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CAN ETHICS BE SEXY?

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- Chair, Professional Conduct Proceedings (BACP)

Can ethics be sexy?

- I would rather have a cup of tea
- Ethics are just a list of dos and donts
- *Boring*

Ethics can be

Fascinating

Exciting

endlessly interesting

A quiz

- Give examples of ways in which you could unethically:

Boost profits

- Accept individuals when the organisation is only funded for couples work (or vice versa)
- Accept long –term clients when only funded for short-term (or vice versa)
- Work beyond level of competency
- Accept clients who are in therapy with others

Things you might be tempted to steal from the office

- Stationery
- Photocopying
- Memory sticks
- Journals
- Electricity

Take business trips

- Take partner along (and charge for them)
- Stay with friends or family but charge for a hotel
- Charge for equipment that you don’t need for that trip.

Things you should report (but don't)

- A client who tells you that they are claiming benefit illegally
- A colleague who answers e-mail whilst on the phone to clients
- Client or colleague who uses recreational drugs
- Unethical behaviour from colleagues

What are Professional Ethics?

- **A moral and philosophical code**
- **A guide for conducting professional life**
- **Can be written as *Rules* or *Principles***

Types of ethical codes

- Mandatory – musts and shoulds (e.g. 10 commandments)

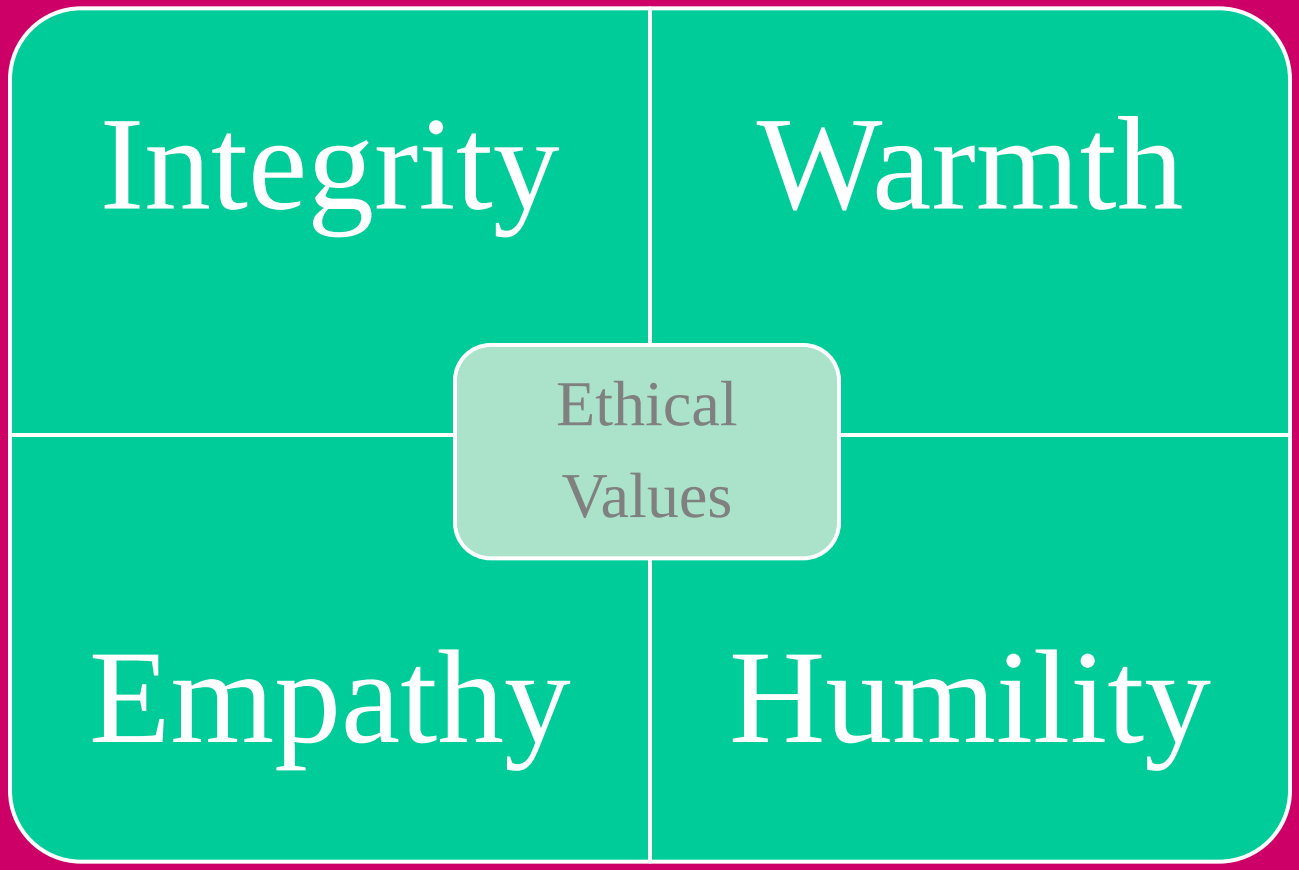
- Aspirational – standards to reach for

(e.g. BACP ethical Framework)

