



Ethics & Risk Management Issues for Therapists in Small Towns

Presented by
Donald N. Bersoff, JD, Ph.D.

Seminar Description

This 6-hour seminar will focus on the ethical challenges facing mental health practitioners in rural and in small (e.g., military, college, GLBT) communities through the use of didactic presentations and discussions of realistic vignettes. Participants will learn:

- The problems and pitfalls of ethical codes
- Alternatives to resolving ethical dilemmas
- Special issues for rural/small community professionals regarding multiple relationships (sexual and nonsexual)
- How burnout problems can affect practice
- How to practice competently in rural/small communities
- How confidentiality may be compromised

J&K Seminars Home Study Program - 6 hours CE credit

Ethical Codes and Their Limitations

- Problems & pitfalls of ethic codes
- Alternative framework for resolving ethical dilemmas
- Consequences of violating ethics code

Ethical & Unethical Multiple Relationship

- Multiple relationships defined
- Unethical multiple relationships

Special Issues in Multiple Relationships

- Business relationships, Bartering, Gifts, Attendance at celebrations (e.g., weddings)
- Danger of nonsexual multiple relationships

Burnout, Competence & Confidentiality

- Work Overload
- Isolation
- Lack of Resources
- Visibility
- Limited Resources
- Accepting clients vs turning them away
- Limited educational opportunities

Ethical Violations & Malpractice Distinguished

- The 4 criteria for proving malpractice
- The relevance of harm to the client
- The differing consequences of ethics violations & malpractice
- Introduction to Tarasoff and its Progeny

Managing Risk with Violent Clients

- The facts & decisions in *Tarasoff* and *Emerich*
- How violence is defined
- The importance of risk assessment
- Protecting confidentiality while protecting 3rd parties
- The importance of consultation
- How record keeping can reduce liability

Confidentiality in Small Towns

- Mistrust in rural communities
- Practice in small colleges
- HIPPA, protected health information & psychotherapy notes

Donald N. Bersoff, JD, Ph.D

Donald N. Bersoff is Professor of Law and Psychology and Director of the JD/PhD Program in Law and Psychology sponsored by Drexel University. He also consults with attorneys and mental health professionals on ethical and malpractice issues and has testified as an expert witness in such cases.

He received his PhD from New York University in 1965 and his JD from Yale Law School in 1976. From 1979-1989 he served as the first general counsel of the American Psychological Association.

In 2000 he was given the Pennsylvania Psychological Association's Ethics Educator of the Year Award and in 2002 the American Psychology-Law Society's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Approved Home Study CE Hours for Psychologists Counselors Social Workers Nurses AOTA

Available for an additional fee - See Exam Enclosed