



DTCare Art Therapy Code of Ethics

Effective Date: February 1, 2024

INTRODUCTION

DTCARE MISSION STATEMENT

DTCare, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of disadvantaged communities worldwide. Our mission is to create transformative opportunities in employment, education, job training, local awareness, capacity building, and the celebration of diversity. As part of our commitment, we address the significant mental health challenges in Ukraine resulting from the ongoing conflict. Through our Art Therapy programs, DTCare delivers clinical psychological support, empowers vulnerable children and families, conducts healing Open Studio sessions, and endeavors to broaden the influence of Art Therapy across the nation. We aim to contribute to a positive change in mental health support throughout Ukraine.

PREAMBLE

The DTCare Art Therapy: Code of Ethics, as outlined in this document, is integral to maintaining the welfare of individuals, families, groups, and communities engaged with art therapists. These principles also serve to advance the mental health and well-being of our clients. The ensuing ethical guidelines are crafted to address a spectrum of situations encountered by art therapists, guided by fundamental values that uphold human rights. These values encapsulate aspirational ethical principles, including:

Autonomy: Art therapists uphold the right of clients to make independent choices regarding life direction, treatment goals, and options. They assist clients in making informed decisions that align with their life objectives and affirm the autonomy rights of others.

Nonmaleficence: Art therapists strive to conduct themselves and their practice to prevent harm to individuals, families, groups, and communities.

Beneficence: Art therapists contribute to well-being by assisting individuals, families, groups, and communities in improving their circumstances. They identify practices that actively benefit others, enhancing overall welfare.

Fidelity: Art therapists acknowledge their role and responsibility to act with integrity towards clients, colleagues, and members of their community. They maintain honesty, accuracy, faithfulness to promises, and truthfulness in their work.

Justice: Art therapists commit to treating all persons with fairness, ensuring equal access to services for clients.

Creativity: Art therapists nurture imagination to deepen self-understanding, understanding of others, and comprehension of the world. They support creative processes for decision-making, problem-solving, and meaning making, fostering healing.



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Cultural Sensitivity and Respect: Art therapists should approach clients with deep respect for their cultural background, acknowledging the significance of art and creativity within their heritage. Understanding the cultural context is crucial for effective therapy.

Trauma-Informed Practice: Given the challenging circumstances, adopting trauma-informed practices is essential. Art therapists should be aware of the potential trauma experienced by individuals and address it with sensitivity, ensuring a safe and supportive environment.

Empowerment and Agency: Encouraging clients to express their unique cultural identities through art can be empowering. Art therapists should foster a sense of agency, helping individuals reclaim and celebrate their cultural heritage through creative expression.

Community Collaboration: Engaging with local artists and community organizations can be beneficial. Collaborative efforts can amplify the therapeutic impact and contribute to the preservation of cultural identity within the community.

Adaptability and Flexibility: Recognizing the dynamic nature of conflict, art therapists should be flexible in their approaches. Tailoring interventions to meet the evolving needs of clients and the community ensures relevance and effectiveness.

Advocacy for Cultural Preservation: Art therapists may consider advocating for the preservation of cultural heritage at broader levels. This could involve collaborating with local authorities, international organizations, and/or participating in initiatives that aim to protect and celebrate cultural diversity.

Ethical Documentation: Ensuring ethical documentation of therapeutic sessions is crucial. Art Therapists should prioritize client confidentiality and informed consent, especially in sensitive situations. Therapists use the Payroll Tracking form for session documentation and are encouraged to keep personal notes, however, DTCare will never ask for clients' privileged information, reinforcing our commitment to ethical practices.

Self-Reflection and Cultural Competence: Art therapists should engage in ongoing self-reflection to enhance cultural competence. Understanding one's own biases and continually educating oneself about the cultural nuances of the clients is vital for ethical practice.

Self-Care and Mental Wellbeing: We encourage our art therapists to prioritize their mental health and well-being, recognizing the demanding nature of working in high-conflict/high-stress situations. They commit to fostering a resilient and supportive mindset, engaging in regular self-care practices to maintain personal balance. By attending to their own mental health needs, art therapists ensure they can effectively contribute to the welfare of clients, colleagues, and the broader community. This principle underscores the importance of therapists nurturing their emotional and psychological resilience as an integral aspect of ethical art therapy practice.



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These Art Therapy Code of Ethics are integral to professional engagements, whether in-person or through various communication channels. It's crucial to distinguish these professional activities from the private conduct of art therapists.

This framework defines "reasonable" as the prevailing professional judgment exercised under similar circumstances. The establishment of these ethical principles demands a personal commitment, continuous effort, and the fostering of ethical behavior among students, supervisees, employees, and colleagues.

This code document articulates the ethical standards for both current and future members of DTCare Art Therapy. It communicates to credentialing bodies, employers, and the public that our members are obligated to adhere to these Art Therapy Code of Ethics. Furthermore, it emphasizes the binding commitment of art therapists to comply with all local laws and regulations alongside these ethical standards.

