

Code of Ethics and Standards of Coaching

as adopted by



The purpose of the Certified Coaches Alliance Code of Ethics and Standards is threefold. First, it provides the broad principles and values to which coaches subscribe. These include confidentiality and the utmost concern for the welfare and success of the client. Secondly, it provides rules for coaches to use in many of the specific situations that a coach might encounter. Finally, this Code is meant to serve as a building block for the ethical and moral standards of coaches. While each individual coach certified through the C.C.A. agrees to follow this Code, they are encouraged to supplement and add to it in order to build a lifelong commitment to building an ethical workplace and profession that lives and breathes for oneself.

1) General Standards

1.01 Applicability of the Ethics Code.

- (a) A code is adopted by a community because its members accept that adherence to such rules, including the restrictions this implies, is of benefit to all, inside and outside the community alike.
- (b) This code of ethics is directed to all professional members of the C.C.A. It consists, essentially, of a series of statements which prescribe minimum standards of practice, to be observed by members. The code is intended to be observed in the spirit and not merely the word.
- (c) The activity of a coach subject to the Ethics Code may be reviewed under these Ethical Standards only if the activity is part of his or her coaching work-related functions.

1.02 Relationship of Ethics and Law of the Country.

- (a) Although the Law of the country in which the Coach practices will take precedence over the C.C.A. Ethical Standards, coaches will, at a minimum, strive to adhere to the C.C.A. code of ethics.

1.03 Professional Relationship.

- (a) Coaches provide their services only in the context of the C.C.A. professional standards.
- (b) Trust and responsibility are at the heart of the coaching profession. It is expected that coaches will always act with integrity towards their clients, their peers, and themselves.

1.04 Competence in Coaching.

- (a) Coaches provide services only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, or appropriate professional experience. Coaches only accept work as they believe they are competent to perform.

1.05 Maintaining Expertise.

- (a) Coaches maintain a reasonable level of awareness of current best business practices and professional information in their fields of activity, and undertake ongoing efforts to maintain competence in the skills they use.
- (b) Coaches keep themselves informed of new technologies, practices, legal requirements and standards as are relevant to the coaching profession.

1.06 Coaching Services.

- (a) When coaches provide coaching services, (inclusive of assessments), to an individual, a group, or an organization, they use language that is reasonably understandable to the recipient of those services.

1.07 Respecting Others.

- (a) Respect for the individual is a cornerstone of the coaching relationship.
- (b) In their work-related activities, coaches respect the rights of others to hold values, attitudes, and opinions that differ from their own.

1.08 Unfair Discrimination.

- (a) In their work-related activities, coaches do not engage in unfair discrimination based on any basis whatsoever.

1.09 Harassment.

- (a) Coaches do not knowingly engage in behavior that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their work.
- (b) Coaches do not enter into any form of sexual harassment, physical advances, verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature. Coaches ensure that their behavior is at all times appropriate and can in no way be described as harassment in any form.

1.10 Personal Problems and Conflicts.

- (a) Coaches recognize that they too may experience personal problems which may exert an adverse effect upon the coach / client relationship. Accordingly coaches inform clients of any such problems, and together decide on appropriate action.
- (b) Coaches have an obligation to be alert to signs of, and to obtain assistance for, their personal problems at an early stage, in order to prevent impaired coaching performance and to take appropriate measures, such as obtaining professional consultation or assistance, and determine whether they should limit, suspend, or terminate their current coaching activity.

1.11 Making Progress.

- (a) Coaches take reasonable steps to ensure that the client progresses, and in cases where there is no progress coaches strive to minimize any harm to their client.

1.12 Misuse of Coaches' Influence.

- (a) Because coaches' professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to and guard against personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence.
- (b) If coaches learn of misuse or misrepresentation of their work, they take reasonable steps to correct or minimize the misuse or misrepresentation.

1.13 Conflict of Interest.

- (a) Whenever feasible, a coach refrains from taking on professional obligations when pre-existing relationships would create a risk of conflict of interest.
- (b) If a coach finds that, due to unforeseen factors, a potential conflict of interest has arisen the coach attempts to resolve it with due regard for the best interests of the affected person and compliance with the Ethics Code.

1.14 Barter

- (a) Coaches may participate in bartering only if the relationship is not exploitative. They are free to negotiate accepting goods, services, or other non-monetary remuneration in return for coaching services, within the legal and Income Tax limitations of the country of practice.

