in inquiries concerning ethical misconduct.

- Every Institute must have a designated person or committee to handle ethical complaints. In every Institute, the name or names should be physically displayed and electronically posted.
- When a student or client makes a complaint against a Faculty/Practitioner, the information is presented to the designated ethics person or committee and is investigated. A plan of action with findings and recommendations must be presented to both parties within 45 days (a plan of action may include a time extension that involved parties agree to when extra time is needed).

**6) Public Opinions and Recommendations:**

- Institutes and Practitioners/Faculties, because of their ability to influence and alter the lives of others and the field, exercise special care when making public their professional recommendations and opinions outside of their practice.
- In general, Institutes and Practitioners should limit their public opinions to their field of expertise.

**7) Ethical Complaints and Violations:**

- Ethical complaints must start with a verbal statement presented by the complainant to the locally designated ethics committee or person. This initiates an investigation. If the ethics complaint is discussed in a public forum, both parties need to be present
- If the complaint is substantiated, this is considered a violation and the Practitioner will be required to cease and desist in the behavior in question. Depending on the complaint, a Practitioner may be referred to supervision and/or sessions with a more experienced practitioner and may be required to stop seeing clients.
- The International Core Energetics Association may review ethical cases from its date of legal formation, and only at the request of an Institute or in the case of widespread unethical behavior.
- Once a complaint is made, an involved Practitioner that chooses not to participate or follow through with the recommendations of the ethical committee, will be considered suspended from membership in the community. And, depending upon the case, it could be referred to local authority and boards.
- In order to be reconsidered as a Practitioner in good standing, a case review will take place at the local level, with a clear action plan for reintegration into the community.
- Improper or frivolous complaints are considered an ethical violation. Whenever possible, Practitioners bring to each other's attention a difficulty and resolve it informally. Students and clients are encouraged to present their complaint to the Practitioner when appropriate.
- When teachers are engaged to teach at different Institutes, they are responsible to notify the hiring institute if they have any pending ethical issues at other locations. And, Institutes will be compelled to share their findings and recommendations with the hiring Institute.

**8) Ethics of Touch:**

The use of touch is considered an important tool for Core Energetics practitioners; verbal and written consent is strongly indicated.

- In the course of sessions, the use of touch is carefully applied, with the intent to allow a better flow of energy in the body and emotions.
- Touch is dependent upon the consent of the client. Touch is never of sexual nature or for the gratification of the practitioner in any way. It is solely used to facilitate the client's process, to provide grounding, containment and /or an increase of energy flow.
- Clients are informed that they always have the right to refuse, modify and stop touch at any time, for any reason, as part of their consent.

**9) Collegial Relationship:**

We refer here to the golden rule: we treat others as we would like to be treated.

- Collegial differs from congeniality: you may not like the other professional, but you deal with them directly and fairly.
- As a professional, if you hear commentary that concerns you about a Certified Practitioner, you first address it directly with the practitioner. If the concern is not addressed you have a duty to report the ethical concern to the appropriate committee.
- You do not take clients that are seeing other practitioners, unless indicated (as in the case of individual and couple treatment, or individual and group process). This is to avoid splitting.
- If a client who is working with another practitioner approaches with a concern about their own practitioner, the practitioner encourages the client to bring the concern to their practitioner, directly. If the concern is a potential ethical violation, consider speaking with the practitioner to address it or if necessary, report the concern to the appropriate ethics committee for investigation.
- If a client approaches a practitioner for sessions because they no longer want to continue with their current practitioner, request the client to discuss and arrange a closure session with their current practitioner prior to initiating session work with a new practitioner.

## ADDENDUM

### **Best Practice Recommendations:**

1. We recommend for students involved in the training not to get involved in sexual relationships with other students. If this happens, it needs to be discussed in the appropriate group. This recommendation seeks to keep the focus on the student's own personal process.
2. When working in a group process, issues/problems typically get presented as black and white, for or against. This may be necessary for clarity about the issue. Nevertheless, we affirm that the resolution of issues comes through the healing of splits and integration.
3. Students practicing Core Energetics must be under supervision and must comply with their Institute's supervision policies and requirements and behave in accordance with ethical standards.
4. At graduation, students who become Certified Practitioners must sign a form affirming that they will follow the ethical code.
5. When seeing clients, the following behaviors are highly recommended:
  - a. Intake form and initial interview at the onset of services
  - b. Consent form
  - c. Written notes as deemed appropriate by your regional laws and Institute guidelines
  - d. Review of written notes to assess progress and understanding of the pattern of behaviors
6. Communication with other providers requires a written release of information from the client.
7. Utilize supervision: New practitioners/graduates engage in supervision twice monthly for first year; thereafter monthly for years 2-5. Establish ongoing relationship with supervisor