



Texas HHSC Institute  
Presents  
*Ethics in the Clinical Relationship*  
Presenter  
Mark Sanders, LCSW, CADC

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*8 Principles that Guide Ethical Decision Making*

- *The client's right to self determination – clients have a right to make their own decisions in life including bad decisions. Counselors have to accept the fact that clients have that right. To impose their will would be unethical.*
- *Non – malice – the counselor will not intentionally harm their clients. Most harm done to clients is done unintentionally. This is called the Iatrogenic Effect.*

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*Iatrogenic Effect*

*Diagnosis*

- *Misdiagnosis – 30%*
- *Overdiagnosis*
- *Treating clients as if they are their diagnosis*

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*Iatrogenic Effect  
Harm in the Name of Helping*

- *Heavy confrontation*
- *Unwelcome touch*
- *Treating Aftercare as an "afterthought"*
- *Not addressing trauma and co-occurring disorders*

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*Iatrogenic Effect Continued*

- *Ignoring the most addictive drug*

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*Nicotine*

- *Kills more people than alcohol, all illicit drugs and HIV combined*
- *Increases relapse rates x 3*
- *A trigger to return to alcohol*
- *Can trigger a return to heroin, methamphetamines, crack and marijuana use*

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*Iatrogenic Effect*

- *Paternalism*
- *Discharge for confirming the diagnosis*
- *Increasing medication as a countertransference reaction*
- *Iatrogenic poverty*

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*Iatrogenic Effect Continued*

- *Not addressing burnout - depersonalization*
- *Biases effecting clinical work*

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*8 Principles Continued*

- *Justice and fairness- providing equal treatment to all people*
- *Fidelity- honoring commitments to those we service*
- *Individualization*

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*8 Principles Continued*

- *Clients have a right to services in a supportive therapeutic environment*
- *The client is the director of his/her plan*

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*4 Factors That Increase Engagement and Therapeutic Change*

- *Model/ Approach*
- *Hope (counselor)*
- *Relationship*
- *Client factors*

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*8 Principles Continued*

- *Truthfulness concerning*  
*Diagnosis*  
*Confidentiality (and its limits)*  
*Refusal of services*  
*Therapeutic approach*  
*Areas of expertise*

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*8 Principles Continued*

- *The clinician has an ethical responsibility to advocate for clients*

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*The Five Things It Takes to be a Great Advocate for Clients*

- *Passion*
- *Courage*
- *Faith*
- *Love*
- *Inspirators*

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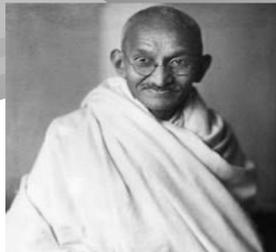
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Gandhi

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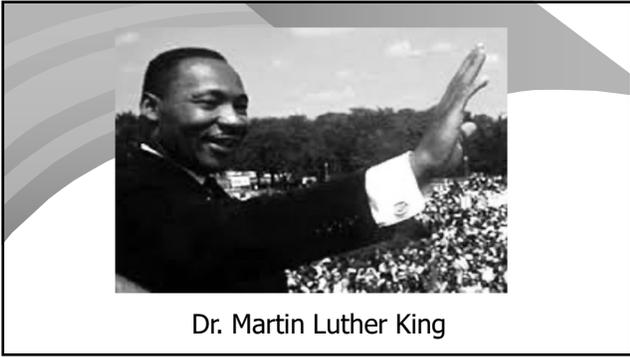
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Dr. Martin Luther King

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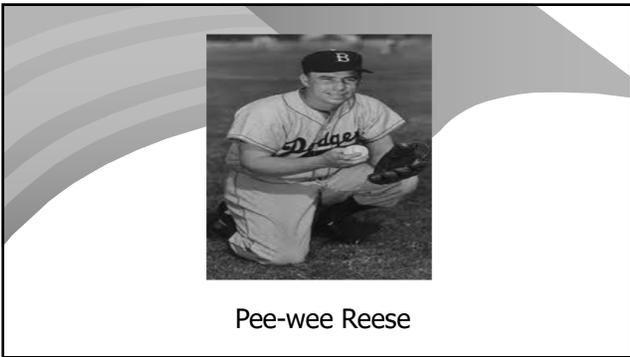
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Pee-wee Reese

