

OLOCOUNSELING CODE OF CONDUCT

Basic principles

OLOCOUNSELING code of conduct, as it is provided for in the Social Statute of OLOCOUNSELING, in accordance with article 2 law 4/2013, aims to specify the Practitioner ethics stating the deontological principles that the Holistic Counselor and Holistic Practitioner must abide by, while practising the “non-organised profession” defined in article 1 law 4/2013 and while adopting a holistic model in his/her main job and in life (article 4 Statute).

The Code of conduct is adopted in accordance with article 2 law 4/2014 in accordance with article 27-bis of the consumer Code, of which the legislative decree 6 September 2005, n. 206. The code of conduct is published, in both Italian and English, on the website of the Association OLOCOUNSELING.

The Code of conduct aims to guarantee the protection of the underage and the safekeeping of human dignity.

The Code of conduct and the internal regulation are integral parts of the Statute, the provisions of the Statute are fully referenced here (article 4 Statute).

The Code of conduct is a tool for the safeguard and transparency of the Professional Association OLOCOUNSELING.

The Code of conduct OLOCOUNSELING provides PRINCIPLES which the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must align with while practising the profession defined in article 1 law 4/2013 and in the Statute, in addition to the rules of behaviour he/she must abide to in general.

The rules of the Code of conduct are binding for all the members of the association, in accordance with article 10 Statute, and abiding by these rules is an unavoidable duty for every member. In accordance with article 11 Statute, the severe failure to comply with the regulations of the Code of Conduct may be considered as a reason for the expulsion from the Association, with the resulting loss of the title of associate.

All the members are required to act with decency, dignity and to practice the profession correctly, therefore any action in contrast with these standards entails the dismissal from the Association, according to the provisions of the Statute and the internal regulation of OLOCOUNSELING.

The failure to comply to the set of rules entails the implementation of sanctions. At the end of the disciplinary procedure these sanctions will be imposed following the principle of adequacy, and proportionately to the severity of the actions or omissions carried out.

The resignation from the association do not interrupt the disciplinary procedure, which must be conducted and concluded.

Article 1 – Deontological rules and their field of implementation

The Statute, the rules of the Code of Conduct and internal regulation apply to all members of the Association OLOCOUNSELING and are binding, on pain of expulsion from the Association.

The associate must know them and abide by them, the lack of knowledge doesn't exempt from disciplinary responsibility.

The principles and the rules in the present Code of Conduct are implemented even in case the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner is carrying out his/her professional service remotely: via internet, skype or other electronic and telematic means.

Article 2 – Ethic Principles

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner practices his/her profession grounding it on the ethical principles of hospitality and respect, authenticity and congruence, kindness and listening, dignity and responsibility, competence and wisdom.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner is professionally free to abstain from collaborating with his/her client when he/she is asked to help achieve objectives which are in conflict with his/her ethics. In this case he/she is required to safeguard the client's needs and to direct him/her to others which may offer what is demanded.

Article 3 - Competence and Professionality

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must operate in his/her area of professional competence.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must recognise the limits of his/her competency and thus only use the tools and techniques he/she has an adequate competency in, and when necessary tools which he/she has a formal authorization to use.

Article 4 - Continuing Professional Education and Development

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner takes care of his/her training with frequent and constant updating, following the path of Continuing Professional Education (CPE), paying attention to his/her personal development and making use of supervision.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must keep an adequate level of professional competence and keep up to date in its branch of expertise, specifically in the area he/she is practising.

It is a deontological violation: to utilize appellations which are used by other professional categories and for which the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner has no certification, to lie about one's professional training, to offend or give false information about the professionalism of any another professional.

Article 5 – Relationship with the Client

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner is bound by the duty of confidentiality and must respect his/her client's freedom and dignity, his/her self-determination and autonomy.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner does not discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, nationality, ideology, social background, financial circumstances, political views, sexual orientation and disabilities.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must inform his/her client about his professional competence and define its limits clearly. It is of the utmost importance for the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner to inform his/her client that he/she can not offer any kind of psychotherapy or medical care. The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner can promote an increase in the client's awareness, using information and practices to improve his/her psycho-physical well-being and energetic balance, to enhance his/her ability to manage his/her own individuality, interpersonal relationships and conflicts.

The agreement between the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner and his/her client must include goals, length of time and payment.

Article 6 – Starting and interrupting the professional relationship

It is the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner's duty to accept the client's issues, and he/she must direct his/her client to other specialists or consultants which are deemed more suitable if the situation falls outside the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner's competency.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner is free to decide to start a professional relationship with a client or not. If the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner refuses to start a professional relationship with the client he/she can provide the name and contacts of other professionals.

When the client is underage or an interdicted person, the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must receive the written consent of both his/her parents or his/her legal wards in order to be able to start a professional relationship. The professional must gather information about eventual existing family hardships or controversy.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner evaluates the possibility to interrupt a professional relationship when:

A) The professional relationship is not beneficial to the client, i.e. the consultancy is ineffective. It is unethical to prolong such relationship in vain.

B) The professional deems it necessary to continue the assistance with other professional figures.

C) On the grounds of other situations which can justify dismissal, such as a relocation or illness. If the refusal to start a relationship with the client or the client's dismissal are not conducted with caution, in order to avoid any possible unease for the client, the action is considered a deontological violation.

Article 7 – Professional Correctness

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner avoids mixing his/her professional life with his/her private life in such a way that this might result in an interference with his/her role and aims as a professional figure.

It is unethical to have professional relationships with people whom we have or have had a personal or intimate relationship (pertaining the emotional, sentimental or sexual sphere).

It is a severe violation of the Code of Conduct to initiate such relationships as described above (pertaining the emotional, sentimental or sexual sphere) with a client during the professional relationship and it constitutes a disciplinary offence.

