

## **Code of Ethics – Theta Coaching Services**



### **Introduction and Purpose**

We are committed to maintaining and promoting excellent practice in coaching. All our partners and employees, in their roles as coaches, mentors, supervisors, trainers and/or students, agree to adhere to the elements and principles of this Code of Ethics.

The Code is a guidance document rather than a legally binding one that in detail spells out what a coach can and cannot do. The Code sets the expectation of best practice in coaching, mentoring and supervision promoting the development of professional excellence. Its purpose is to:

- Provide appropriate guidelines, accountability and standards of conduct for all our coaches
- Set out how our coaches are expected to act, behave and perform when working with clients
- Guide our coaches' development and growth in the profession

### **The Code of Ethics**

The Code is arranged into four sections and covers our general expectations of professional behaviour and conduct:

1. Working with Clients
2. Conflicts of interest/termination
3. Professional Conduct
4. Excellent Practice

### **1. Working with Clients**

#### **Context**

- 1.1 When professionally working with clients in any capacity coaches will conduct themselves in accordance with this code, committed to delivering the level of service that may reasonably be expected of a practising coach.

## Contracting

1.2 Before they start working with a client, coaches will make this Code available to their client, and explain and make explicit, their commitment to abide by this Code.

1.3 Before starting to work with a client, coaches will explain and strive to ensure that the client and sponsor know, and fully understand, the nature and terms and conditions of any coaching, mentoring or supervision contract, including financial, logistical and confidentiality arrangements.

1.4 Coaches will use their professional knowledge and experience to understand their clients' and sponsors' expectations and reach agreement on how they plan to meet them. Coaches will also try to take into account the needs and expectations of other relevant parties.

1.5 Coaches will be open about the methods they use, and on request will be ready to supply the client and sponsor with information about the processes involved.

1.6 Coaches will ensure that the duration of the contract is appropriate to achieve the client's and sponsor's goals and will actively work to promote the client's independence and self-reliance.

1.7 Coaches will ensure that the setting in which any coaching, mentoring, supervision or training takes place offers optimal conditions for learning and reflection and therefore a higher likelihood of achievement of the goals set in the contract.

1.8 Coaches should always put their client's interests first but at the same time safeguard that these interests do not harm the interests of the sponsor.

## Integrity

1.9 Coaches will accurately and honestly represent their relevant professional qualifications, professional body to which they belong, experience, training, certifications and accreditations to clients, sponsors and colleagues.

1.10 In communication with any party, coaches will accurately and honestly represent the value they provide as a coach, mentor or supervisor.

1.11 Coaches will ensure that no false or misleading claims are made, or implied, about their professional competence, qualifications or accreditation in any published, promotional material or otherwise. Coaches will attribute ownership of work, ideas and materials of others to the originator and not claim it as their own.

1.12 Coaches will act within applicable law and not in any way encourage, assist or collude with conduct which is dishonest, unlawful, unprofessional or discriminatory.

## **Confidentiality**

1.13 When working with clients, coaches will maintain the strictest level of confidentiality with all client and sponsor information unless release of information is required by law.

1.14 Coaches will have a clear agreement with clients and sponsors about the conditions under which confidentiality will not be maintained (e.g., illegal activity, danger to self or others) and gain agreement to that limit of confidentiality where possible unless the release of information is required by law.

1.15 Coaches will keep, store and dispose of appropriate and accurate records of their work with clients, including electronic files and communications, in a manner that ensures confidentiality, security and privacy, and complies with all relevant laws and agreements that exist in their country regarding data protection and privacy.

1.16 Coaches will inform clients that they are receiving supervision and identify that the client may be referred to anonymously in this context. The client should be assured that the supervision relationship is itself a confidential relationship.

1.17 If the client is a child or vulnerable adult, coaches will make arrangements with the client's sponsors or guardian to ensure an appropriate level of confidentiality in the best interests of the client, whilst also complying with all relevant legislation.

## **Inappropriate interactions**

1.18 Coaches are responsible for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern all physical and virtual interactions with clients or sponsors.

1.19 Coaches will avoid any romantic or sexual relationship with current clients or sponsors. Further, coaches will be alert to the possibility of any potential sexual intimacy with the aforementioned parties and take appropriate action to avoid the intimacy or cancel the engagement in order to provide a safe environment.

