

# Guidelines for the BCPA Ethics Salons

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## Purpose of the Salons

An Ethics Salon can be a productive and enjoyable vehicle for the discussion of ethical issues in practice. The purpose of the Ethics Salon is to promote communication among BCPA members, to foster open discussion and understanding of ethical issues and concerns, and to build a shared sense of community among members. Thus, discussions and topics brought to the Ethics Salon should be oriented toward enhancing collegial communication and increasing the knowledge base of psychologists. It is a place where differences of opinion can be aired with courtesy and respect for Ethics Salon members and others.

BCPA Ethics Salons are not a substitute for registrants' intended communication with the College of Psychologists. Nor do they in any way replace legal or ethical advice or supervision or reference to the *Code of Conduct* for Registered Psychologists in British Columbia. This is not a forum to review issues currently before the College.

Our Salon guidelines do not supersede or replace the requirements and regulations of the *Health Professions Act*, or the *Code of Conduct*. However, they do seek to clarify the limitations of discourse at the Ethics Salons.

Please remember at all times that all Salon participants are bound by the *Health Professions Act* and the *Code of Conduct* and have a duty to report if they have "reasonable and probable grounds to believe there has been a violation" of the *Code* or the *Act*.

To make the best out of the Ethics Salons, here's a list of Do's and Do not's:

### Do's:

- Do remember that the purpose of these Salons is the discussion of issues pertaining to the ethical practice of psychology
- Do ensure that you are registered for the Salon as space is limited. If you must cancel, or are unable to attend for any reason, ensure that you inform the BCPA Office staff so that someone else may attend in your place.
  - Please note that if you register and do not attend the salon, you will be suspended for one month before you will be allowed to register again. This will ensure that all who wish to attend and *will* attend get a chance to do so.
- Do ensure that you have read the prescribed reading and are prepared to discuss it.
- Do ensure that you are an active participant of the discussion and discourse.
- Do remember to maintain strict confidentiality when discussing specific circumstances, cases or clients

- Do bring information that you think pertains to psychologists and psychological issues; this specifically includes issues that pertain to practice and ethics issues, or continuing education.
  - In contrast, do not bring information on issues that fall under the mandate of: CPA, APA, the College, CRHSPP, or global causes like minimum wage, Amnesty International etc (however noble). If that was tolerated, the Ethical Salons would quickly lose focus and participants will get annoyed.

**Do not's:**

- Do not forget that personal attacks, criticism, or “personal reflections” upon other psychologists are prohibited, no matter how serious the differences over policy or philosophy. This includes naming any particular psychologist, group of Psychologists (like, ‘all school Psychologists’, or ‘all academic psychologists’ etc.).
  - Common courtesy must be observed. Reference to other professions or their members must be similarly respectful, regardless of the degree of difference of opinion.
- Do not forget that strict confidentiality must be observed at all times; thus, when discussing issues you must not use any identifiers with regard to the case or clients.
- Do not use the Ethics Salons for illegal purposes, including, but not limited to, defamation, violation of intellectual property laws, or criminal laws.

By following these rules and standards, you will contribute to a climate that encourages trust and collegiality, and friendly, informative, and spontaneous discourse. The intention is to provide the opportunity to discuss challenging situations that can present ethical dilemmas, not to suggest ethical or unethical behaviours.

## **Ethical Salon Oversight**

We have established an Ethical Salon Oversight Taskforce of Staff, the Member Services Committee Chair, and Salon Facilitators who will ensure and report attendance and adherence to the Salon Guidelines. If they notice that a participant does not adhere to the guidelines, the following steps are taken:

1. If the Ethical Salon Oversight Taskforce agrees by consensus that the guidelines have been violated, a courtesy warning will be sent directly to the Salon Participant, with a reminder of the Guidelines, and an explanation of the violation.
2. In the case of a second violation, the member’s name will be removed from Salon attendance eligibility for three months, and an explanatory note will be sent.

- a. After a person has been suspended from Ethical Salons for three months, the member will be eligible to reapply. A reapplication for Ethical Salon privileges will be made to the Administrator (or the Board), who will confer with the Ethical Salon Oversight Taskforce.
- b. Reapplication does not guarantee immediate reinstatement. If reinstated, 'the clock starts over'. If not reinstated, the rationale for the decision will be sent to the member.

We welcome you to the Ethical Salons and look forward to your introduction and participation.