



ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS AND CASE MANAGERS

2017 CASE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

THE WELLNESS COALITION

NOVEMBER 3, 2017

PRESENTED BY: TURENZA SMITH, PH.D., LMSW

ETHICS ACTIVITY

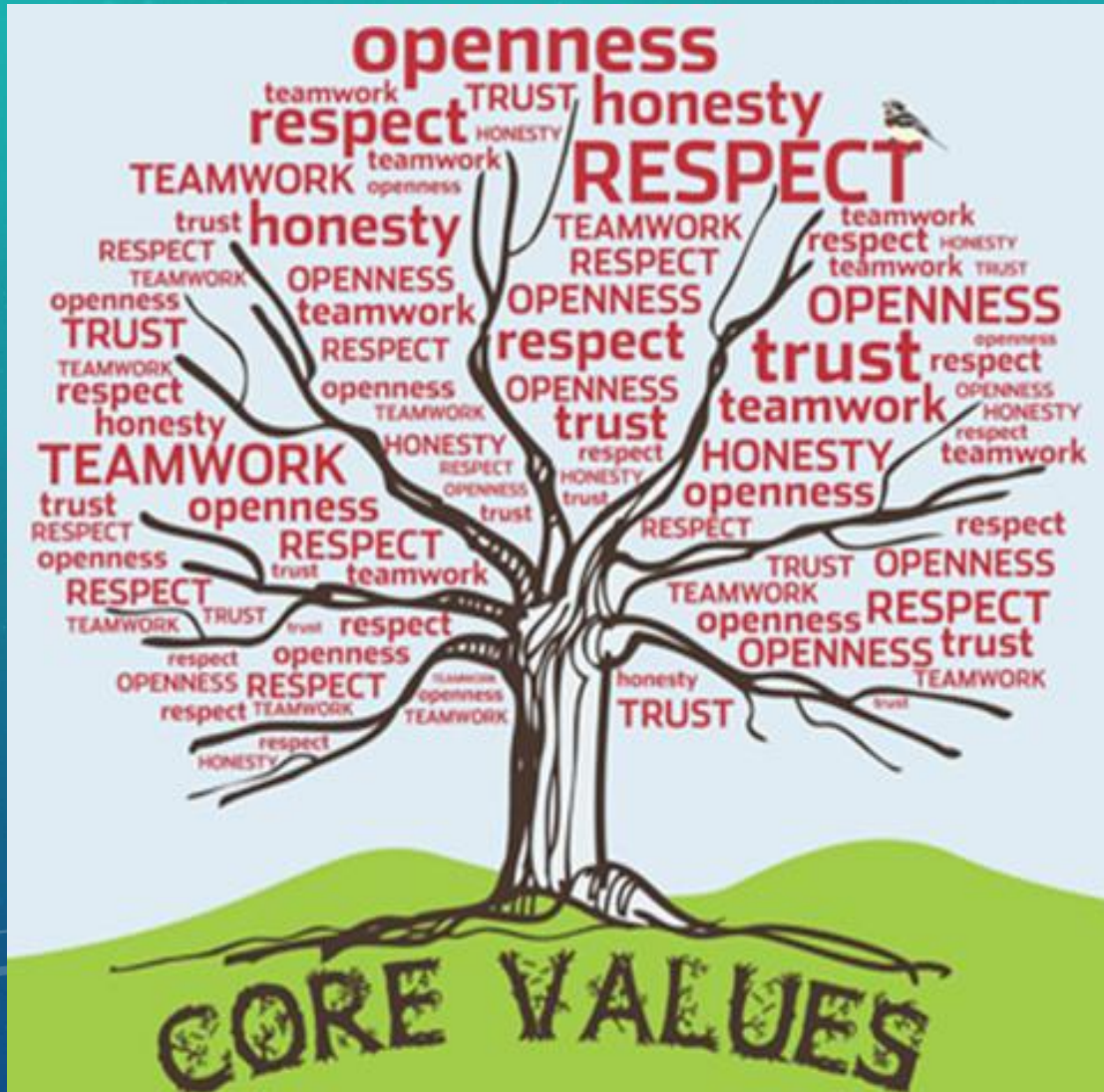
Based on your assigned case:

- What is the ethical dilemma(s)?
- What standard(s) of the Code of Ethics guide how a social worker or case manager should handle this dilemma?
- How would you/your group handle this case?

