

Code of Ethics for the SSEAA

The practitioner's chief focus and primary ethical responsibility is for the clients' wellbeing.

The practitioner works to establish a relationship which the client experiences as safe, consensual and fully engaged.

The practitioner works to support the client into their experience of embodiment.

Members understand they have a duty of care to the community at large. This includes clients, but also potential clients, students of somatic modalities, workshop participants, and those engaging in the work in informal ways.

The practitioner commits to their own personal growth, professional development and ongoing self care.

The practitioner is aware of the potential for attraction within the client practitioner relationship and ensures the focus is on the clients' growth & learning.

The practitioner practices in a way that is free of narcissistic gratifications such as gratifications of authority, power, sensual pleasure and admiration.

During the session the practitioner is fully and consistently at the service of the client's personal growth.

Code of Professional Conduct for Somatic Non-Erotic Touch Practitioners

Introduction

This Code of Professional Conduct (hereinafter referred to as the Code) consists of an Introduction and Preamble, and the Code itself containing specific ethical standards. The ethical standards set forth rules of professional conduct for Somatic Practitioners who do not use erotic touch in their work, including Certified Somatic Sex Coaches (CSSC) and Certified Embodied Counselling Practitioners (CECP). These ethical standards are not exhaustive. The fact that a given conduct is not specifically addressed by the Code does not mean that it is necessarily either ethical or unethical.

Working in an official capacity as a SOMATIC PRACTITIONER trainer, teacher, assistant, or organiser commits individuals to adhere to the Ethics Code and the rules and procedures used to implement it. These Ethics and Conduct Codes applies to SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS work-related professional activities including somatic sex coaching, embodied counselling, individual or group work, teaching, training, assisting, supervision, consulting, and organizing. These work-related activities can be distinguished from the SOMATIC PRACTITIONER's private conduct and work which is not SOMATIC

PRACTITIONER related, which is not within the scope of this Code. The Ethics Code is intended to provide standards of professional conduct that apply when working in any way related to Somatic Sex Coaching, Embodied Counselling, or other Somatic Practitioner work.

In the process of making decisions regarding their professional behaviour, SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS must consider this Code, in addition to laws and licensing boards' regulations. When the Code establishes a higher standard than codes of law, SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS must meet the higher ethical standard. If the Code's standards appear to conflict with requirement of law, SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS are to uphold the applicable laws.

Preamble

Somatic Non-Erotic Touch Practitioners (SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS) are members of the SSEAA, working as coaches, educators or counselling practitioners, who **do not** use genital or erotic touch in their work.

SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS may perform in various roles such as teacher, trainer, coach, assistant, organizer, client, consultant, volunteer and supervisor. They work with a common goal of providing support, coaching, counselling and education and improving the quality of life for an individual and the world. The Code of Conduct provides a common set of values upon which SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS continually build their professional work.

This code is intended to provide both the general principles and the rules covering most situations encountered by SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS. It has as its primary goal the welfare and respect of the individuals and groups with whom SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS work. It is the individual responsibility of each SOMATIC PRACTITIONER to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS respect and value human, civil and sexual rights, and do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

The development of a dynamic set of ethical standards for SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS' work-related conduct requires a personal commitment to a lifelong effort to act ethically; to encourage ethical behaviour by students, supervisors, supervisees, employees, and colleagues, as appropriate; and to consult with others as needed concerning ethical problems. Each SOMATIC PRACTITIONER supplements, but does not violate, the Code's values and rules on the basis of guidance drawn from personal values, culture, context, and experience.

References to 'client' in the Codes should also be assumed to include workshop participants, online course students, mentees, and students or intending students of somatic modalities. References to 'session' in the Codes should also be assumed to include workshops, where it would be sensible and ethical to make that assumption.

Duties and Obligations Towards Our Clients and Students

1. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will be professional in attitude and conduct, responsible in relations with clients and students, reliable in agreements and timely in appointment schedules.

2. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS recognize the importance of consent, agency and choice in all work with groups and individuals. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will strive to provide options from which the client can actively elect that which will serve their own education. At no time shall a client be required or coerced to participate in any activity, event or exercise. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS include education about consent and choice and actively create learning environments where clients are empowered to exercise these skills.

3. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS may use physical touch for the purposes of supporting the client's regulation and / or supporting the client to contact and connect with their felt experience. If SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS use touch, they touch consciously and with the intention of serving the well-being of the client within the parameters of pre-established agreements. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS agree to obtain clients' consent and to act with concern for their safety, growth, and awareness of boundaries. In workshop contexts SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will work to create a framework in which participants are fully informed and empowered about consent. The client's self-touch is encouraged for the purposes of self-regulation and being in contact with their felt experience.

4. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS acting as practice volunteers for students agree to act solely in a volunteer role, and not to attempt to provide teaching or training. Feedback given to students will be constructive, compassionate, and non-instructional. Feedback is given from the personal perspective, not on behalf of the modality.

