

*Issued 1 November 1998
cancels previous Code*

PSYCHOPHYSICAL THERAPISTS GUILD OF AUSTRALIA



CODE OF ETHICS

INTRODUCTION

The ethical principles of the Psychophysical Therapists Guild of Australia are to be found embodied in the Therapist's Oath as administered by the Guild to prospective Members:

"I vow that I will be chaste and ethical in my life as a Therapist and that I will be honest: mentally, physically and emotionally in all my dealings with my profession. I will treat people who seek my help as people and never just as patients. I will ensure that their dignity is preserved at all times.

I will refrain from making claims about my prowess and will not denigrate other Therapists or professions. I will maintain my ethics and the dignity of my chosen profession in all my dealings with my Teachers, my fellow Therapists, and with the general public.

I will seek to recognise my limitations, and work to overcome them but will always work within the limits of my ability. Above all: I will do no harm."

(used with permission from the Academy of Esoteric Sciences)

1. Psychophysical Therapists carry out the following activities:
 - (a) Psychophysical Therapy and associated therapies.
 - (b) Ongoing study, research and the development of community awareness.
2. Members should strive to attain the highest degree of professional competence and professional integrity in the application of the knowledge and techniques of Psychophysical Therapy.
3. The integrity of the profession must be preserved, and Members, when acting in their professional capacity, are expected to behave in a manner which enhances and does not damage the status of the profession.
4. Members should endeavour to promote the expansion of Psychophysical Therapy knowledge, firstly by encouraging the training of suitable persons in the science of Psychophysical Therapy and secondly by ensuring that the general public is properly informed about Psychophysical Therapy.
5. Members should foster conditions enabling free scientific enquiry, should endeavour to carry out systematic study of problems in their field, and should seek publication of findings both positive and negative in order to advance the science and the status of Psychophysical Therapy.

MATTERS PERTAINING TO PATIENTS

6. The welfare of patients, students, research subjects and the public must take precedence over Members own self interests, over the interests of their employers and of their colleagues.

7. In the advertising of their services, Members should use appropriate wording. The information contained in advertisements shall be factual and explanatory, not in the form of emotional, persuasive advertising, not claiming superior competence, and not offering guarantees of a particular outcome as an inducement.
8. A caution. By law, as defined in the Medical Practitioners Act of 1938, a Psychophysical Therapist must not offer to or provide therapy for certain prescribed conditions viz. cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, leukaemia, multiple sclerosis, poliomyelitis or tuberculosis, except on the specific direction of a registered medical practitioner.
9. Whenever a Member charges fees in return for professional services rendered to patients, there is an obligation to determine the fee with careful regard to the following two criteria:
 - (a) That a just and adequate remuneration is deserved for competent work of a high professional standard; and
 - (b) That patients are not deprived of necessary therapeutic services through bona fide financial difficulties.
10. Members who legitimately assume any professional responsibility for assisting a patient must, as far as possible, retain their responsibility until mutually satisfactory arrangements have been made for its transfer or termination.
11. A patient is entitled to assume that a clinical or consulting relationship is confidential. Where the patient has been guaranteed or can reasonably expect that information given will be treated confidentially, the Member should not divulge any information without the patient's permission.
12. However, with a patient who is a minor or someone deemed incapable of acting for themselves, all Members, after they have done everything possible to respect such independence as may remain with the patient, will regard their responsibilities as directed to the parent, next of kin, or guardian.
13. Before communicating any confidential information to another therapist, the Member should obtain the patient's permission to do so.
14. A Member must not disclose information about criminal acts of a patient unless there is some over-riding legal, social or moral obligation.
15. When there is evidence of a problem or a condition with which the Member is not competent to deal, this should be made clear to the patient so that they may be referred to an appropriate person.
16. When a patient requests, or indicates a desire for a second opinion, the Member should offer to assist the patient in obtaining that competent second opinion.

