

# Elevating Ethical Awareness

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



# Acknowledgements

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(revised 2015)
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## SPEAKER INTRODUCTIONS



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

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# 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.



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# 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.



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# Getting to Know You

Who are you?

Where do you work?

What's your role in your EAP?

(Polls)



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# Our Goal For Today



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



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# 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.



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# 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



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# Ethics is NOT



JUDGMENTAL OR IMPOSING  
OF PERSONAL VALUES.



CHOOSING THE LESSOR OF  
TWO EVILS.



THE SAME AS POLICY OR  
LAW.



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# Legal and Organizational Terms



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



**Policy**- Written, Formalized Standards



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



**Precedent**- Having done something before



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# Ethics, Workplace Policy and Laws

## QUICK QUESTION

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



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

-Potter Stewart



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# Eight Ethical Principles

- Service
- Beneficence
- Role Fidelity
- Integrity

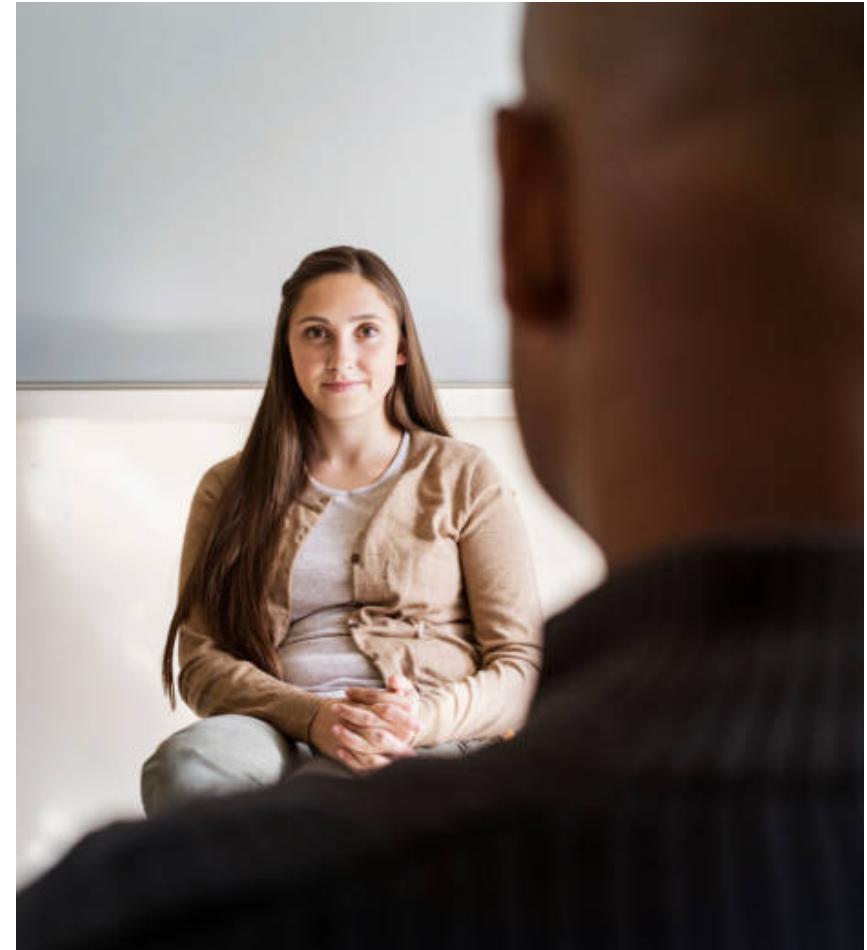


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# Eight Ethical Principles (cont.)

- Respect for Client Rights
- Nonmaleficence
- Confidentiality
- Competence



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# 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



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# 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>



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# Responsibilities of the Employee Assistance Professional



**To colleagues  
and other  
professionals**



**To employees  
as clients**



**As  
professionals**



**To employers or  
work  
organizations**

# Responsibilities of the Employee Assistance Professional (cont.)



**In conducting  
research**



**To vendors and  
providers**



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



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# 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)



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# 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>

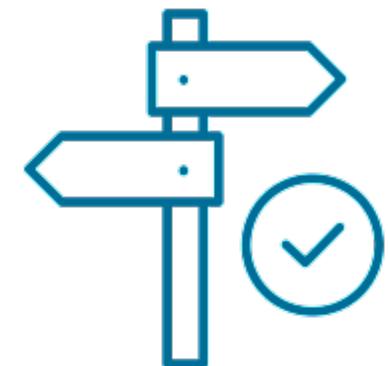


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# EAPA Ethical Decision-Making Model

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



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# 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



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# Select Ethical Issues in EAPs

**Informed Consent**

**Confidentiality**

**Boundaries/Dual Relationships**



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# Group Exercise

## Case Scenario # 1



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- 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



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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.



