

Hakomi Institute Code of Ethics

Hakomi Institute Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics. August 1993 (Updated 1995)

INTRODUCTION

The Hakomi Institute's Code of Professional Conduct (hereinafter referred to as the Ethics Code) consists of an Introduction and Preamble, and the Code itself containing specific ethical standards. The ethical standards set forth enforceable rules of conduct for Hakomi therapists (CHTs), trainers, teachers, assistants, and organisers (all hereinafter referred to as "Hakomi therapists").

It is essential to the application of this code that Hakomi therapists and others understand that the application of an ethical standard may vary depending on the context (see Preamble). The ethical standards are not exhaustive. The fact that a given conduct is not specifically addressed by the Ethics Code does not mean that it is necessarily either ethical or unethical.

Certification in the Hakomi Method, membership in the Hakomi Therapist Association (HTA), and/or working in an official capacity as a Hakomi trainer, teacher, assistant, or organizer commits said individuals to adhere to the Hakomi Ethics Code and the rules and procedures used to implement it. Students of the Hakomi Method should also be aware that the Ethics Code may be applied to them by State psychotherapy and counselling boards, courts, and other public bodies.

This Ethics Code applies to all Hakomi therapists' work-related professional activities including massage, individual or group therapy, teaching, training, assisting, supervision, consulting, and organising. These work-related activities can be distinguished from the Hakomi therapists' private conduct which is ordinarily not within the purview of the Ethics Code.

The Ethics Code is intended to provide standards of professional conduct that can be applied by the Hakomi Institute. Whether or not a Hakomi therapist has violated the Ethics Code does not by itself determine whether he or she is legally liable in a court action. These results are based on legal

rather than ethical rules. However, compliance with, or violation of, the Ethics Code may be admissible as evidence in some legal proceedings depending on the circumstances.

In the process of making decisions regarding their professional behaviour, Hakomi therapists must consider this Ethics Code, in addition to State laws and licensing boards' regulations. If the Ethics Code establishes a higher standard than codes of law, Hakomi therapists must meet the higher ethical standard. If the Ethics Code's standards appear to conflict with requirement of law, Hakomi therapists make known their commitment to the Ethics Code and take steps to resolve the conflict in a responsible manner. If neither law nor the Ethics Code resolves an issue Hakomi therapists should consider other professional materials including the American Psychological Association (APA) Code of Ethics, and the dictates of their own conscience as well as seek consultation with others within the field.

The procedures for filing, investigating, and resolving complaints of unethical behaviour are described in the Hakomi Ethical Grievance Process and are available from the Hakomi Institute. The actions the Hakomi Institute may take for violation of the Ethics Code include such actions as reprimand; censure; termination of certification; and removal of teacher, trainer, or organizer or assistant status.

PREAMBLE

The Hakomi Method offers a unique form of therapy utilising a set of spiritual principles (standard Hakomi principles) and integrating body, mind, and spirit in its application. Hakomi therapists perform many roles such as therapist, teacher, trainer, assistant, organizer, consultant, and supervision. They work with a common goal of providing healing and improving the quality of life for an individual and the world. The Hakomi Ethics Code provides a common set of values upon which Hakomi therapists build their professional work.

This code is intended to provide both the general principles and the decision rules to cover most situations encountered by Hakomi therapists. It has as its primary goal the welfare and protection of the

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individuals and groups with whom Hakomi therapists work. It is the individual responsibility of each Hakomi therapist to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct. Hakomi therapists respect and protect human and civil rights, and do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

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

DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TOWARD THE CLIENT:

1. Hakomi therapists will be professional in attitude and conduct, responsible in relations with clients and students, reliable in agreements and timely in appointment schedules.
2. Hakomi therapists will refrain from providing Hakomi therapy or training sessions and/or presenting any instructional material while either the therapist or the client/student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
3.
 - a) Hakomi therapists will not enter into sexual intimacies with or make any specific or implied sexual proposition to clients or students before, during, or after any individual or group therapy sessions or any training or workshop. Hakomi therapists will refuse any sexual advances from any client or student.
 - b) Hakomi therapists will not accept into therapy, persons with whom the therapist has been sexual in the past. Accepting students into a training or workshop with whom any staff member has been sexual will not occur when another training option is available. When another option is not available, alternative staff will be made available for the student's supervision and training. When such multiple roles are unavoidable, the trainer/teacher is responsible for providing careful screening, management, supervision, and evaluation for the student. (See section on Multiple Relationships.)
- c) Hakomi therapists will wait a minimum of two (2) years after terminating a professional relationship before initiating sexual intimacies with former clients or students. The Hakomi therapist who engages in such activities after the two years following cessation or termination of treatment or training bears the burden of demonstrating that there has been no exploitation, in light of all relevant factors, including:
 - 1) the amount of time that has passed since therapy or training terminated;
 - 2) the nature and duration of the therapy or training;
 - 3) the circumstances of termination;
 - 4) the client's or student's personal history;
 - 5) the client's or student's current mental status;
 - 6) the likelihood of adverse impact on the client or student and others, and
 - 7) any statements or actions made by the therapist during the course of therapy or training suggesting or inviting the possibility of a post-termination sexual or romantic relationship with the client or student.
4. Hakomi therapists will introduce prospective clients/students to the techniques of Hakomi, including the use of touch and the power of regression work, so potential clients/students can make informed decisions about entering therapy or instruction. Hakomi therapists agree to maintain appropriate documentation of consent according to the laws of the State.
5. Hakomi therapists will use physical touch in a

