

---

# Elevating Ethical Awareness

---

A course fulfilling the 2-hour ethics requirement  
for CEAP® renewal



# Acknowledgements

- Created by 2007 EAPA Ethics Subcommittee  
(revised 2015)
  - ❑ Marilyn Rumsey, Chairperson
  - ❑ Stephanie Beer
  - ❑ Mark Cohen
  - ❑ Jan Paul
  - ❑ Jeff Christie
  - ❑ Bob Johnson
  - ❑ Dave Sharar
  - ❑ Henri Menco
- 2018 Ethics Education Panel - update
  - ❑ Jeanie Robertson
  - ❑ Bob Hotes
  - ❑ Susan Meyerle
  - ❑ Henri Menco
  - ❑ David Nix
  - ❑ Liz McBride
- 2023 Update
  - ❑ Amy Freadling
  - ❑ Susan Meyerle



## SPEAKER INTRODUCTIONS



**MARCI STAFFORD**  
LMFT, CEAP, SHRM-CP  
EACC CHAIR 2025-2026



**BRYAN HUTCHINSON**  
CEAP, SAP, LAP-C, MAC  
EACC CHAIR 2023-2024

Disclosures: We serve the EACC and receive no financial compensation for this presentation.

© 2024 Employee Assistance Professionals Association



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Facilitator Disclaimer

Today's discussion is grounded in ethics research and publications in EAP and related fields. The information presented today does not substitute for guidance from one's own professional licensure board, professional ethics committee, supervisor, attorney, etc.



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Engagement Guidelines

- Recognize you are in a safe space to express your thoughts and experiences.
- Honor the confidentiality of participants' experiences.
- Know your participation is voluntary, but beneficial for sharing of mutual support and experiences.



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Getting to Know You

Who are you?

Where do you work?

What's your role in your EAP?

(Polls)



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Our Goal For Today



To apply an ethical decision-making process to employee assistance (EA) practice



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Learning Objectives

- Discuss the role and significance of ethics in professional practice;
- Apply the EAPA Code of Ethics and the EACC Code of Conduct to ethical decision making; and
- Utilize the recommended ethical decision-making model in EA practice.





# Ethics

Ethics is a philosophical discipline dealing with the morality of behavior, differentiating between right and wrong. It includes:

- ❑ *Choices* rather than mandates
- ❑ Careful review of the situation
- ❑ The presence of values
- ❑ Shaped through training and experience
- ❑ Consideration of others' interests



# Ethics is NOT



**JUDGMENTAL OR IMPOSING  
OF PERSONAL VALUES.**



**CHOOSING THE LESSOR OF  
TWO EVILS.**



**THE SAME AS POLICY OR  
LAW.**



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Legal and Organizational Terms



**Law- Federal, State, Local Regulations**



**Policy- Written, Formalized Standards**



**Practice- Understood, Repeated, Application of Policies**



**Precedent- Having done something before**



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Ethics, Workplace Policy and Laws

## QUICK QUESTION

What are some examples of how ethics, workplace policies and the law can collide?



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

*“Ethics is knowing the difference  
between what you have a right to  
do and what is right to do.”*