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# Group Exercise

## Case Scenario #3



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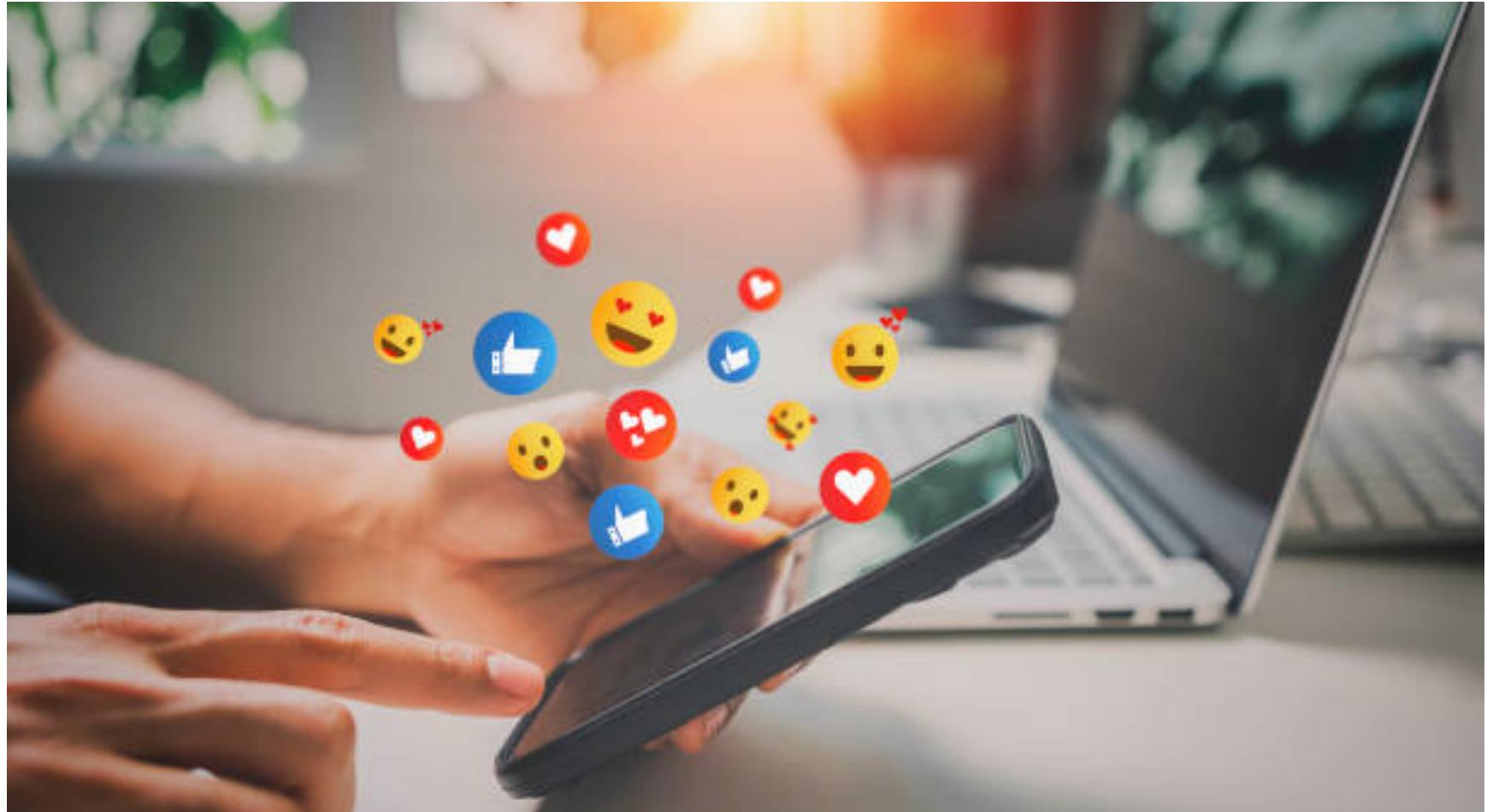
You are an internal EAP counselor, and regularly present suicide prevention webinars for interested employees to attend confidentially. After a recent session, your HR rep asks you to reach out to a specific employee who they are concerned may be at risk. When asked to elaborate, you are told that one 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.



