

Course Outline

Course Developer

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA)

Course Format

3-week, facilitated online course (approximately 20 hours)

Course Prerequisites

Graduate-level training in counselling ethics or successful completion of *Ethics Primer*

Course Description

Building from [Ethics Primer](#) or previous training in counselling/psychotherapy ethics, this follow-up, facilitated online course will dig deeper, exploring best practices for ethical counselling according to CCPA's code of ethics and standards of practice. Students will discuss ethical "grey areas" in current counselling practice; course activities will require personal reflection about values, culture, context, and decision-making processes as ethical knowledge is translated to practice through working with real and hypothetical scenarios.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Deepen their understanding of the CCPA Code of Ethics
- Demonstrate proficiency in identifying ethical code violations and applying the ethical decision-making model
- Craft a personal framework for ethical decision-making informed by the complexities and uniqueness of their context
- Identify situations when seeking supervision and/or consultation would be appropriate
- Develop a strategy for maintaining ongoing ethical rigor within their practice

Required Texts / Supplies

Sorsdahl, M. N., Borgen, R. A., & Borgen, W. A. (Eds.) (2023). *Ethics in a Canadian counselling and psychotherapy context*. Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. Order from <https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/ccpa-publications/>

Note: This text is available in print or electronic format through CCPA. If you are a CCPA member, please log into the Member Portal to place your order through the store – select publications under categories and then select the book. Follow the directions to add to your cart and checkout to complete your order. If you are not a member, you will need to register for a **free** Complimentary Membership – see <https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/applyformembership/>. Click apply under Complimentary Member and follow the instructions; you can expect an email with instructions on how to access the member portal. You'll then be able to place your order through the store.

Additional materials will be provided via the course site.

Ethics Refresher

Note: Dr. Ken Pope has compiled an annotated list of relevant ethical resources. Students may find the following sections helpful as optional readings:

- Ethics & Malpractice (<https://kspope.com/ethics/>)
- Boundaries (<https://kspope.com/dual/index.php>)
- Clinicians' Self-Care & Well-Being Resources (<https://kspope.com/ethics/self-care.php>)
- Fallacies & Pitfalls (<https://kspope.com/fallacies/index.php>)
- Informed Consent (<https://kspope.com/consent/index.php>)
- Sexual Issues (<https://kspope.com/sexiss/index.php>)

Topical Structure

1. Ethical Foundations for Complex Contexts

Building from *CCPA Ethics Primer*, this module provides space to examine foundations for ethical practice within the context of the complexities of diverse clients, counselling practices, and workplace settings. Differing approaches to ethical decision-making (e.g., virtue, principle, quick check, and wise practices lens) will be examined, along with the importance of counsellors respecting their clients' world views, rather than imposing their own.

2. Consent, Confidentiality, and Conflict of Interest

This module provides an opportunity to dive deeply into the complexities of the informed consent process, explore boundaries of confidentiality (including working with third parties and technology), and address ways to protect information through record-keeping practices. The nature of dual relationships, especially in the context of rural/remote and cultural communities, will also be explored.

3. Professional Development, Consultation, and Supervision

This module examines counsellors' responsibility to seek ongoing training and supervision, developing strategies for seeking supervision and consultation when appropriate. At this point in the course, the focus shifts to identifying, analysing, and resolving ethical dilemmas that are contextually relevant to each student's unique work setting.

Learning Philosophy/Approach

LearnOnline is a student-centred, dynamic community where instructors and students co-create an engaging safe space to reflect, share, and grow together. Life Strategies Ltd. is committed to infusing principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion within all our endeavors, including our e-learning offerings. We recognize that learning is a lifelong process impacted by our lived experiences and relationship to others and appreciate the unique learning preferences our students hold as they balance complex lives.