1.15 Exploitative Relationships

- (a) Coaches do not exploit persons over whom they may have a management role.
- (b) Coaches do not engage in sexual relationships with personnel over whom the coach has evaluative or direct authority, because such relationships may be viewed as exploitative.

1.16 Referrals.

- (a) When indicated and if professionally appropriate, coaches may cooperate with other professionals in order to serve their client more effectively.

1.17 Third-party Requests for Services.

- (a) When a coach agrees to provide services to a person or entity at the request of a third party, the coach clarifies to the extent feasible, at the outset of the service, the nature of the relationship with each party. This clarification includes the role of the coach (such as organizational consultant), the probable uses of the services provided or the information obtained, and the fact that there may be limits to confidentiality.
- (b) If there is a foreseeable risk of the coach's being called upon to perform conflicting roles because of the involvement of a third party, the coach clarifies the nature and direction of his or her responsibilities, keeps all parties appropriately informed as matters develop, and resolves the situation in accordance with this Ethics Code.

1.18 Delegation to and Supervision of Subordinates.

- (a) Coaches delegate to their employees, and assistants only those responsibilities that such persons can reasonably be expected to perform competently, on the basis of their education, training, or experience, either independently or with the level of supervision being provided.
- (b) Coaches provide proper training and supervision to their employees and take reasonable steps to see that such persons perform services responsibly, competently and ethically.

1.19 Records and Information Management.

- (a) Coaches create, maintain, disseminate, store, retain, and dispose of records and data relating to their practice, and other work in accordance with the law of the country in which they practice, and in a manner that permits compliance with the requirements of this Ethics Code.
- (b) Coaches should appropriately document their work in order to facilitate provision of services later by them or by other professionals, to ensure accountability, and to meet other legal requirements of their Country.

1.20 Fees and Financial Arrangements.

- (a) As early as is feasible in a professional relationship, the coach and the client or other appropriate recipient of coaching services, reach an agreement specifying the compensation and the billing arrangements.

- (b) Coaches do not misrepresent their fees.
- (c) If limitations to services can be anticipated because of limitations in financing, this is discussed with the client, or other appropriate recipient of services as early as is feasible.
- (d) If the client, or other recipient of services does not pay for services as agreed, and if the coach wishes to use collection agencies or legal measures to collect the fees, the coach first informs the recipient that such measures will be taken and provides that recipient an opportunity to make prompt payment.

1.21 Accuracy in Reports to Payers.

- (a) In their reports to payers for services, coaches accurately and clearly state the nature of the service provided, the fees and/or all other charges.

1.22 Referral Fees.

- (a) When a coach pays, receives payment from, or divides fees with another professional other than in an employer - employee relationship, the payment to each is based on the services (referral, consultative, administrative, or other) provided, and is agreed to in writing prior to commencement of engagement.

2. Advertising / Public Statements

“Advertising / Public Statements” refers to any written documents or verbal statements that a coach makes publicly available (such as a brochure, article, speech, or professional resume) relating to coaching.

2.01 Statements by Others.

- (a) Coaches understand that others may engage in making public statements for them, whether specifically asked to do so or not. Coaches will make their best effort to ensure that any such public statements are true and not misleading.

2.02 Avoidance of False Statements.

- (a) Coaches agree not to make any public statements that are false, under any circumstance. Examples of such statements include the coaches training or experience and the fees they charge.

3. Coaching Relationship

3.01 Structuring the Relationship.

- (a) Coaches will clearly explain to the new client exactly what coaching is and is not.
- (b) Coaches agree to stay within the boundaries of scope of practice and therefore will never provide advice or recommendations or practice psychotherapy, counseling, or any other service that he or she is not authorized to provide or legally licensed to perform within his or her state, province or country.
- (c) Coaches agree to refer clients to other professionals when relevant.

3.02 Safety and Well-Being.

- (a) Coaches make an appropriate referral to a Mental Health Professional or Emergency Service Professional at an early point of recognizing situations in which clients may put their own safety or well-being at risk, or the safety or well-being of others at risk, and in severe situations the Coach must contact a Mental Health Crisis Service or Emergency Service on behalf of the client.
- (b) Coaches never attempt to diagnose or assess any mental health issue or specific problem where clients may put themselves or others at risk, but must act solely out of their personal experience, as coaches are not trained or licensed to make such diagnoses or assessments.
- (c) Coaches notify the appropriate authorities when a client discloses that they are harming or endangering another individual or group. The coach must also attempt to notify the person or group who is being harmed or endangered. The Coach does not need to discern if a mental health problem is present or in fact if the current or imminent harm is in fact illegal.