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# An Additional Challenge: Technology



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# Technology Considerations



Informed Consent, including benefits and limitations



Competence



Privacy and Confidentiality



Records and Documentation



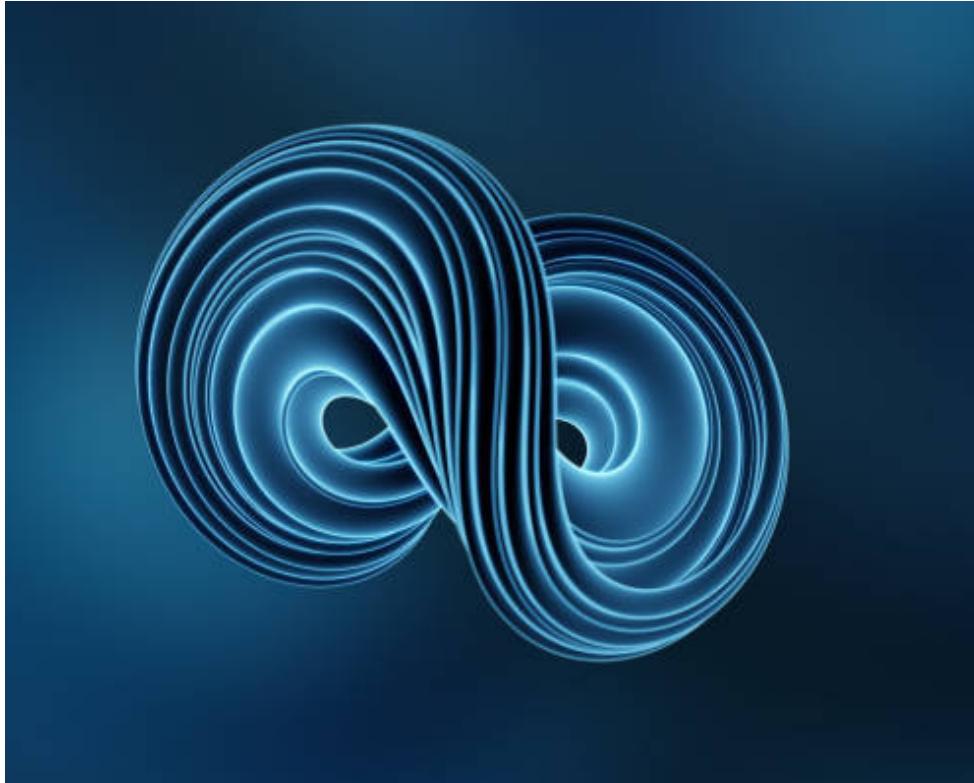
Boundaries, conflicts of interest, professionalism



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# 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.



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# 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



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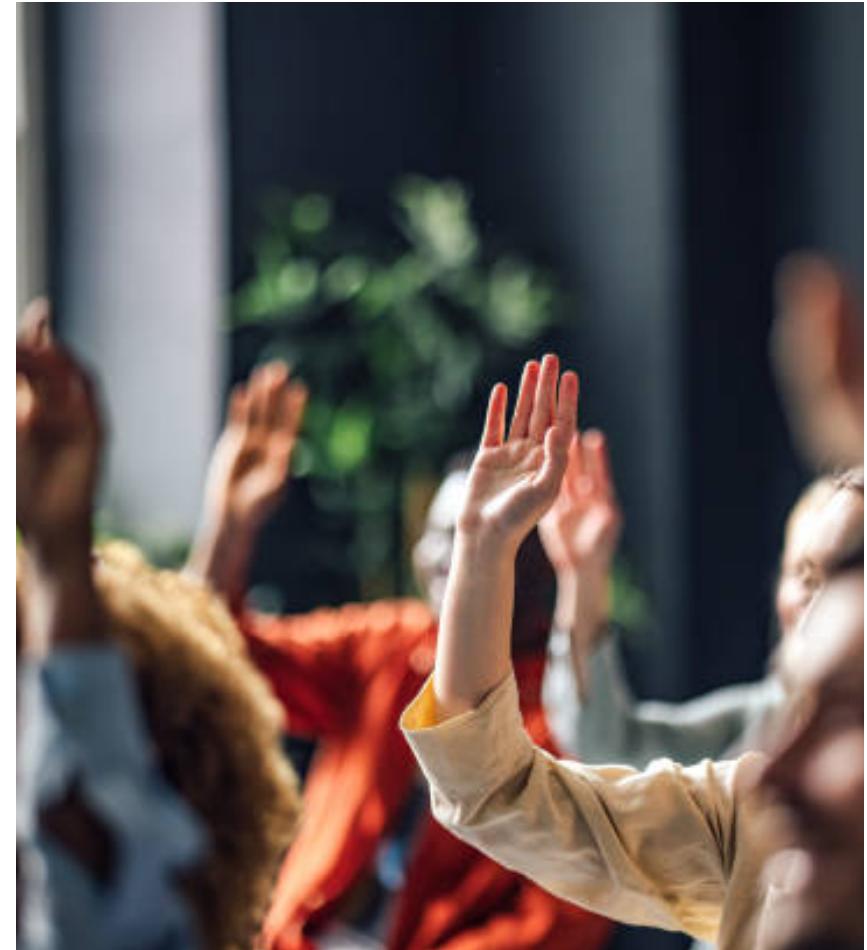
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# Now we're at the end . . .

Questions?

Thoughts?

Feedback?



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# Thank you for participating!

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