Life Strategies Ltd. continues to serve as an industry leader supporting local, national, and international strides forward in the professionalization of the counselling and career development sectors. As a result, our courses are well positioned to respond to current and emerging trends, ethical and professional standards, and evidence-based practices from a variety of related sectors (e.g., HR/business, education, counselling). Life Strategies recognizes and values the diverse educational and employment backgrounds of individuals from within the counselling and career development sectors and welcomes contributions that bridge across sectors, contexts, and clientele.

Ethics Refresher

Life Strategies invites students to integrate their unique contexts within their e-learning journey and honour their personal learning goals. Together our learning community can support enhancing our professional community. We expect students, instructors, and administrative staff to treat others with respect and kindness, even when differences of opinions arise. We acknowledge, however, that sometimes our efforts to make people feel welcomed and included may fail, so we are always open to feedback to inform adjustments and improvements going forward.

Online Instruction Overview

This online course will be hosted on Life Strategies' [LearnOnline](#) e-learning platform which uses a Moodle-based learning management system. The system organizes a variety of learning activities (e.g., assigned readings, resources, videos, discussions, assignments) into several topical modules which students will progress through on a set schedule as described in the *Course Syllabus*. A course instructor will facilitate the discussions and review the assignments, providing feedback and insights throughout the course. Although discussions are asynchronous (i.e., students are required to make a minimum of two posts, at their convenience, over at least 2 days that the topic is active), from time to time, the instructor may schedule live “sessions” or “office hours” using a web conferencing application (e.g., Zoom). Any “live” components will be communicated to students via the News forum; however, we recognize our students come from different time zones and are balancing many other work/life commitments that can impede attending in real time. As such, live elements will be recorded and/or optional.

Facilitated e-learning offers amazing opportunities for shared learning. Many experts in the field believe that the best learning occurs in the discussion forums and that the posted course content may take on a secondary importance. Although this course will provide comprehensive content, students' active participation in the discussions enriches learning and is required for successful course completion. Students are encouraged not to delay jumping into the discussions. Although discussions are related to the assigned readings, resources, and/or videos, it is not necessary to wait until all of the readings/videos have been reviewed before jumping into the discussion forums – in fact, posting early and often contributes to richer discussions. Being inactive within the discussions for several days will impact a student's overall grade and may result in being unenrolled from the course.

Registered students will be enrolled and receive log-in instructions by email (noreply@learnonline.lifestrategies.ca) 1 week prior to the course start date. This provides a few days for students to orient themselves within the e-learning environment, review course expectations, and troubleshoot any technical concerns. If you require additional support or a course extension, please contact our team (studentadvisor@lifestrategies.ca) and we'll do our best to accommodate your needs.

Operational Requirements

As this course is offered entirely online, students must have reliable Internet access and be comfortable using Internet technology and participating in discussion forums.

Within each course, topics open and close on specific days facilitating learning as a cohort. Although there is flexibility in times of day to post, to achieve course mastery (i.e., 80%) students will be expected to adhere to the course schedule and spend a similar amount of time on this course as they would in a classroom-based environment of 20 hours.

Documents will be posted in Word, PowerPoint, and PDF — students must be able to download these documents as well as upload similar documents. Web conferencing software (e.g., Zoom) may also be utilized.

Ethics Refresher

Students can count on our team for support if any technical challenge arises during the learning process. Contact us by sending an email to info@lifestrategies.ca so we can assist as soon as possible.

Accommodation

We recognize that every student has different learning styles and needs. We want to make sure each student gets the most out of their learning experience with us. If you have any special need and/or disability which needs accommodation or special consideration throughout the course, please let us know prior to the course start so that we can work collaboratively to more effectively meet those needs.

Life Strategies Ltd. is a truly remote workplace with staff and associates working across a wide variety of traditional, ancestral, unceded and occupied Indigenous Lands. We want to take a moment to acknowledge the territory and thank the Nation(s) for allowing us visitation on their traditional lands and invite you to do the same. If you are connecting from Canada, please go to <https://native-land.ca> to learn more about and to reflect upon the lands you are joining us from.