17. When a patient needs referral and the Member has formed the opinion that the patient is not capable of exercising judgement, Members may at their discretion communicate fully confidential data on referring the patient where it will increase the understanding of the patient's problem and improve the outcome.

18. Where a patient is referred to a Member by someone who is a member of another profession, the Psychophysical Therapist should, after discussion with the patient, make a report to the referring person.

19. When communicating material about a patient, the Member should ensure that the content and form of the communications are appropriate to the knowledge and qualifications of the recipient.

MATTERS PERTAINING TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GUILD

20. If a Member forms the opinion that a colleague is behaving unethically, they should approach the colleague in the first instance and only if the matter is not resolved the Committee should be notified.

21. When a Member is consulted by a person who it is reasonable to assume is currently the patient of a colleague, careful consideration should be given as to whether it is appropriate to inform the colleague that another opinion is being sought. If, however, the person claims to have terminated the relationship with the colleague, the Member may proceed with the patient.

MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE TEACHING OF PSYCHOPHYSICAL THERAPY

22. A Member may conduct courses or workshops in Psychophysical Therapy or its associated fields with members of the public only **after** such courses or workshops have been approved by the Committee.

23. A Member must not ask individuals who are likely to be disturbed by the experience to participate as subjects in training demonstrations.

24. A Member must warn students witnessing case demonstrations that they are expected to preserve the anonymity of the subject and respect the subjects rights to privacy.

25. Members should seek the permission of the Committee before deciding to participate in or lend their names as a Guild Member to training courses or enterprises in Psychophysical Therapy lest, by so doing, substandard or subprofessional agencies or individuals are enabled to misrepresent their qualifications or otherwise infringe standards of learning in Psychophysical Therapy.

MATTERS PERTAINING TO RESEARCH INTO PSYCHOPHYSICAL THERAPY

26. Research should be carried out in such a way that bias is not deliberately introduced into the planning, conducting or reporting of a research study.
27. Test results or other confidential data obtained in a research study should never be disclosed in situations or circumstances which might lead to identification of the subjects, unless their permission has been obtained.
28. Confidential material about patients or subjects, which might lead to their identification must not be published without their permission.
29. A Member intending to engage in research must first gain permission from the Committee for that research and will then proceed so as to ensure that no risk to subjects exists. When the outcome is in doubt experiments will be conducted so as to be fail-safe for the subject.
30. A Member must not use a position of authority to exert undue pressure on potential subjects for the purpose of securing their participation in a particular research project.
31. A Member engaged in research should allow a reasonable opportunity for subjects to withdraw their services after becoming acquainted with the role expected of them.
32. Where it is necessary to disguise the purpose of an experiment Members should, wherever possible, inform subjects of its true purpose at the conclusion of the research.
33. Where a research study discloses a degree of maladjustment in one of the subjects, the Member should consider advising the subject how to seek appropriate management.
34. All Members must draw the attention of any assistant under their supervision or direction, to those parts of this code which are relevant to their work. A Member must give adequate supervision to ensure, as far as possible, that ethical principles are not contravened.
35. Research designs using plant and animal subjects should be developed without inflicting pain, distress or suffering by omission or commission and with consideration for the laws of karma.
36. When writing, publishing or editing, a Member should encourage the publication of material which advances the science of Psychophysical Therapy, or is of an educative nature, and should discourage the publication of material which fails to meet these criteria. It is detrimental to the profession to withhold from publication material which advances the science and practice of Psychophysical Therapy.
37. Members must not publish as their own work that which is not essentially theirs or to which they have not made a significant contribution.

38. Credit should be assigned to all those who have contributed to a publication in proportion to their contribution. However, the nature of the contribution, be it in respect of research, design, collection of data, writing or otherwise, should be made clear.
39. Members must not try to prevent the publication of a critical review of their work.
40. Members must not endorse favourably for personal or financial gain, a work which has been described by the Committee to be an inadequate treatment.