3.03 Providing Coaching Services to Those Served by Mental Health Professionals.

- (a) Coaches decide on an individual basis whether or not to enter into a coaching relationship with a client who is currently undergoing psychotherapy or other mental health treatment. Most important in making this decision is the client's welfare.

3.04 Interruption of Services.

- (a) Coaches make reasonable efforts to make other arrangements for any interruption of coaching services. For longer-term interruptions (longer than 1 month), the coach is encouraged to refer clients to other coaches until they are able to resume coaching.

3.05 Terminating the Coaching Relationship.

4) Privacy and Confidentiality

These Standards are applicable to the professional activities of all coaches.

4.01 Discussing Confidentiality and the Limitations Thereof.

- (a) Coaches respect the client's right to privacy. They do not solicit private information from the client unless it is essential in the provision of services, or the implementation of research. The standards of confidentiality apply once disclosure occurs.
- (b) The discussion of confidentiality occurs at the beginning of the professional relationship, unless it is contraindicated or infeasible, and from then on as necessary.
- (c) Coaches discuss the nature of confidentiality and its limitations with clients and other interested parties. Coaches examine situations in which confidential information may be requested or disclosed.
- (d) All information obtained in the course of the professional service is confidential unless there is a compelling professional reason for its disclosure. Coaches will only disclose confidential information without a specific release if it is necessary to prevent foreseeable imminent harm to the client or another. In all circumstances, coaches will be judicious in the amount of information that is disclosed.

4.02 Maintaining Confidentiality.

- (a) Coaches are fundamentally prudent in the protection of the confidentiality rights of those with whom they work or consult. Coaches acknowledge that professional relationships, institutional regulations, and/or the law may establish confidentiality.
- (b) Coaches will not discuss confidential information in any setting unless privacy can be assured.
- (c) Coaches discuss confidential information only for appropriate professional, consultative, or scientific purposes and only with persons clearly concerned with such matters.
- (d) In their dealings with the public and media (including professional presentations, and writing) coaches will be careful to guard the confidentiality of their clients. Moreover, coaches will disguise confidential information so that clients are not individually identifiable. Coaches will only disclose confidential information if the client or legally authorized individual has given express written consent.
- (e) In a consultative capacity, coaches do not share confidential information that could lead to the identification of a client with whom they have a confidential relationship.
- (f) Coaches take logical precautions to protect client confidentiality in the event of the coach's cessation of practice, incapacitation, or death.
- (g) Coaches protect the confidentiality of their deceased clients in accordance with this Ethics Code.

4.03 Records and Information Management.

- (a) Coaches maintain confidentiality of information communicated through the use of telephone, voice mail, computers, email, instant messaging, facsimile machines and other information technology sources.
- (b) Coaches take precautions to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of information communicated through the use of telephone, voice mail, computers, email, instant messaging, facsimile machines, and other information technology sources.
- (c) Coaches take practical and lawful steps to assure that records remain available in order to serve the best interests of clients.

4.04 Disclosures.

- (a) Unless prohibited by law, coaches will only disclose confidential information if the client, or person legally authorized to consent on behalf of the client, has given express written consent.
- (b) Coaches may disclose confidential information without the consent of the client only as mandated or permitted by law.
- (c) When possible, coaches inform clients about the disclosure of confidential information and possible ramifications, before the disclosure is made.
- (d) Coaches will only disclose confidential information to third party payers with the appropriate written consent of the client.
- (e) Coaches must disclose certain confidential information as required by law or if the

confidential information may put the client or others at risk of harm or compromise their well-being.

5) Coaching Training

5.01 Design of Training Programs.

- (a) Coaches who train other coaches do their best to ensure that their training programs are well thought-out, and will provide the trainee the eleven core competencies as agreed upon by the majority of world-wide coaching bodies.

5.02 Ethics and Training.

- (a) Coaches who train other coaches will ensure that the trainees are made aware of this ethics code, when applicable, and will abide by it during the training process.