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therapeutic context consciously and non sexually. Hakomi therapists agree to obtain clients'/students' consent and to act with concern for their safety, growth, and awareness of boundaries.

6. A Hakomi therapist will consider the limits of her/his skills and experience before accepting requests for or providing therapeutic or instructional services to potential clients/students. Further, a Hakomi therapist will refuse professional work for which she/he is insufficiently prepared.
7. Hakomi therapists will seek the advise of colleagues or supervisors regularly or periodically as a routine part of their practice or training. In consultations, confidential information that reasonably could lead to the identification of the client/student is not shared without prior written consent of the client/student.
8. Hakomi therapists will terminate professional services to and relationships with clients/ students when such services are no longer required or no longer serve the needs and interests of the clients/students.
9. Hakomi therapists will withdraw services, except in unusual circumstances, only after careful consideration of all situational factors and any possible adverse effects. Hakomi therapists are responsible to make appropriate referrals and to provide support to clients/ students during termination and transition.
10. Hakomi therapists will terminate services only on just and reasonable grounds as stated below:
 - a. clients' readiness and desire for completion;
 - b. loss of clients' confidence;
 - c. lack of further benefit to the client from continued services or any other termination deemed to be in the clients' best interest;
 - d. evidence of conflict of interest between the therapist and the client/student or of a situation jeopardising the relationship;
 - e. incitement by the client to perform illegal,

harmful, unfair, or fraudulent acts.

11. Hakomi therapists will notify clients/students promptly, (a minimum of two (2) months notice if at all possible), of any anticipated interruption or termination of services. Hakomi therapists will facilitate the transfer, referral, or continuation of services with respect for the clients'/students' preferences and needs together with the Hakomi therapists' professional assessment.
 12. Hakomi therapists will refrain from the exploitation of professional relationships for personal gain, whether financial, personal, professional, or for research purposes.
 13. Hakomi therapists will uphold the highest standards regarding basic human rights.
 14. Hakomi therapists will be cognisant and responsible concerning local and state laws in relation to the practice of psychotherapy; to do so in the context of representing Hakomi professionally and respectfully.
- DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS REGARDING THE PRESERVATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY:**
15. Hakomi therapists will respect, defend, and preserve the privacy of all information gained in private and/or group sessions and during instructional settings.
 16. Hakomi therapists will release professional obligations for confidentiality only by written authorisation from their clients/students, statutory requirement or court order. No information from sessions or records of sessions will be revealed to anyone without properly executed written authorisation from clients/students. Such information will be revealed only as specifically authorised by the clients/students. Hakomi therapists further understand that a general, nonspecific, or verbal authorisation is not sufficient.
 17. Hakomi therapists will preserve the anonymity of clients/students when using information for purposes of teaching, research, and supervision.
 18. Hakomi therapists will require all persons attend-

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ing group therapy or teaching sessions to reach written or spoken agreement which respects and maintains the confidentiality of information shared during such sessions.

19. Hakomi therapists will maintain appropriate professional records of all Hakomi client sessions, including names of clients and/or persons attending, dates, fees charged, and such additional notes or documentation as may be appropriate to provide competent professional therapy. A Hakomi therapists further agrees to maintain the security of such records five (5) years after the last sessions with the client.
20. Hakomi therapists will obtain informed written permission from clients/students before taping or filming any session, explaining the intended use of the tape or video and the limits of confidentiality.

DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TOWARD THE PROFESSION:

21. Hakomi therapists will represent with honesty and accuracy the scope of training, qualifications, and experience with Hakomi work in all spoken or written forms. Further, statements concerning status as a Hakomi student certified therapist, teacher, or trainer will be in accord with those authorised by the Hakomi Institute.
22. Hakomi therapists will monitor all oral and written statements used in the advertisement, description, or explanation of services and the work of Hakomi, 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 modalities of therapy;
 - d) state or imply superiority to other Hakomi practitioners.

