

# **European Association of Reality Therapy - EART**

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

### ***GENERAL PRINCIPLES***

1. The European Association of Reality Therapy (subsequently referred to in this document as “the association” or “EART”) acknowledges the fundamental human rights of every individual and will at all times strive to respect and nurture those rights.
2. Membership of EART will be in accord with the constitution of EART.
3. Individuals who are members of organisations within the European Association of Reality Therapy including trainee members (referred to in this document as “members”) use Reality Therapy as their core therapeutic approach.
4. By adhering to the principles of Choice Theory as elaborated by Dr. William Glasser members will respect the dignity and freedom of choice of the human being.
5. Members use their skills for the welfare of their clients and in such a way so as not to infringe the rights of others.
6. Membership of EART implies a commitment to the ethical code of the association.

### ***RELATIONSHIP WITH CLIENTS***

7. Participation in therapy by a client must be by informed consent of the client.
8. In the case of minors or people with limited cognitive faculties extra care must be taken to ensure that they are content with the therapy relationship.
9. Even in cases where attendance at therapy has been made compulsory on the client by an outside person or agency, further engagement in therapy may not take place against the client's will.
10. Members will apply their therapy skills in a way that best serves their clients with due respect for the rights of others.
11. Prior to the first therapy intervention members will ensure that the client has a good understanding of the nature of the therapeutic relationship, the specific approach used, the qualifications, accreditation, experience and limits of the therapist, the nature of therapy confidentiality and its limits, fee scales involved and, when possible, an estimate of the duration of therapy.

12. Members are encouraged to provide some services for reduced fees or no fees.
13. Members will establish a warm and honest professional relationship with clients.
14. This "professional friendship" is a partnership developed specifically to work for the good of the client with due regard for the needs and rights of others.
15. There are other relationships that are not compatible with the therapist-client relationship. These include sexual relationships, employer-employee relationships, business relationships, supervisor-supervisee relationships.
16. Therapists will generally be wary of any dual role they currently have with their clients and ensure that such roles do not interfere with the therapeutic work.
17. At no times should a therapist exploit their clients, financially, emotionally, sexually or in any other way.
18. Since friendship is often one of the unfulfilled needs of clients, the therapist may help such clients develop friendship skills but shall not encourage the client to become dependent on the therapist for friendship or other needs.
19. A therapist deals with a client in such a way that the client can choose to grow and develop. Criticism, sarcasm, a judgemental attitude or any form of external control are all contrary to the practice and principles of Reality Therapy.
20. In helping the client elaborate plans of action, the therapist will strive to ensure that the client experiences success in such undertakings.
21. When a therapist is learning new approach that was not introduced at the beginning to the client it must not be used without the latter's awareness and consent.
22. The client should be aware and give informed consent if all or part of the therapy process contributes to statistical or research work of any kind.
23. The therapist shall be punctual in appointments with the client and shall do everything possible to minimise all cancellations or other interruptions of the therapy process.
24. The venue chosen for therapy shall be acceptable to the client and shall be conducive to the client's development.
25. The therapist shall not prolong therapy sessions or a series of therapy sessions unnecessarily.

26. Where the therapist's personal values are relevant to the subject matter of the therapy, the therapist makes these clear to the client so that both therapist and client may be aware of any potential therapist bias in the matter. Where the therapist's values are such as to threaten the integrity of the therapeutic process, the therapist will discuss this with the client a view to referring him/her to another therapist.

## **Confidentiality**

27. Prior to starting therapy members will provide clients with a clear statement about confidentiality and its specified exceptions.
28. Members shall treat all information obtained from or relating to their clients in the course of therapy with full confidentiality apart from the specified exceptions.
29. One exception where information disclosure is advised is when this is necessary to protect the safety of the client or others.
30. Another exception is where a client involves his or her therapist in legal proceedings or permits such involvement to take place and where the therapist is unable to present the whole truth without recourse to otherwise confidential information. In such a situation the therapist may reveal the necessary information and only the necessary information.
31. Another exception to confidentiality is where there is a prior legal onus on the therapist to reveal certain types of information.
32. Unless the client is told otherwise, it is to be taken as implicit that confidentiality covers everything the client discloses during therapy including the fact that the client is meeting the therapist.
33. The client may share any aspect of the therapy sessions with others.
34. A client retains the right to request the therapist or give the therapist permission to release information about the client even though this was otherwise protected by confidentiality.
35. Where the therapist shares any information about the client with another person only minimum details shall be communicated.
36. All threats against life shall be regarded as serious. The therapist shall take appropriate steps to check the lethality of the threat and shall act accordingly.
37. Where there is reasonable suspicion of abuse of the client (or by the client), the therapist shall take the appropriate steps to protect the abused.
38. If the therapist discusses a particular case with a supervisor this is not regarded as confidential provided all details that might identify the client are disguised and the supervisor together with any other supervisees present are bound by supervision confidentiality.

39. Normally permission to share confidential information will require written permission of the client or, in the case of a minor or client with a legal guardian, written permission of the person or persons with legal responsibility for the client.
40. The therapist shall not use confidential information for any personal advantage or gain.
41. Where a member avails of auxiliary personnel such as secretarial assistance it is the member's responsibility to ensure that the client's confidentiality is understood and protected by such personnel.

