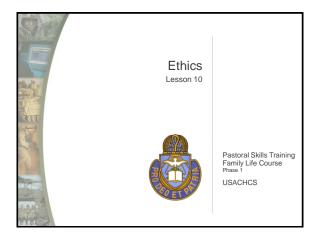
Pastoral Skills Training – Family Life

A discussion of assigned case study

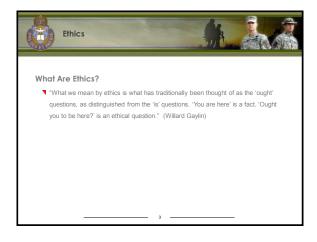
Lesson 10: Ethics

Student Guide

Lesson Objectives							
Identify the practices that constitute ethical pastoral counseling.  O Define ethics.  Identify potential areas of ethical difficulty in pastoral counseling.							
Session 1: Presentation Webinar							
Student Readings							
Philosophical Foundation of Ethics	10-philosophical-foundation-of-ethics.pdf						
Case Study	10-case-study.pdf						
Session 2: Discussion Webinar							









## Why Ethics?

- Ethical principles help establish the foundation of trust from which counselors can build a healing relationship.
- ▼ People trust counselors with precious and often embarrassing information that, if poorly handled, can cause great harm.
- Because it is usually practiced behind closed doors, counseling is unusually vulnerable to breaches of boundaries, allowing inappropriate relationships to grow if not carefully managed.
- Because of the complexity of interactions between a person and a pastoral counselor, it is possible for counselors to manipulate, or even to be manipulated, by people.



## **Existing Codes of Ethics**

- American Association of Pastoral Counselors Code of Ethics
- Association of Professional Chaplains Code of Ethics
- Conscience: While guidelines help us to define appropriate behavior in a multitude of situations, there are always situations that fall outside of direct or implied quidance. For this reason, it is important for counselors to pay careful attention to the guide of conscience as well as basic principles of behavior.



## **Professional Practices**

- Counseling exists to serve the needs of the counselee, not the counselor. Counselors should seek to serve the best interests of those whom they serve, giving voice to the vulnerable whenever possible.
- Skills and knowledge are to be used to help; avoid using them for personal gain. Counselors use their knowledge and professional associations for the benefit of the people they serve and not to secure unfair personal advantage.
- ▼ Counselors should make referrals or obtain consultations when it is in the best interests of those they serve .



## **Needs of Counselee**

- The needs of the counselee must always come first.
- Defining question: Whose need am I serving right now by making this statement or asking this question?
- $\P$  If counselors aren't honest with themselves, or others, then their own needs may become the priority. It is more effective, and probably more loving, to conduct the counseling session professionally—with the counselee's needs placed as the
- Self-awareness: A counselor must constantly check his or her motives, and be aware of personal needs that he or she may inappropriately try to meet through work with a counselee.

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- Don't end a counseling relationship simply because the counselor is discouraged, or tired, or irritated.
- American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC):
  - $\P$  "We do not abandon or neglect clients. If we are unable, or unwilling for appropriate reasons, to provide professional help or continue a professional relationship, every reasonable effort is made to arrange for a continuation of treatment with another professional."



- roles with each other that could lead to conflict.
- $\P \ \, \mathsf{AAPC} \ \, \mathsf{states:} \ \, \mathsf{``While} \ \, \mathsf{acknowledging} \ \, \mathsf{the} \ \, \mathsf{complexity} \ \, \mathsf{of} \ \, \mathsf{some} \ \, \mathsf{pastoral} \ \, \mathsf{relationships},$ we avoid exploiting the trust and dependency of clients. We avoid those dual relationships with clients (e.g., business or close personal relationships) which could impair our professional judgment, compromise the integrity of the treatment, and/or use the relationship for our own gain."



Most codes of ethics prohibit any sexual relationship within two years of a counseling relationship.

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