Why ethical codes/frameworks

- A frame, or a boundary, to the counselling relationship
- A protection from exploitation.
- A minimum standard for professional practice

Values of ethical thinking



HUMILITY

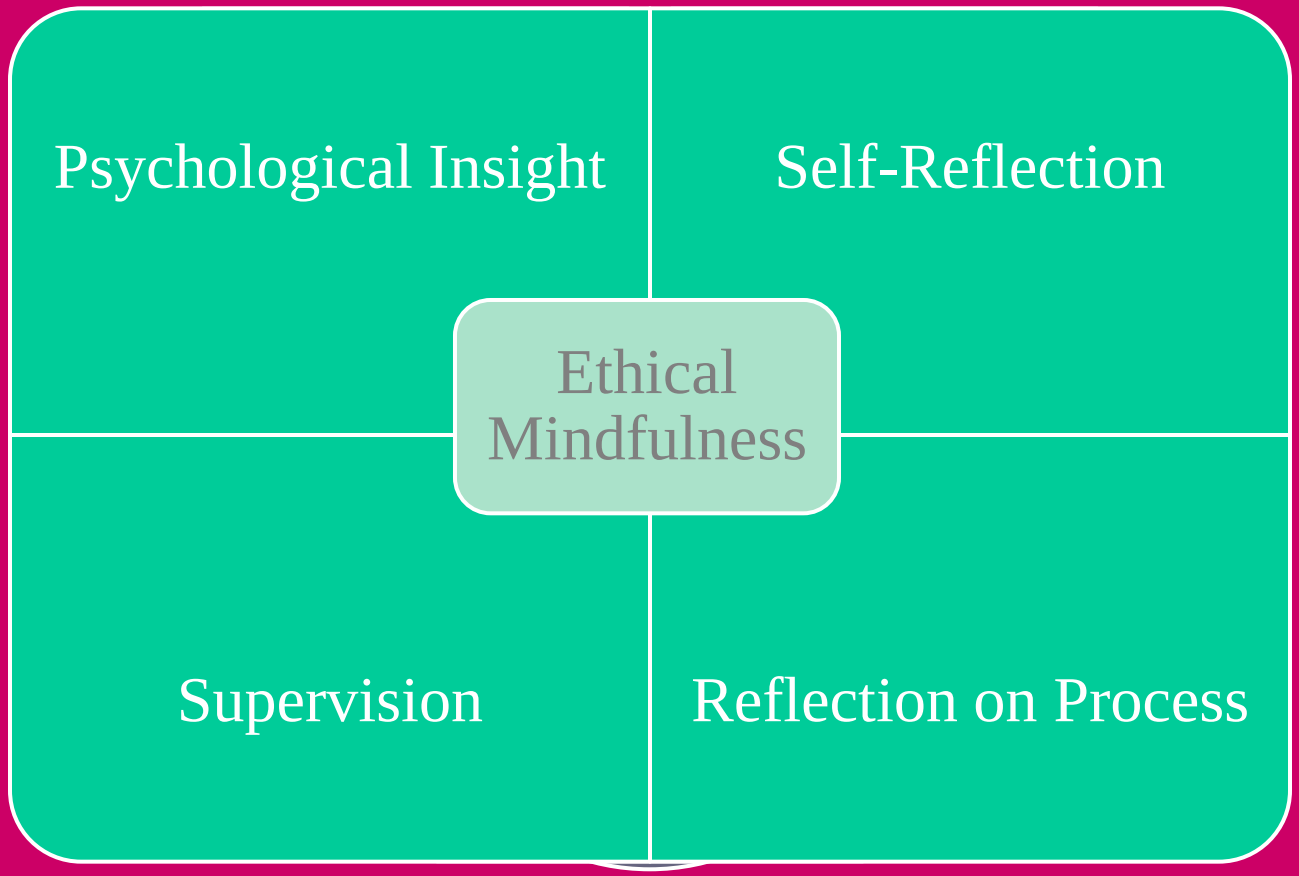
“ The ability to access accurately and acknowledge one’s own strengths and weaknesses”

BACP Ethical Framework 2010

Lack of Humility can lead to

- Seeing self as expert and therefore:
- Not using supervision properly
- Forgetting about client autonomy (I know best)
- Lack of proper contracting.
- Client dissatisfaction (and loss of income to self or organisation)

Concepts of ethical mindfulness



Nearly Last Slide

- Ethical mindfulness requires psychological mindfulness
- Psychological mindfulness requires ethical mindfulness.
- One ethical dilemma does not necessarily have one right answer.

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Tasks

Option 1

- As the inexperienced counsellor you have decided to report your colleague. How do you justify this ethically?

Option 2

- As the inexperienced counsellor you have decided to say nothing. How do you justify this ethically?

Option 3

- You are the experienced counsellor. How do you ethically justify your decision to your less experienced colleague?