PRINCIPLES

DTCare's art therapy program is dedicated to offering therapeutic support to individuals in Ukraine, guided by a commitment rooted in principles of empathy, respect, cultural sensitivity, and integrity.

1. RESPONSIBILITY TO CLIENTS - Art therapists prioritize client welfare and respect their rights.

1.1 Client Welfare and Informed Practice

- Art therapists at DTCare prioritize the well-being of clients above all else.
- "Do no harm" is a fundamental principle, ensuring that therapeutic practices do not cause physical, emotional, or psychological harm.
- Clarity in therapeutic relationships is maintained, and multiple relationships that may impair competence are avoided.
- Therapists recognize their influential position, refraining from exploiting trust or dependency.
- Personal problems that may affect work competence are addressed, and therapists avoid roles where interests could impair competence or cause harm.
- Supervision or consultation is sought when facing discomfort or uncertainty, and a safe environment is provided for therapy.
- Art therapists educate clients about ethical principles, certification, licensure requirements, and privacy legislation.

1.2 Maintaining a Safe Environment

- Art therapists ensure a safe, functional environment with proper ventilation, lighting, water access, and knowledge of art material hazards.



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- Storage for artwork and secured areas for hazardous materials are provided.
- Privacy, confidentiality, and compliance with health and safety regulations are prioritized.

2. PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY - Art therapists prioritize and safeguard client information, ensuring confidentiality during and after treatment in therapy environments.

2.1. Informed Clients

- Clients are informed about the limitations of confidentiality.

2.2 Consent for Disclosure

- Confidential information is not disclosed for consultation or supervision without explicit client consent, except in cases of immediate, severe danger.
- When it's in the client's interest to disclose information, written consent is sought, except in emergencies.

2.3 Legal Mandates

- Disclosure of confidential information is done in compliance with laws, especially in civil, criminal, or disciplinary actions related to art therapy services.

2.4 Confidentiality with Minors

- For minor clients, disclosure and consent are obtained from the parent or legal guardian unless mandated otherwise by law.
- Efforts are made to preserve confidentiality with minors, avoiding disclosure that may negatively impact treatment.

2.5 Record Maintenance

- Art therapists maintain client treatment records for a reasonable time, following local and institutional laws.
- Records are stored or disposed of to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

3. PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE AND INTEGRITY - Art therapists maintain high standards of professional competence and integrity.

3.1 High Standards and Continuous Learning



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- Art therapists must possess the necessary qualifications and skills to provide effective and ethical therapy.
- Continuous professional development is encouraged to stay current with best practices.
- Art therapists uphold high standards of professional competence and integrity.

3.2 Scope of Practice

- Art therapists use only materials, processes, and practices within their scope of practice, training, and education.
- Referral to other therapeutic services is facilitated if a therapist cannot provide help within their competence.

3.3 Competent Diagnosis and Collaboration

- Art therapists diagnose and treat only within their competence based on education, training, and experience.
- Cooperation with other professionals is pursued when indicated to serve clients effectively.

3.4 Responsible Public Communication

- Due to their potential influence, art therapists exercise care when making public professional recommendations or statements.
- Accurate representation of research findings is maintained to prevent distortion or misuse.

3.5 Ethical Relationships

- Art therapists avoid exploitative relationships with clients, students, interns, trainees, supervisees, employees, research participants, or colleagues.
- They refrain from engaging in harassing or demeaning behavior towards individuals they interact with.

4. HANDLING OF CLIENT ARTWORK - Art therapists prioritize client artwork, securing informed consent for its release aligned with therapeutic goals, and engaging in thoughtful discussions to empower clients during exhibition while avoiding unintended consequences.

4.1 Handling and Release of Client Artwork

- Art therapists regard client artwork as protected and the client's property.

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- Release of artwork is aligned with therapeutic objectives, and clients are informed about any retention of copies.

4.2 Informed Consent for Artwork Usage

- Verbal consent is secured before photographing, videotaping, or duplicating client artwork for any purpose.
- With proper consent, photos of clients' work will only be used for educational, research, or psychological assessment purposes.

4.3 Exhibition of Client Artwork

- Exhibiting client artwork provides empowerment and reduces stigma, with considerations for potential unintended consequences.
- Clients are engaged in thoughtful conversations about the benefits and consequences of exhibiting their artwork.
- Safeguards are ensured to prevent exploitation or misrepresentation of clients and their imagery.
- Art therapists help clients decide which artwork to exhibit based on therapeutic value, self-disclosure, and tolerance for audience reactions.
- Confidentiality and anonymity considerations are discussed, and written informed consent is obtained for exhibitions.
- Potential therapeutic impacts of selling exhibited artwork are discussed with clients, ensuring awareness of profit usage.
- Clear communication about exhibition details is provided, including online exhibitions and the potential for widespread image availability.
- DTCare and therapists working for DTCare are not permitted to profit or sell client artwork without expressed written permission from the artist. Clients can sell their own artwork.