Article 8 – Professional Duty of Confidentiality

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must respect his/her duty of confidentiality in the client's interest, therefore he can't disclose news, facts, circumstances and information she/he has learnt because of her/his professional relationship; in conformity with the current regulations.

When the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner collaborates with other colleagues he/she can share only the information which is strictly necessary in order to improve the client's wellbeing.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must do her/his best in order to ensure the duty of confidentiality is respected by her/his collaborators or employees, and by everyone who is cooperating in her/his professional activity, regarding the facts and circumstances learnt because of their collaboration in the professional activity.

The duty of confidentiality persists after the client's death.

The duty of confidentiality is not applicable in the following situations:

- a) If there is an effective consent, also signed by the client or ex-client. Of course the client is guaranteed he can revoke that consent in a time and a modality that is useful in relation to the purpose it was asked for.
- b) When there is a request by a Judicial Authority.
- c) If the life or the health of the client and/or a third party is in serious danger.

Article 9 – Educational publications

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner may use data gathered during his/her professional practice for scientific, educational or research publications, but the disclosure of the identity of the subjects is strictly forbidden.

Anyway all the subjects involved must be aware of the purpose of the use of the material. In order to comply with the laws in force it is necessary to obtain and file away the client's written consent.

When teaching or training the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner encourages in his/her students, pupils or interns an interest for ethical and deontological principles, and she/he will inspire her/his professional conduct to those principles.

Article 10 – Relationships with Colleagues

In working relationships the cooperative model is preferred to the competitive model, therefore the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner must respect the professionalism of her/his colleagues and relate to them with integrity and decency.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner, aligned with the purpose of the Association, will promote and support exchange and collaboration among colleagues.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner may make use of the contributions of other specialised professionals, with whom there may be chances to integrate some knowledge, in order to promote each other's expertise.

Article 11 – Professional Practice

While practising her/his profession and when the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner is publicly representing the Association or her/his profession in any way, he/she must align his/her conduct to the principles of professional decency and dignity.

Regardless of the limits that the present Italian laws on advertising establish, the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner will not behave unfairly in public in order to acquire clients, thus she/he will avoid bragging about results which are impossible to achieve.

Any act or behaviour aimed to undermine the image of the Profession, thus any act or behaviour which constitutes an abuse of the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner 's professional position, is considered a deontological violation.

Article 12 – Information on the Professional practice

In any case informative advertising about the titles and specialisations of the professionals, the features of the service that is offered and the overall prices and costs of the professional services, must abide to criteria of transparency and truthfulness of the message. The respect of these criteria is verified by the Board of Arbitrators.

The lack of transparency and truthfulness in the message is considered a deontological offence. The message must be expressed respecting the decency of the Profession, complying with the criteria of professionalism and truthfulness, while safeguarding the image of the Profession.

Article 13 – External collaborations

When the Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner starts an employment relationship, with a fixed term contract, or as a subordinate or a collaborator with a public or a private institution, association or agency, she/he must accept only employment conditions which will not compromise her/his Professional autonomy and freedom, she/he must always abide by the present Code of Conduct.

Article 14 – Liability to disciplinary action

The violation of the previous articles (duties, roles of conduct, criteria, principles) is a disciplinary offence and it is persecuted following the rules established in the Internal Regulation, according to the process schedule of the Regulation and the disciplinary procedure.

Any infraction or violation of the Penal Code is an explicit violation to the rules of conduct.

The Holistic Counselor or Holistic Practitioner who has violated the penal law, not by means of negligence but with fraudulent or express behaviour, must undergo a disciplinary procedure, except here any autonomous evaluation of the act committed.

Article 15 – Disciplinary power

The power to impose sanctions is recognised by the Board of Arbitrators, as a disciplinary agency, that distributes them with equanimity and proportionally to the violation of the deontologic rules.

Sanctions are related to the severity of the acts and the eventual reiteration of incorrect behaviour, taking into account the specific subjective and objective circumstances which contributed to cause the violation.

Article 16 – Disciplinary Procedure

The disciplinary procedure is carried out according to the constitutional principles and the rights of the European Convention for the safeguard of human rights, following the process schedule sanctioned in the Regulation of Disciplinary procedures.

Article 17 – Sanctions

Disciplinary sanctions are as follow:

- Verbal reprimand: the violator will be summoned by a member of the Board of Arbitrators.
- Formal Warning: the violator will receive a written document asking him/her to keep a

correct conduct avoiding behaviours, also similar, that may implicate deontological violations. A formal warning can be repeated for a maximum amount of three times, after this the violator will be automatically suspended.

- Suspension of membership, re-admission as part of the association is allowed only under limited conditions: the violator's membership of the association is suspended and he/she can't exercise the pertaining rights established in accordance with the regulations in force. Re-admission can be allowed if the subject follows training and refresher courses with positive results.
- Suspension of membership for an indefinite period of time, for severe violations that are irreconcilable. A meeting of the members of the association will be announced and the members will sanction the expulsion from the association of the member who is indefinitely suspended.

Article 18 – Statue of limitation of the disciplinary process

Disciplinary actions lapse five years after the act of violation.

In case of a criminal conviction for a offence that was not caused by negligence, the statue of limitation is two years from the final judgement of the criminal proceedings.

Interruption of the limitation period for the disciplinary procedure occurs when the violator is informed of the registration on the classified register.

In any case the status of limitation can not be extended beyond the maximum limit of seven years and six months. The time of eventual suspensions is not calculated.

Article 19 – Final provision

The code of conduct is updated and guarded by the Board of Arbitrators, who are responsible for the Code, its observance and implementation. They have the specific task to monitor the professional conduct of the members.