-Potter Stewart



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Eight Ethical Principles

- Service
- Beneficence
- Role Fidelity
- Integrity

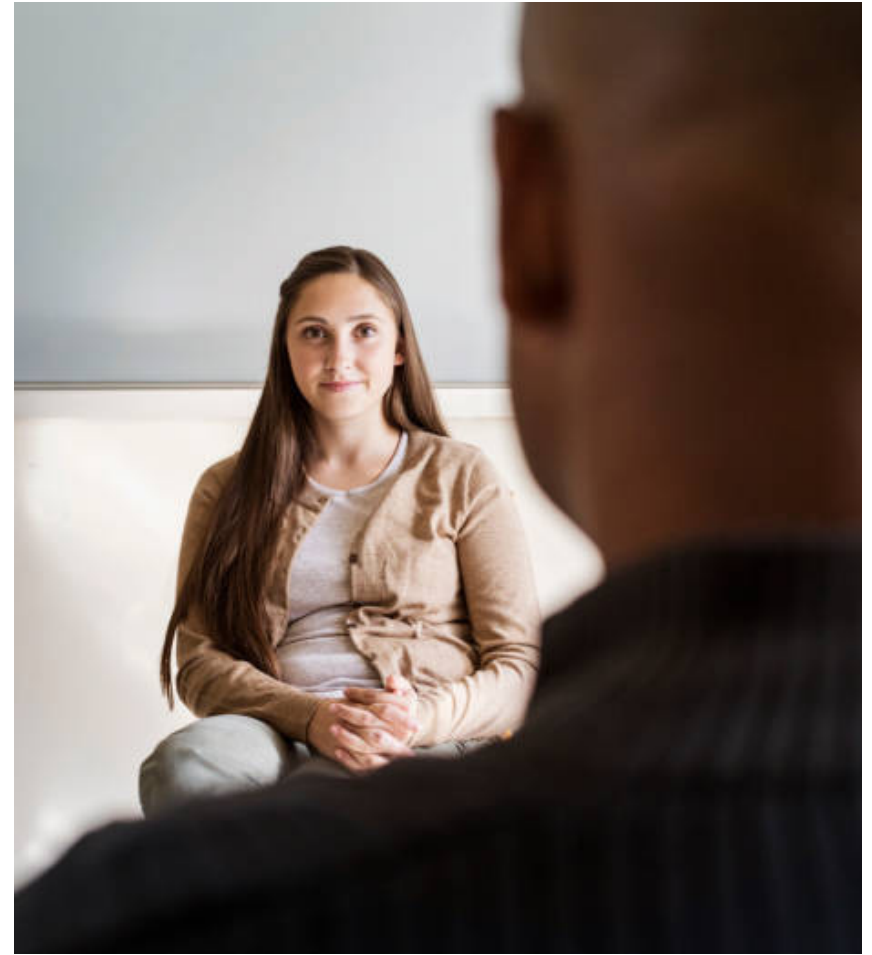


**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Eight Ethical Principles (cont.)

- Respect for Client Rights
- Nonmaleficence
- Confidentiality
- Competence



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Professional Codes

- Provide standards and guidelines
- Reflect normative values of the profession
- Regulate the professional/client relationship
- Equip EAP professionals with guidelines and resources to support ethical decision-making





# EAPA Code of Ethics and CEAP Code of Conduct

- EAPA Code of Ethics
  - ❑ The profession as a whole
- CEAP Code of Conduct
  - ❑ The expectation of the CEAP's behavior



<https://eapassn.org/page/ethicsandcodes>



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Responsibilities of the Employee Assistance Professional



**To colleagues  
and other  
professionals**



**To employees  
as clients**



**As  
professionals**



**To employers or  
work  
organizations**



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Responsibilities of the Employee Assistance Professional (cont.)



**In conducting  
research**



**To vendors and  
providers**



**To the employee  
assistance profession  
and broader society**



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Ethical Dilemmas

Ethical dilemmas have no right or wrong answer, arising when:

- there are competing ethical standards that apply,
- there is a conflict between what is ethical and moral,
- the complexities of the situation render the application of ethical standards unclear, or
- some other circumstances prevent a clear application of standards.

(Cottone & Tardyvas, 2007)



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Ethical Decision-Making Models

- Designed to bring clarity to ethical reasoning
- Generally constructed to reflect the profession's standards and codes of ethics

Find EAPA's decision-making model here:

<https://eapassn.org/page/ethicsandcodes>



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# EAPA Ethical Decision-Making Model

1. What are the potential ethical issues in this situation?
  - What are the competing values or interests? (x vs. y)
  - What are your personal values on this issue and which ones are in conflict?
  - Are there any ethical guidelines (laws, corporate policies, codes of ethics, practice standards, etc.) that apply to this issue?
2. Who are the stakeholders? (i.e., any individual or group impacted by the decision, e.g., the corporation, employee, family, public, yourself)
3. List all possible choices of action
  - Which choice benefits the client?
  - Which choice benefits the sponsoring organization?
  - Which choice benefits you?
  - Which choice benefits society?
4. Make your decision



