

# Therapeutic Life Story Work International

## Professional Code of Ethics

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Therapeutic Life Story Work International (TLSWi) is committed to uphold best practice through a clear and achievable ethical and value policy to ensure equity, diversity and person-centred practice.

To become a TLSWi member, applicants must agree, meet and champion the professional code of ethics set out in these 6 domains: -

- Ethics
- Values
- Morals
- Integrity
- Character
- Laws

### **Ethics**

The term Ethics refers to a set of rules that describes acceptable moral conduct that can often be subject to a judgement by the individual or a collective of behaviour and attitude.

Ethics is a critical component of what it is to be professional, so that all that is done is guided by a set of standards upheld and enforced to protect and serve the community and society in general.

### **Values**

Values are important in all walks of life, be that professional or personal, we often consider social values, personal values and professional values – and each value is changeable, both in maturity, societal change and law. To have a value requires protection, demonstrable actions and internal awareness and promotes a positive person-centred engagement of value and mutual respect. To value something is to care, to keep safe and to promote – all key to the TLSWi approach.

## **Morals**

Ensuring that we are clear about right and wrong, and when not, to address dilemmas and seek redress are key to professional morals. There are laws to guide, but also social morals, and personal morals that conflict and sometimes confuse. Whether we are looking at Kohlberg's moral thinking concepts or Soloman's set of Moral Rules, the TLSWi member needs to support thinking and introduce psycho-educational opportunities to develop acceptable rules or modes of conduct on which society is based. Very often we will work with service users who are struggling with moral thinking, schemas and decision making, are role is to support reflection and understand action through modelling, rehearsing and encouraging moral development.

## **Integrity**

Integrity is centred on the need to be open and honest. Integrity is a major component of trust, not just in decision making, but also in consistency. Integrity is to be your best, and when not, to identify this and explain to the service user. It is hard to secure a traumatised service user's trust, much more likely we develop reliance and reliability, both of which require Integrity. In TLSWi work, we often work with the most unfortunate of individuals, who have become wary of what we represent and may see us as yet another adult to let them down. Building relationships through the early intervention provides roots of integrity, and once this is established, the service users can take the risks required to keep them safe.

## **Character**

Character engages ethics, integrity, value and morals as the building blocks of who we are. It is not simply a 'turn on/turn off' skill, but one that a vigilant service user will attune to before many words are even exchanged. Our character is our passport to the service user's world, it's not what we say and what we do, it is what we are....

A person with high morals and clear integrity is more likely to be seen as a character worthy of respect and reliance.

## **Law**

The Law is a set of rules and regulations agreed by society and designed to protect and promote people who are subject to that Law to safeguard their well-being and protect them from those that might choose to do harm or take advantage. Although laws frequently provide us with a sense of right and wrong and guide our behavior, it is up to the individual if they follow such laws. Many of those you will work with have been affected by those who have not followed the law, and in some cases where the service user themselves have fallen foul of this. Laws reflect the society at the time and are formed on the basis of ethics, values, morals and society – not all law is good law, but law itself is the framework we work to.

## **Professional Code of Ethics**

Many professional organisations have developed codes of ethics to address their unique situations. By requiring that all employees, members or associates agree such a Code of Ethics the professional organisation ensures that all those that have agreed such cannot claim they were not aware of the standards required.

A professional code of ethics informs the public what to expect of the service from a professional, be that a social worker, solicitor, accountant and anyone of many intervention/service providers. As long as professionals adhere to the standards accepted, then the service user, commissioner and other stakeholders have reasonable confidence in the service being provided.

## **TLSWi Professional Code of Ethics**

Our actions affect not only ourselves, but also those around us. Many of our professional decisions involve ethics. If we tell a lie, we can lose someone's trust and undermine our own integrity. If we use shoddy materials or workmanship on the job, we can jeopardize the safety of others.

Questions of morality and ethics can be found at all levels of society. Ethical behavior is equally important in the workplace as it is in our personal lives. Everywhere business is conducted, ethics matters.

TLSWi members are required to continually reflect on and in practice to ensure that they are person centred in their approach to all those that they offer a service to, or represent. The role of the TLSWi member is to protect their child/young person/adult (service user) by ensuring honesty, clarity and consistency to all those stakeholders engaged with the best interest of the service user and family. At any time that a professional dilemma becomes known, the TLSWi member will refer this to the commissioner of the service as well as to the service user and allied interests. The

TLSWi member will support the advocacy of the service user and be available to act in the best interest of the service user. At all times there will be the need to reflect on the role of TLSW and ensure that the role is defined in the Life Story process and not diluted into other practice such as social work, family intervention and/or school issues that are not directly in tune with the commissioned intervention.

TLSWi Members must continue in their professional development via training, development days, active engagement in the TLSWi discussion and research online platforms and attend (when possible) annual Conference Days – (Alumni Days will become TLSWi Conference Days (National)).

Notwithstanding this, all TLSWi members will engage with regular (monthly) supervision with a qualified/approved supervisor using the TLSWi Supervision process and recording. A supervision process has now been designed for TLSWi and training will be provided for those offering supervision throughout 2020.

TLSWi members are committed to working in the best interest of the service user and, in doing so will be mindful of their judgements and actions that are engaged during the process. Working with people will inevitably lead to challenges that will impact on those with whom they provide intervention. There is a clear responsibility that TLSWi members challenge inequality, racism, sexism and champion diversity and equity to all those that are involved in the approach.

TLSWi members are required to be aware of safeguarding policy and procedures in respect to the locality they practice. It is right to offer service users an opportunity to engage and to develop trusting relationships, but confidentiality cannot be offered. It is important that service users are aware of the mandatory reporting of protection concerns and safety of the service user and the community they are connected to. To this end, TLSWi members are required to maintain clear records of engagement, session plans and/or session outcomes and to follow the current General Data Protection Regulation and Information Commissions Office requirements on data management and protection.

TLSWi members will ensure that they are respectful of all colleagues, stakeholders and connections in the service user's system. There is a need to respond to, act on and record any and all issues where the concerns may arise as therapeutic life story work is engaged.

Richard Rose  
TLSWi Founder and Director