



GLOSSARY

Definition of terms used in EFPA Board of Ethics documents and position papers

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS ASSOCIATIONS EFPA

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Psychologists have a great responsibility to use their knowledge in the direction of human well-being. To get good professional performance an adequate education and training is mandatory. A Psychologist should be trained by other psychologists and learn the ethical principles and values of the profession. Professional ethics is essential in establishing the major reference points for professional practice. Psychologists strive for a high competence in their education about ethics and ethical reasoning.

In this Glossary the reader will find some terms used in EFPA Board of Ethics documents and position papers. The EFPA Board of Ethics does not intend to make a statement or a doctrine here about various terms in ethics. These definitions are intending to support the understanding of EFPA Board of Ethics documents and are written to be accessible to a broad audience. With concise definitions, this Glossary will help people to better understand ethics subjects and to make professional decisions with a greater sense of confidence and understanding. It is a contribution to professional development.

In this Glossary, the EFPA Board of Ethics will not address the definition of 'client'. The Board of Ethics understands that this concept is very complex, considering the several contexts of psychologists' work. The Board of Ethics has decided to discuss the subject and to develop a position paper on the subject.

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Term	Definition
Autonomy	Autonomy (self-determination) is the ability and right of an individual or collective to determine their own fate (e.g., whether to undertake certain interventions.) The respect for autonomy of people is a principle that ought to be respected in the context of psychological intervention. One goal of psychology is to promote the autonomy of clients, helping them to make their own decisions.
Beneficence	Beneficence signifies an obligation to seek good outcomes for others. In Psychology, beneficence is practiced by the psychologist prioritizing the client and the needs of the client
Code of ethics	Codes of ethics are educational and regulatory tools for a group of professionals, promoting the best values for professional practice. They aim to build the profession's identity, promoting a homogeneous and high-quality practice of the profession
Competence	(See Model Code) Competence refers to the ability and safety of a psychologist to work within their field. To be competent, a professional needs sufficient education and training in a particular field of intervention, adequate supervision, and experience of applying interventional techniques or procedures. A competent intervention should be based on scientific knowledge of psychology
Confidentiality	Confidentiality is an obligation of secrecy of the psychologist. The psychologist undertakes not to communicate the client's private and personal information to other parties without the client's consent. This practice is generally understood to be both a moral and legal duty of the psychologist. There are exceptional situations when breaking confidentiality can be necessary.
Conflict of interests	Conflicts of interest arise when one or more aspects of a psychologist's professional roles, personal needs, attitudes, and values will negatively affect their working relationship with a client. Psychologists frequently work with vulnerable clients and must be mindful of conflicts of interest that may threaten a beneficial professional relationship. It is part of the psychologist's integrity to be aware of possible conflict of interests before psychological interventions, so they can prevent a difficult situation.
Dignity	Recognition of the value of a person, which commands respect for the other and confers rights to the person. For the psychologist, recognition of the dignity of the client translates into respect for the client's values, autonomy, and sense of responsibility

Dilemma	It is a situation where the psychologist experiences a conflict between principles and/or values.
Dual Relationships	It is a kind of Multiple Relations. A dual relationship happens in the case a psychologist has a second, significantly different relationship with their client in addition to the professional one
EFPA Board of Ethics	(See the EFPA website)
Equality	Concept that all persons, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, ability/disability, sexual orientation, or other traits have equal rights. (See Equity).
Equity/Equipoise	Fundamental attitude of the psychologist in treating all clients equally, respecting their personal characteristics and differences. To have equal opportunities meaning equity or equipoise acknowledges the individual differences of the client(s) but seeks to treat them with a balanced, non-judgmental attitude. Clients' individual differences are acknowledged and inform the intervention or treatment but should not bias or negatively impact treatment or interventions
Ethical Principles	Represents values that orient and rule the professional conduct of psychologists.
Ethics Adjudication	The investigation of ethics complaints against psychologists and the imposition of sanctions where appropriate
Ethics Committee	See Appendix A of Model Code
Ethical Decision Making	Application of the principles of ethics and best practice of psychology to decision making within the client/psychologist interaction. See Appendix B of Model Code.
Guidelines in Ethics	A framework of advice approved by EFPA (and prepared by the Board of Ethics) that orient, guide and/or support sound practice of psychologist's professional work regarding specific topics
Informed Consent	It is an agreement based on a voluntary participation of the client after comprehensive information about the intervention or research
Integrity	A psychologist's fidelity to ethical principles of the profession of psychology
Justice	Quality to conduct professional activity with fairness and honesty (no biases, no discrimination).
Meta-Code	The EFPA Meta-Code, approved 1995 and revised 2005, is a document establishing the principles of European Psychologists, the common standards among the European Member Associations. It is the first guidance for the content of Ethics Codes of Member Associations
Model Code of Ethics:	approved 2015, is based on the principles presented in the Meta-Code. It provides guidance in how to apply ethical principles to professional practice in such a way that they will advance ethical awareness and reflection

Mediation	Is a possibility to deal with a complaint against the psychologist. It is a semi-structured process in which a mediator assists the disputing parties to work through and resolve problems or conflicts together. It is non-judgmental, voluntary process that focuses on helping parties to find mutually satisfying resolutions to their problems, consistent with the interests of each party
Multiple relationships	There are two types of multiple relationships; the dual relationship, when a psychologist has an additional, non-professional relationship with his/her client, or when a psychologist establishes a professional relation with two people who are close to each other
Privacy	Freedom from intrusion by a third party. The right of an individual or group to non-disclosure of personal details or information without their consent. Respect for the privacy of the client is fundamental for the psychologist. (<i>See Confidentiality</i>).
Position Paper in Ethics	A written text usually short, outlining the opinion of the Board of Ethics of EFPA regarding specific topics.
Recommendations	Suggested courses of professional conduct of psychologists regarding specific topics in ethics, approved by EFPA
Responsibility	A principal framing psychologists' duty to deal with professional questions and being accountable for maintaining professional standards in the work. In addition, it is generally accepted that one psychologist's actions may impact on the whole professional community and in society in general
Self-Determination	see <i>Autonomy</i> .
Values	The moral, ethical and belief paradigms of an individual or group determining their actions in daily life. (<i>See also Principles.</i>)

Board of Ethics

Website: [Board of Ethics](#)

The EFPA Board of Ethics serves as a support to the European psychologists in the matter of ethics and deals with general aspects of professional development that are relevant for the psychological profession, irrespective of field of practice or specialization.

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