# Ethical Decision-Making is Not Done in Isolation

Professional discussions and interactions are essential, including:

- Work Colleagues
- Work Supervisors
- Mentors
- Professional Association Staff and Colleagues



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Select Ethical Issues in EAPs

**Informed Consent**

**Confidentiality**

**Boundaries/Dual  
Relationships**



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide



---

# Group Exercise

## Case Scenario # 1



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

- You are a contracted provider of onsite critical incident services. You accept a request to provide a debriefing for a group of employees who are 'stressed and distracted' by the current political climate. Upon arrival, the HR rep takes you aside to prepare you that there are several especially vocal employees who have been influenced by the liberal media, and that she's hoping you can help everyone get along, despite their political beliefs. You're informed that the session will be recorded, since some employees are unable to attend.



---

# Group Exercise

## Case Scenario # 2



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

You are an EAP affiliate provider in private practice. You receive a formal referral from an EAP case manager, for a call center employee whose recent DUI has come to their employer's attention. The employee has been suspended until completion of any treatment recommended by your assessment. In the first session, the employee tells you that they are handling this legal matter, and asks you to explain how their use of alcohol is any of your, or their employer's business.



---

# Group Exercise

## Case Scenario #3



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

You are an internal EAP counselor, and regularly present suicide prevention webinars for interested employees to attend confidentially. After a recent session, your HR rep asks you to reach out to a specific employee who they are concerned may be at risk. When asked to elaborate, you are told that one of the post-session anonymous surveys had mentioned this specific employee's name as someone who had recently made statements that are warning signs for suicidal behavior.