5. CULTURAL AND DIVERSITY COMPETENCE – Cultural and diversity competence in art therapy involves art therapists consistently gaining awareness and knowledge of cultural diversity for themselves and their clients, applying these skills effectively in practice. This competence is maintained to provide treatment interventions that consider and respond to cultural issues.

5.1 Cultural Competence in Practice

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- Art therapists continually acquire awareness and knowledge of cultural diversity, especially in the context of the attack on Ukrainian culture.
- Multicultural competence is maintained to provide treatment interventions that not only address cultural issues but also contribute to the preservation and rebuilding of Ukrainian culture during and after the conflict.

5.2 Non-Discrimination and Sensitivity

- Art therapists do not discriminate based on various factors, recognizing the specific challenges faced by the Ukrainian culture.
- Striving to understand belief systems and the impact of conflict, they provide culturally relevant interventions that support the resilience and restoration of Ukrainian cultural identity.

5.3 Self-awareness and Education

- Art therapists are aware of their own values and beliefs, acknowledging the sensitivity required when working with individuals affected by the attack on Ukrainian culture.
- Continuous education is sought to understand the unique social diversity and oppression experienced in the context of the conflict, considering various factors such as the impact on race, ethnicity, gender, and more.

5.4 Knowledge and Sensitivity to Ukrainian Culture

- Art therapists acquire knowledge about the specific challenges faced by the Ukrainian culture, recognizing and supporting the strengths inherent in the community.
- Sensitivity to individual differences within the Ukrainian cultural context is maintained, fostering a therapeutic approach that aligns with the resilience and aspirations for cultural restoration.

5.5 Culturally Sensitive Practices

- When working with individuals from the Ukrainian culture, art therapists engage in culturally sensitive supervision, seek assistance from within the community, and make referrals to professionals who understand the cultural nuances, contributing to the broader effort to uphold and rebuild Ukrainian culture during and after the conflict.



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6. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS - DTCare is committed to making art therapy accessible to all while maintaining ethical standards in financial arrangements.

6.1 Prohibition of Charges to Clients

- Art therapists participating in the DTCare Art Therapy program are strictly prohibited from charging any fees to clients. This includes direct charges for services, materials, or any related expenses.
- The core principle of the program is to provide art therapy services at no cost to clients. This commitment ensures that financial barriers do not hinder individuals from accessing the therapeutic benefits of art.

6.2 Transparent Communication on Financial Matters

- Art therapists should communicate clearly with clients about the financial structure of the program. This includes emphasizing the no-cost nature of the services and addressing any concerns or questions clients may have regarding financial arrangements.
- Therapists should refrain from any financial arrangements or agreements with clients, ensuring that the therapeutic relationship remains focused on the well-being of the individual without the influence of financial considerations.

7. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT – DTCare is dedicated to continuous improvement, ensuring that the art therapy program remains dynamic, responsive, and aligned with the evolving needs of both clients and therapists.

7.1 Commitment to Ongoing Evaluation

- DTCare maintains a steadfast commitment to continuous evaluation and improvement of the art therapy program. Regular assessments are conducted to identify areas of strength and opportunities for enhancement, ensuring the program's effectiveness and relevance.
- DTCare recognizes the invaluable insights provided by both clients and art therapists. Feedback mechanisms are established to actively seek and incorporate their perspectives, fostering a collaborative environment where the experiences of those involved contribute to the program's evolution.

7.2 Utilization of Feedback for Service Enhancement

- Feedback collected from clients and therapists is not only valued but actively utilized to enhance the quality of art therapy services. DTCare views constructive feedback as a catalyst for positive



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change, implementing improvements that directly address the needs and preferences of those engaged in the program.

- Evaluation findings are not only acknowledged but serve as a foundation for adaptive programming. DTCare remains flexible in its approach, ready to modify and tailor the art therapy program to better meet the evolving needs of participants and uphold the highest standards of care.

8. ADHERENCE TO ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR ART THERAPISTS

Art therapists affiliated with DTCare commit to uphold the DTCare Art Therapy Code of Ethics. It is the individual responsibility of each DTCare art therapist and employee to conduct themselves in alignment with these principles and to adhere to all relevant laws, regulations, and licensing requirements governing therapeutic practice within their respective areas. These principles serve as a foundational guide for education and ethical conduct, establishing a framework for principled and responsible art therapy practice within the DTCare community.

9. INQUIRIES AND COMPLAINTS

Conflicts and disagreements are inherent in human interactions. Situations may occur in which one or more individuals believe that one or more members of DTCare may have violated the *Art Therapy Code of Ethics*. DTCare HQ can address any inquiries that fall within its scope of responsibility. Complaints of unethical conduct are beyond the scope of DTCare HQ and will be addressed to the DTCare Board of Directors. Inquiries to the DTCare HQ can be submitted by emailing: info@dtcare.org