23. Hakomi therapists will give credit, when appropriate, to the originators of important ideas and techniques used with Hakomi therapy and teaching.
24. Hakomi therapists will understand and practice Hakomi work within the spirit of the principles and letter of this Code. Hakomi therapists further agree to request supervision and guidance when experiencing ambiguity or difficulty with interpretation of what constitutes ethical behaviour.
25. Hakomi therapists will directly contact in a constructive and positive manner, any Hakomi community member about whom the therapist has concerns regarding his/her actions or statements which may conflict with this Code or the principles of Hakomi. If at such time satisfactory resolution is not reached, the Hakomi therapist Hakomi representative regarding how to proceed. Further, the therapist understands the limitations of this process concerning an obligation to maintain confidentiality of clients/students.
26. Hakomi therapists will aid the Hakomi Institute in upholding this Code and cooperate fully with investigation of possible violations. A Hakomi therapist will submit a written response to any allegations or questions of ethical impropriety on his/her part, or of which he/she may be aware or have information. Further, Hakomi therapists understand such written response shall be within ten (10) days after being officially contacted by the Hakomi Institute, the National Ethics Committee or its authorised representatives or staff.

DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS TO COLLEAGUES:

27. Hakomi therapists will refrain from solicitation of colleagues' clients, whether those colleagues are Hakomi practitioners or those of any other healing arts.
28. Hakomi therapists will encourage appropriate communications and, if appropriate, terminations, between potential clients and their other current or recent therapists, before assuming professional responsibility.

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29. Hakomi therapists will serve colleagues during absence or emergency by providing the same appropriate service and considerations to the colleagues' clients as to their own.
30. Hakomi therapists will refrain from providing sessions/training to any persons with whom they have multiple relationships (defined as performing multiple roles with the same person) which could affect the quality, objectivity, or effectiveness of their work or in any way potentially cause harm. Because the structure of Hakomi training and workshops often creates multiple roles and relationships and thus a high potential for conflict situations, Hakomi therapists agree to be particularly careful about multiple relationships involving current/former clients/students, friends, family, or colleagues.

Given that multiple relationships in training and community settings are often unavoidable, Hakomi therapists agree to be sensitive to real and ascribed differences in power; be responsible for bringing potential issues into the awareness of those involved; and be available for reasonable processing with those involved.

31. Hakomi therapists will set the interests and well-being of their clients/students above their own interests and, when applicable, above those of employers, family, or those who may inappropriately seek to influence the course of therapy.
32. Hakomi therapists will safeguard their professional independence and integrity by avoiding any situation which could create either the appearance of or an actual conflict of interest in the relationship with clients/students.
33. Hakomi therapists will inform clients/students of any potential conflict of interest and the direction of their obligations and responsibilities. Hakomi therapists agree that this may be particularly important if others have or are attempting to influence the course of therapy, (per paragraph 31 above).
34. Hakomi therapists will accept no benefit, rebate, or commission for Hakomi sessions or instruction apart from the remuneration to which they

are entitled. Similarly, Hakomi therapists will not pay, offer, or promise to pay any such benefit, rebate, or commission for services from clients/students if said services would in any way be exploitative to the client/student.

35. Hakomi therapists will recognise the inherent potential for creating multiple relationships and conflict of interest that arises when barter is used as a form of payment. If barter is used as payment for professional services, the therapist is responsible for insuring that the client / student is in no way exploited and will: document the fair market value of all goods and service exchanged; document and report such market value as income for tax and record keeping purposes; whenever feasible, enlist the aid of a neutral third party to handle or supervise the exchange.

HAKOMI THERAPISTS AGREE THAT THEY HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE PROVISIONS OF THIS CODE.

This Code represents the standards to which Hakomi therapists aspire and will abide to the best of their ability. Further, Hakomi therapists agree to be held accountable to their colleagues for any actions which deviate from its standards. For the entire time Hakomi therapists choose to maintain association with the Hakomi Institute or request recognition as a Hakomi therapist, teacher, trainer, organizer, or Hakomi Therapy Association member their agreement with the provisions of this Code will be understood. If a Hakomi therapist chooses to curtail association with the Hakomi Institute and/or free herself/himself from the provisions of this Code, she/he agrees to provide immediate written notification to the Hakomi Institute and to respect this Code for an additional ninety (90) days to allow his/her withdrawal from the Institute to be implemented and completed. ■