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Malala Yousafzai

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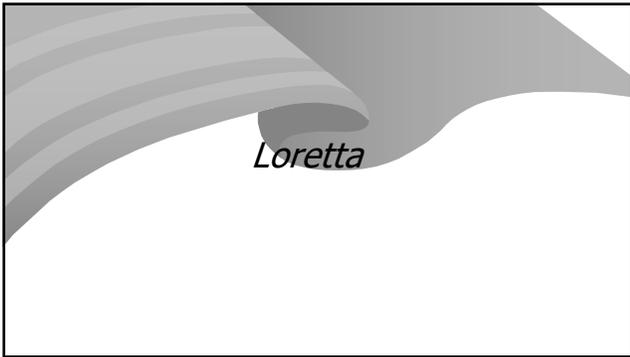
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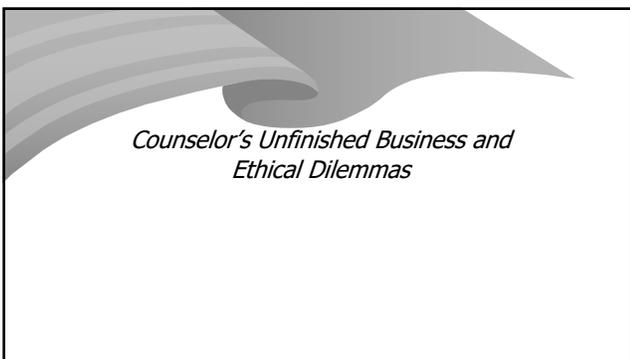
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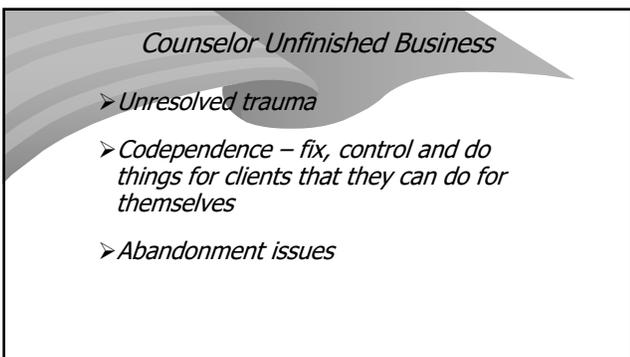
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Terminating Ethically

Ask yourself the following questions.

1. Is the decision to terminate mutual?
2. Is there a sound clinical reason to terminate?  
 Freud said the client is ready to terminate when they can:
  - A. Work
  - B. Love

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Terminating Ethically Continued

3. Am I delaying termination because I like this client personally?
4. Am I terminating quickly because I don't like this client?
5. Am I terminating because this client is succeeding and many recent clients have had bad outcomes and I want to "Quit while I am ahead?"

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Terminating Ethically Continued

6. Am I ready to terminate because this client overwhelms me?
7. Am I ready to terminate because this client bores me?
8. Am I ready to terminate because I think this client is progressing too slowly?
9. Am I delaying termination for financial reasons?

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Terminating Ethically Continued

- 10. *Am I delaying termination because of a countertransference reaction?*
- 11. *Am I delaying termination because I am a perfectionist?*
- 12. *Am I delaying termination because of a physical attraction?*

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Terminating Ethically Continued

- 13. *Am I delaying termination because I need to be needed?*
- 14. *Am I delaying termination because of abandonment issues?*
- 15. *Am I delaying termination because I don't know how to terminate?*

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How to Terminate

Important points

- 1. *The longer the relationship between the therapist and the client, the more difficult the termination.*
- 2. *The better the relationship between the therapist and the client, the more difficult the termination.*
- 3. *The more sudden and unexpected, the more difficult the termination.*
- 4. *The easiest way to prepare for termination is to understand how the client has dealt with separations in the past.*

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Stages of Termination and the Role of the Counselor

- 1. Denial
  - A. Bring it up.
  - B. Expect and explain regression.
  - C. If the client disappears, reach out.

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Stages of Termination Continued

- 2. Anger
  - A. Allow open expression.
  - B. Try not to take it personal.

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Stages of Termination Continued

- 3. Sadness
  - A. Allow open expression.
  - B. Feel free to express feelings of your own.

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