## **2. Conflict of interest**

2.0 Coaches will not exploit a client or seek to gain any inappropriate financial or non-financial advantage from the relationship.

2.1 To avoid any conflict of interest, coaches will distinguish a professional relationship with a client from other forms of relationships.

2.2 Coaches will be aware of the potential for conflicts of interest of either a commercial or personal nature arising through the working relationship and address them quickly and effectively in order to ensure that there is no detriment to the client or sponsor.

2.3 Coaches will consider the impact of any client relationships on other client relationships and discuss any potential conflict of interest with those who might be affected.

2.4 Coaches will disclose any conflict openly with the client and agree to withdraw from the relationship if a conflict arises which cannot be managed effectively.

## **Terminating professional relationships and on-going responsibilities**

2.5 Coaches will respect a client's right to terminate an engagement at any point in the process, subject to the provisions of the coaching, mentoring or supervision service agreement.

2.6 Coaches will encourage the client or sponsor to terminate the coaching, mentoring or supervision engagement if it is believed that the client would be better served by another practising coach or a different form of professional help.

2.7 Coaches understand that their professional responsibilities continue beyond the termination of the professional relationship. These include:

- Maintenance of agreed confidentiality of all information relating to clients and sponsors
- Safe and secure maintenance of all related records and data that complies with all relevant laws and agreements that exist in their country regarding data protection and privacy
- Provision of any follow-up that has been agreed to.

2.8 Coaches are required to have a provision for transfer of current clients and dissemination of records in the event of the coach's incapacitation, or termination of practice.

## **3. Professional Conduct**

### **Maintaining the reputation of the profession**

3.1 Coaches will behave in a way that at all times reflects positively upon and enhances the reputation of an increasingly professionalised service.

3.2 Coaches will demonstrate respect for the variety of practising coaches and other individuals in the profession and for the different approaches to coaching, mentoring and supervision.

### **Recognising equality and diversity**

3.3 Coaches will avoid knowingly discriminating on any grounds and will seek to enhance their own awareness of possible areas of discrimination.

3.4 Coaches will be cognisant of the potential for unconscious bias and seek to ensure that they take a respectful and inclusive approach, which embraces and explores individual difference.

3.5 Coaches will challenge in a supportive way any colleagues, employees, service providers, clients or participants who are perceived to be using discriminatory behaviour.

3.6 Coaches will monitor their spoken, written and non-verbal communication for inadvertent discrimination.

3.7 Coaches will engage in developmental activities that are likely to increase their self-awareness in relation to equality and diversity.

## **Legal and statutory obligations and duties**

3.8 Coaches are obliged to stay up to date and comply with all relevant statutory requirements in the countries in which their professional work takes place and work within any organisational policies and procedures in the context in which they are working.

3.9 Coaches will have the appropriate professional indemnity insurance to cover their coaching, mentoring and supervising work for the countries in which they operate.

## **4. Excellent Practice**

### **Ability to perform**

4.1 Coaches will have the qualifications, skills and experience appropriate to meet the needs of the client and will operate within the limits of their competence. Coaches should refer the client to a more experienced or suitably qualified practising coach where appropriate.

4.2 Coaches will be fit and healthy enough to practice. If they are not, or are unsure if they are able to practice safely for health reasons, they will seek professional guidance or support. Where necessary or appropriate, the practising coach should manage the termination of their work with the client and refer the client to an alternative practising coach.

### **On-going supervision**

4.3 Coaches will engage in supervision with a suitably qualified supervisor or peer supervision group with a level of frequency that is appropriate to their coaching, mentoring or supervision practice, the requirements of their professional body and the level of their accreditation, or evidence engagement in reflective practice, ideally with peers and/or more experienced colleagues.

4.4 Coaches need to ensure that any other existing relationship with the supervisor does not interfere with the quality of the supervision provided.

4.5 Coaches will discuss any ethical dilemmas and potential, or actual, breaches of this Code with their supervisor or peer supervision group for support and guidance.

### **Continuing professional development**

4.6 Coaches will develop their level of coaching and/or mentoring competence by participating in relevant and appropriate training and/or continuing professional development (CPD).

4.7 Coaches are expected to make a contribution to the professional community that is appropriate to their level of expertise. Forms which this may take include informal peer support to fellow practising coaches, contributing to advancing the profession, research and writing etc.

4.8 Coaches will systematically evaluate the quality of their work through feedback from clients, their supervisor and other relevant parties.