



Ethics, Boundaries and Standard of Care Considerations in the Digital Age and in Tele-Mental Health

Presented by
Ofer Zur, Ph.D.

This course focuses on defining & identifying the Standard of Care, differentiating between ethical boundary crossings, and unethical boundary violations and reviewing the ethical issues of digital and traditional boundaries and Tele Mental Health.

AGENDA

Dealing Ethically with Issues of:

Digital Boundaries (01:30:15)

- Social Networking with clients
- Yelp exchanges
- 'Texting into the night';
- Therapists Googling clients;
- Clients Googling Therapists - Online self-disclosure;
- Disinhibition effect

Tele Mental Health

- Cross States lines
- Separate Informed Consent

- Verifying clients' identity-location-age, Emergencies: 911,
- Duty to warn, Danger to self or others,
- Child abuse reporting; Internet disruption, security & privacy
- Additional Professional Liability policy

Traditional Boundaries (01:37 17)

- Boundary Crossings vs. Boundary Violations;
- Gifts
- Touch
- Dual Relationships
- Self-disclosure
- Bartering
- Home visit, Home office, 'Walk & Talk' Therapy.

Objectives— Participants will be better able to:

- Describe risk associated with "after hours" online-digital communications.
- Describe how to ethically manage clients searching for online personal information about their therapists and how to keep track of (or control) what clients can find out about their therapists online
- Identify what should be included in the Mandatory Informed Consent for tele mental health
- Identify appropriate engagement in social networking with a current or former client
- Describe the most important complex and unique boundaries and ethical issues introduced to behavioral health in the digital age and by tele mental health
- Describe expectations for practicing tele mental health across state lines
- Identify ethical responses to suicidal or danger to others or to child abuse cases of online clients in distance locations.

Ofer Zur, Ph.D.

Ofer Zur, Ph.D. is an experienced ethics, clinical and forensic consultant in mental health related issues. He has been teaching Ethics at the graduate and post-graduate levels for over 25 years, and he has published extensively in the area of standard of care as it pertain to issues such as confidentiality, record keeping, scope of practice, diagnosis, treatment and the broad area of therapeutic boundaries. He was the owner and director of the Zur Institute from 1995 to April 2020, and he has been consulting with psychologists, social workers, marriage and family therapists, counselors and attorneys on issues of boundaries and the standard of care regarding licensing board complaints, personal injury and medical malpractice cases for over 25 years. In 2021, he received authorization from the Minnesota Supreme Court to prepare an **amicus brief** regarding the standard of care for psychotherapy.

He co-edited the landmark book, *Dual Relationships and Psychotherapy*, published by Springer Pub. in 2002. In 2003 he authored the breakthrough best seller, *The HIPAA Compliance Kit*, distributed by W. W. Norton. His book, *Boundaries In Psychotherapy*, is the most comprehensive book on therapeutic boundaries published in 2007 by American Psychological Association, APA Books. His latest book: Zur, O. (Ed.) (2017) *Multiple Relationships in Psychotherapy and Counseling: Unavoidable, Common and Mandatory Dual Relations in Therapy*. New York: Routledge. The book debunks the slowly fading away myth that "all dual relationships are unethical" and explores the complex meaning of the statement that "not all dual relationships are unethical."

Approved Home Study 3 CE Ethics Hours for Psychologists Counselors Social Workers MFT AOTA

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Practice Level—Intermediate

904 Church Rd., Wyncote, PA 19095-1601 (800) 801-5415 JK@JKSeminars.com

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Practice Level –Intermediate.

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