## **Record Keeping**

42. Any notes or other records about a client kept by the therapist or therapist in training are covered by the rules of confidentiality and by data protection legislation.
43. Any notes or records kept about a client must have the client's permission.
44. No audio or video recording of a therapy session shall be undertaken without advance approval of the client and he or she retains control over its subsequent use or destruction.
45. In obtaining information from or about a client, the therapist shall only seek what may be necessary for the client's welfare.
46. All forms of recorded material relating to therapy sessions require the informed consent of the client and must be kept with the utmost care and confidentiality.
47. In the case of computerised or digital data all due care must be given to security of access, security of data transfer and security of erasure with full respect for the rights of the individual.
48. Members have an obligation to learn about the limits of security in computers, in digital storage and in all communication between computers.

## **Referral**

49. The member shall learn from the client if any other professional help is being received or sought by the client and shall do all possible to ensure that his or her own intervention will not jeopardise the work of other helpers.
50. The member shall recommend the client to inform the other helper of the member's involvement.
51. If a member believes that he or she can be of no further help to a client then the client shall be informed as soon as possible.

- 52.If the member believes that the client should seek other professional help instead of or in addition to therapy, he or she shall inform the client of this fact.
- 53.The member shall learn about other relevant human welfare resources in the community and general locality.
- 54.The member shall take all due care only to make referrals or recommendations to other professionals who have the relevant competence to deal adequately with the client.
- 55.A member has a responsibility to ensure that any referral made is for the client's greater good with due respect for the needs and rights of others.
- 56.A member may not charge a client any form of fee for making a referral.

### ***PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES***

- 57.Members will always strive to improve their knowledge and skills of therapy.
- 58.At all times members will have due regard for the standards of good practice adopted by fellow-members of EART and by fellow-professionals.
- 59.The therapist shall not accept a client who appears to be outside the therapist's competence.
- 60.A therapist shall be aware of local customs and values and the individual belief system of the client and will take due account of these in therapy.
- 61.Members are strongly recommended to be in regular consultation with other therapists.
- 62.Members are recommended to engage in regular professional development.
- 63.Members are also recommended to attend regular supervision sessions with a view to maintaining and enhancing the quality of their service.
- 64.Members will at all times respect the intellectual property rights of others.

### **Qualifications**

- 65.Members will always represent their relevant professional qualifications and accredited status accurately and completely to their clients.
- 66.Information about the nature of the awarding bodies or organisations, the duration of courses involved and the criteria for entry or for awards should be readily available to clients.
- 67.If a member has professional accreditation by an external therapy body true and accurate Information about such accreditation and its requirements should also be readily available to clients.

68. Members will take special care that information about their qualifications, accreditation, experience or expertise is not open to any misinterpretation by clients or others.

## **Psychometrics**

69. A member will only use psychometric instruments for which he or she has relevant training and qualifications.
70. The use of psychometric instruments is justified only when there is a strong probability that the results will be helpful in the therapy process.
71. Any psychometric instrument used as a formal aid in the therapy process should have a clearly defined purpose with clear information about reliability, validity, error of measurement and normative data.
72. In the use of standardised instruments it is essential that the norms used are relevant to the client and the client's circumstances.
73. The meaning and significance of any psychometric results should be limited to what was determined in the standardisation of the instrument.
74. Care should be taken that any questionnaire or other therapy aid that could be confused with a psychometric instrument should have its purpose and limitations clearly explained to the client.
75. Psychometric tests are confidential to the therapy relationship, and will not be used for any other purpose without the express agreement of the client.

## **Research**

76. Members will respect the principles of scientific methodology by maintaining a solid theoretical base for their therapy work, by promoting and supporting objective scientific research and by constant monitoring of the efficacy of their individual interventions.
77. When members engage in research either as participants or planners they will uphold the principles of accuracy, truth, openness, objectivity and integrity.
78. When clients are invited to become involved in research they will be fully informed about the nature and format of the research, about how their data will be protected and used.

## ***PROFESSIONAL DECLARATION***

79. A member may advertise his or her therapy service to the public.
80. A member may describe areas of experience, qualifications, expertise and membership of professional organisations.
81. Such information should be stated accurately and without exaggeration.
82. Despite keeping up (maintenance) the optimism that reside in firm believe that everybody can choose better behaviour in the future No guarantee of "solution" or "cure" shall be given.
83. Advertised contact details must include a valid land address and/or a valid landline number.
84. Members will refrain from criticism of other therapists or approaches.
85. Members will not engage in any explicit or implicit comparison with other therapists or approaches.
86. Where a member works with assistants or associates their qualifications, experience and expertise will be stated clearly.
87. All advertising shall be in a form acceptable to fellow members of EART.
88. Advertising of the therapy role must in no way degrade the therapy profession.
89. When advertising therapy services a member may not advertise non-related services in the same place.
90. Members shall not display an affiliation with an organisation in a manner that falsely implies the sponsorship or validation of that organisation.
91. Members will inform clients of the appendix to the Code of Ethics: The Complaints and Appeal Procedures available to them.