# An Additional Challenge: Technology



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

# Technology Considerations



Informed Consent, including benefits and limitations



Competence



Privacy and Confidentiality



Records and Documentation



Boundaries, conflicts of interest, professionalism

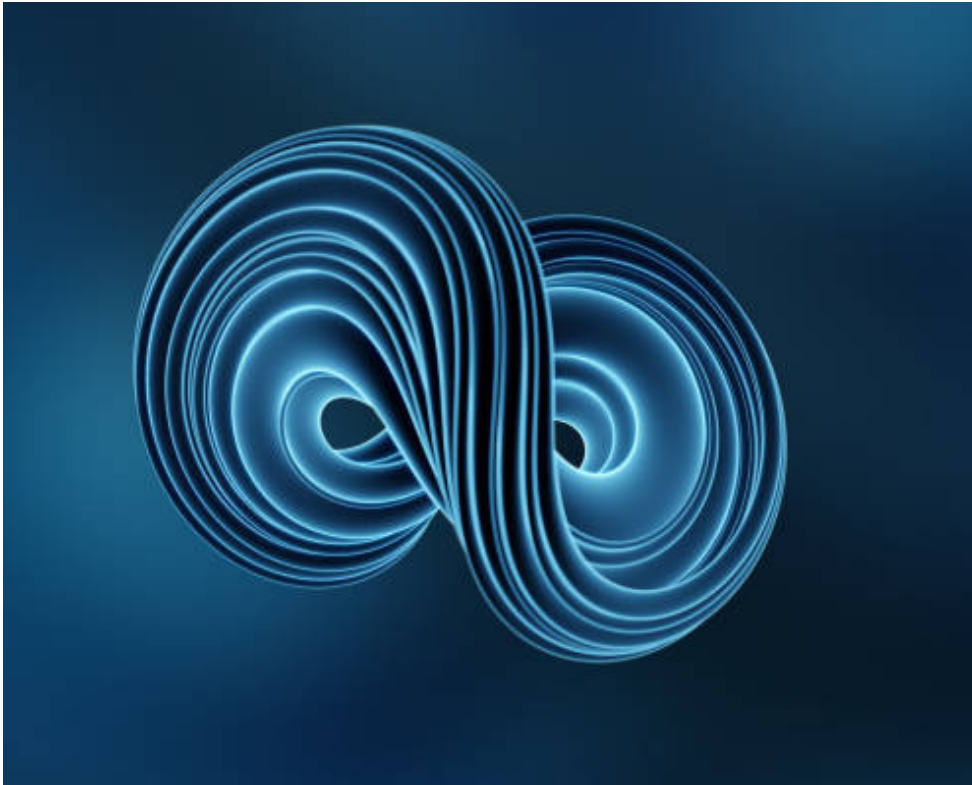


**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide



# FOREVER . . .



EAP Professionals must be aware that all their online postings, blogs, or chats may be viewed by clients and will stay online in some form, forever.



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Key Takeaways

- Ethical decisions are situational
- Ethical codes and decision-making models can guide decisions
- Ethical practice does not happen in isolation, and should include ongoing consultation and supervision

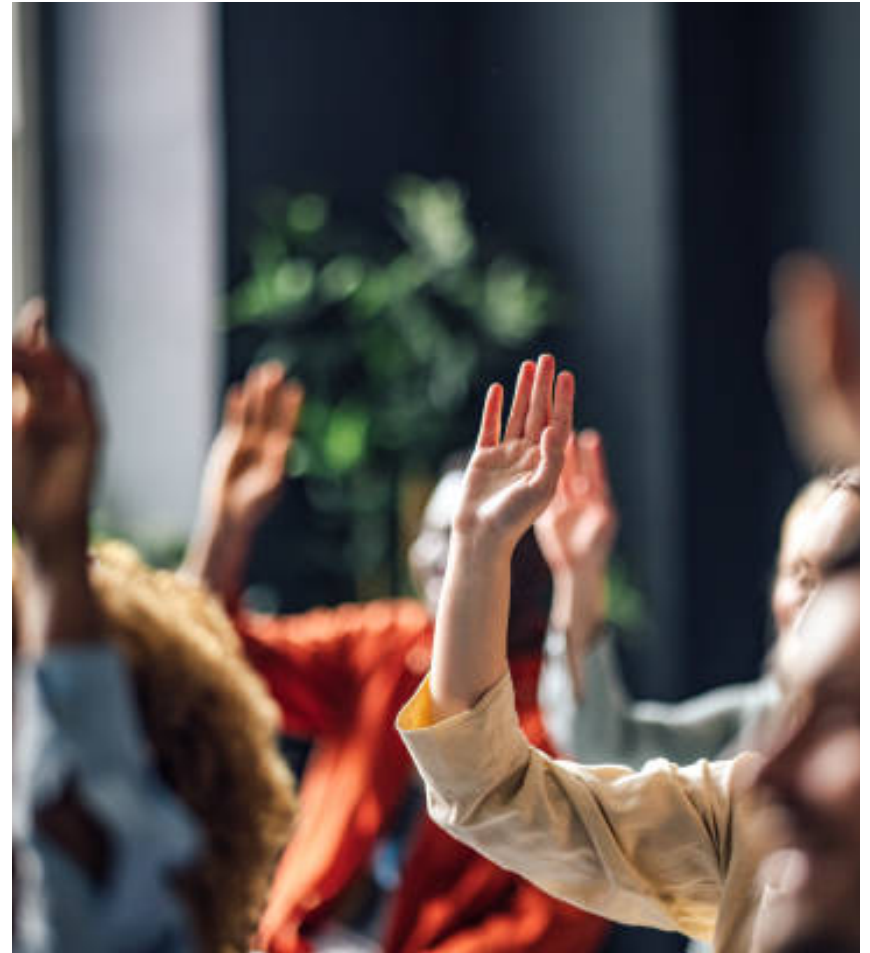


# Now we're at the end . . .

Questions?

Thoughts?

Feedback?



**EAPA**

Connecting, Educating & Supporting EA Professionals Worldwide

---

# Thank you for participating!

---

