

The Ethical Evolution: Practicing Ethical Social Work in the Technological Era

1. Your organization is holding an online fundraiser and your client has been asked to share their story of recovery from heroin addiction. When the event was going to be live, your client excited to tell her story to the room, but now the media director at your organization records a zoom video of your client. Your client calls you to tell you about the change in plans and now she is feeling a little nervous about her story “living” in cyberspace, but she really doesn’t want to let your organization down.

What are relevant code(s) of ethics for this situation?

What are potential ethical concerns? What do you do?

2. You are working with a 20-year-old college student on issues with a recent break up. She recently went home to Arkansas when the campus shut down for COVID. You have continued to meet via Facebook Messenger. Last week, her mom walked into her room during your appointment and said to her daughter, “Who the hell are you talking to.” Your client looks at you and says, “You tell her.”

What are relevant code(s) of ethics for this situation?

What are potential ethical concerns? What do you do?

3. You have been seeing your client for over a year for depression. In the past, your client was part of the Incel community and an active participant on the Incel forums but has said that he no longer wants to be a part of “that hate”. However, after the shooting in Atlanta, your client told you that he can understand where the shooter is coming from. He tells you that he recently posted some of his thoughts on a reddit forum and he explicitly tells you he doesn’t want you to read the posts. Two weeks ago, he told you that he bought a gun because he feels unsafe in his home at night after recent robberies. You want to search for his Reddit posts, but you are worried about confidentiality and ethical obligations to the client.

What are relevant code(s) of ethics for this situation?

What are potential ethical concerns? What do you do?

4. You are conducting family therapy via Zoom with two adult partners and their twin 16-year-old daughters. The family is working on improving communication. At your session today one of the daughters was extremely upset because her dad posted on Facebook, "Our family is doing so much better now that we're in therapy! #winning".

What are relevant code(s) of ethics for this situation?

What are potential ethical concerns? What do you do?

5. In your private life, you are a part of a Catholic advocacy group. You recently became president of the group and you are proud of the work you are doing on the sanctuary church movement for undocumented immigrants. You decide to add a recent article about your new role on your LinkedIn page. The next week, a client says to you during your Zoom session, "I didn't know you were Catholic. I am too! What parish do you belong to?"

What are relevant code(s) of ethics for this situation?

What are potential ethical concerns? What do you do?