5. Regarding Sexual Contact and / or Conduct with Clients or Students

a) SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS agree not to engage in sexual or romantic interactions, or sexual or erotic touch, with clients or students, in or out of session.

b) SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS agree not to use their work to coerce or manipulate others into a relationship or sex.

c) SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS understand the inherent power they hold in their role and will not use this power for sexual exploitation of their clients, or anyone they are serving in a professional capacity.

d) SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS are conscious that, and make their clients conscious that, the work will neither fulfil the SOMATIC PRACTITIONER's, nor their client's, desire for sexual connection. When attraction occurs within the professional relationship (either SOMATIC PRACTITIONER towards client, or client towards SOMATIC PRACTITIONER) SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS agree to discuss the attraction at professional supervision with the aim of maintaining clear professional boundaries and protecting the client's ability to access the work.

e) SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS agree not to begin any other form of sexual contact with their clients for a minimum of two (2) years after any professional services have terminated. These restrictions also apply to workshop participants, except where there is a pre-existing romantic or sexual relationship, or a professional peer-level relationship, between the practitioner and attendee.

f) Regarding current relationships. Any student or client who is in an active pre-existing sexual relationship is exempt from point 6(e).

6. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS acknowledge the importance of the well-being of the whole person, including all somatic aspects. To protect the health of both student and professional, SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS recognize the need for risk-reduction and professional protocol in all individual and group work. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS take steps to minimize any physical or emotional harm, in active collaboration with all students. All group classes shall include education about group hygiene protocol, with sufficient facilities / supplies provided to students to maintain appropriate hygiene.

7. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERSs will refrain from working and / or presenting any instructional material while either the practitioner or the client is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

8. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will consider the limits of their skills and experience before accepting requests for or providing work to potential clients. Further, a SOMATIC PRACTITIONER will refuse professional work for which they are insufficiently prepared or qualified.

9. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS are encouraged to seek the advice of colleagues or approved supervisors as a routine part of their practice or training. Formal supervision is to be undertaken at least 6 times a year, and after any event where a concern of ethics or boundaries arises during practice. In consultations, confidential information that reasonably could lead to the identification of the client is not shared without prior written consent of the client.

10. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will terminate professional services to and relationships with clients when such services are no longer required or no longer serve the needs and interests of the clients.

11. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS may unilaterally terminate services on just and reasonable grounds after careful consideration of all situational factors and any possible adverse effects. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS are responsible for making appropriate referrals and to provide support to clients during this transition.

12. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will refrain from the exploitation of professional relationships with their clients for personal gain, whether financial, professional, or for research purposes.

Duties and Obligations Regarding the Preservation of Confidentiality

13. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will respect, defend, and preserve the privacy of all information gained during instructional sessions.

14. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will release professional obligations for confidentiality by statutory requirement or court order or if the practitioner establishes that they have a duty of care towards the client, i.e. a concern for the person's safety or the safety of others. The practitioner's first step in this process is to do all possible to communicate this concern with the client and reach agreement regarding safety. If this is not possible the practitioner will seek external support. This process will be shared with clients when beginning work together.

15. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will preserve the anonymity of students/clients when using information for purposes of teaching, research, and supervision.

16. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will require all persons attending sessions reach written or spoken agreement that respects and maintains the confidentiality of personal or personally identifying information shared during such sessions.

17. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will maintain appropriate professional records of all classes and sessions to maintain continuous care. These records will be stored in a secure and confidential manner.

18. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will obtain informed, written permission from students before taping or filming-any session, explaining the intended use of the recording and the limits of confidentiality.

Duties and Obligations Towards the Profession

19. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERSs are co-creating a Somatic Profession Industry with other aligned practitioners, which intends to fill the public need for accurate information and embodied learning opportunities. Any public representation by a SOMATIC PRACTITIONER of the work or profession, including the delivery of workshop events, shall be respectful, in integrity with this Code and shall have the intention of furthering the profession.

20. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will represent with honesty and accuracy the scope of their training, qualifications, and experience in all spoken or written forms.

21. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will monitor all oral and written statements used in the advertisement, description, or explanation of services and the principles of somatic work, determining that those statements will not:

- a. create unjustified expectations regarding outcomes or benefits;
- b. make false claims about level of competence, training, or certification;
- c. state or imply superiority to other methods or educational opportunities;
- d. state or imply superiority to other somatic practitioners.
- e. suggest that we diagnose, treat or prevent any medical or psychological condition.

22. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERSs will distinguish between Somatic Practitioner work and other professional services they may offer. In presenting and devising workshops, blended modalities may be useful and are not counter to the obligations under this Code.

23. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will practice within the spirit of the principles and letter of this Code. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS further agree to request supervision and guidance when experiencing ambiguity or difficulty with interpretation of what constitutes ethical behaviour.

24. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS may directly contact the SSEAA in a constructive and positive manner, about any other SOMATIC PRACTITIONER about whom they have ethical concerns, and agree to be available for contact by their peers in the event of ethical concerns about their own practice.

Duties and Obligations to Colleagues

25. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will refrain from solicitation of colleagues' clients and students.

26. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS will encourage appropriate communication between clients and their current or recent therapists.

27. Should conflict arise amongst SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS colleagues, whether as part of a training session or within a personal context, the parties agree to seek resolution to their conflict, including but not limited to mediation, in such a way as the conflict and the resolution thereof, does not adversely affect clients or the educational setting. SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS agree that they have read and understood the provisions of this Code. They represent the standards to which SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS aspire and will abide to the best of their ability. Further, SOMATIC PRACTITIONERS agree to be held accountable to their colleagues for any actions that deviate from its standards.