AGENDA

- I. Contrast Values, Morality and Ethics
- II. Look at Why This Topic is So Important in Case Management
- III. Review Specific Professional Ethics and Standards
- IV. Navigating and Managing Ethical Challenges

VALUES, ETHICS, AND MORALITY



Social Work and Case Management Practice is impacted by:

- Personal Values
- Professional Values
- Ethics
- Morality

VALUES

1

Values lay the foundation for the understanding of attitudes and motivation because they influence our perceptions.

2

Individuals enter organizations with notions of what is right and wrong with which they interpret behaviors or outcomes

3

Values generally influence attitudes and behavior.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES

Social Workers

- Service
- Social Justice
- Dignity & Worth of the Person
- Importance of Human Relationships
- Integrity
- Competence

(NASW, Code of Ethics, , 2017)

Case Managers

- Consumer Protection
- Quality Case Management Practice
- Ethical Standards and Behaviors
- Scientific Knowledge and Dissemination

(Commission for Case Manager Certification, 2017)

ABSWE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Social Worker	Level	Action
Tindle, B.	LGSW	License revoked for unprofessional conduct (PDF)
Weitzel, A.	LGSW	Fined and reprimanded for unprofessional conduct. (PDF)
*McMaken, K.	LCSW	Licensee reprimanded for unprofessional conduct (PDF)
Jarvis, K.	LCSW	license revoked for unethical practice Boards Decision , Hearing Officers Recommendation ,
*Thrasher, T.	LGSW	Reprimanded for unprofessional conduct (PDF)
Jones, S.	LCSW	License revoked for unprofessional conduct. (PDF) (Hearing Officer Recommendation)
Jones, A.	LGSW	Reprimanded for unprofessional conduct Agreement

ETHICS, WHAT IS IT????

- Ethics is the code of conduct or behavior governing an individual or a group (as members of the profession).
- The complex set of ideas, beliefs, or standards that characterizes or pervades a group, community, or people.

Dolgoff, 1997



MORALITY



WHAT IS A DILEMMA?



- A difficult problem seemingly incapable of a satisfactory solution.
- A situation involving choice between equally unsatisfactory alternatives Aroskar, et al. (1997)



ETHICAL DILEMMAS

- Ethical Dilemmas are situations involving conflicts, moral claims, and give rise in such questions as:
 - What ought I do;
 - What harm and/or benefit will result from this decision/actions; and
 - What is good (virtue) or what is the right thing to do?

(Aroskar, et. Al.1997)

ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN SOCIAL WORK & CASE MANAGEMENT

- Ethical dilemma occurs when social workers must choose between two contradictory ethical principles or directives.
- Conflict may arise between the social worker/case manager and patients, families, agency staff, and government regulations.



CODE OF ETHICS



- Written list of profession's values and standards of conduct
- Provides a framework for decision making
- Oriented toward daily decisions made by member's of the profession (i.e. NASW)



Commission for Case Manager Certification

WHY IS THIS TOPIC IMPORTANT

- ❑ IMPORTANT THAT CASE WORKERS KNOW THE RULES THAT DIRECT THEIR PRACTICE
- ❑ PROVIDES GUIDELINES
- ❑ WORKERS WILL BETTER UNDERSTAND BEST PRACTICE
- ❑ ACCOUNTABILITY
- ❑ TRANSPARENCY
- ❑ PREVENTS THE EXPLOITATION OF CONSUMERS
- ❑ PRESERVES THE INTEGRITY OF THE PROFESSION
- ❑ BENEFITS THE CONSUMER AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF THE PROFESSION

PROFESSIONAL ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Social Workers

- Clients (1.01- 1.17)
- Colleagues (2.01-2.10)
- Practice Settings (3.01- 3.10)
- Professionals (4.01-4.08)
- Social Work Profession (5.01-5.02)
- Broader Society (6.01-6.04)

Case Managers

- Integrity of the Profession (1.01)
- Commitment to Clients (2.01-2.15)
- Colleagues (3.01-3.05)
- Practice Settings (4.01)
- Professionals (5.01-5..03)



3. Which sections of the *NASW Code of Ethics* were updated?

The sections of the *NASW Code of Ethics* that were revised include:

The Purpose of the Code

1.03 Informed Consent

1.04 Competence

1.05 Cultural Competence and
Social Diversity

1.06 Conflicts of Interest

1.07 Privacy and Confidentiality

1.08 Access to Records

1.09 Sexual Relationships

1.11 Sexual Harassment

1.15 Interruption of Services

1.16 Referral for Services

2.01 Respect

2.06 Sexual Relationships

2.07 Sexual Harassment

2.10 Unethical Conduct of
Colleagues

3.01 Supervision and Consultation

3.02 Education and Training

3.04 Client Records

5.02 Evaluation and Research

6.04 Social and Political Action

MANAGING ETHICAL CHALLENGES

- CONSULT THOSE IN THE KNOW vs. THOSE YOU KNOW
- TEACH CASE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES
- KNOW THE BASIC ETHICAL PRINCIPLES RELEVANT TO YOUR AREA OF PRACTICE
- KNOW THE LAW
- BE AWARE OF EXPANDING ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS
- ASSESS THE SITUATION

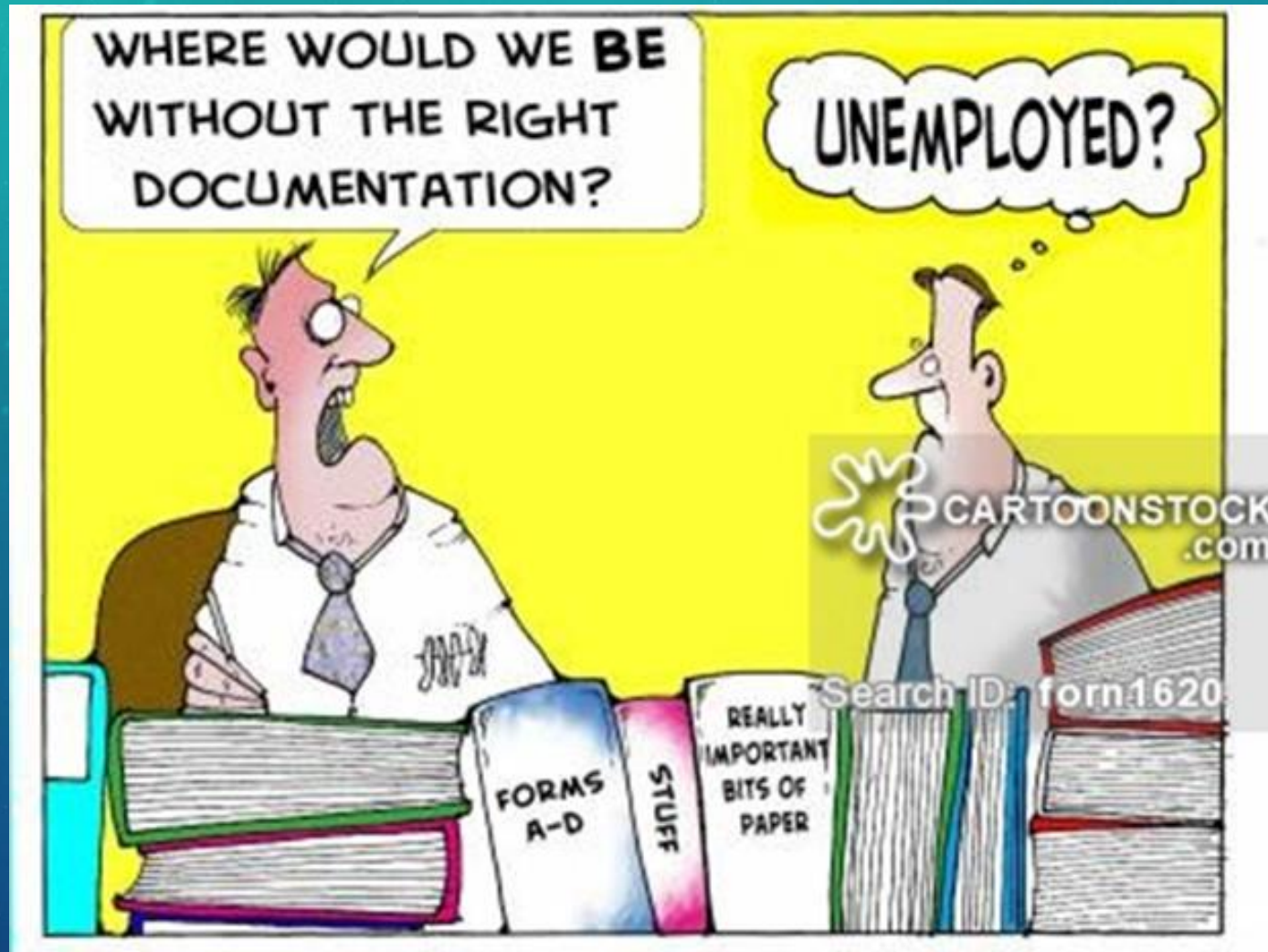


MANAGING ETHICAL CHALLENGES

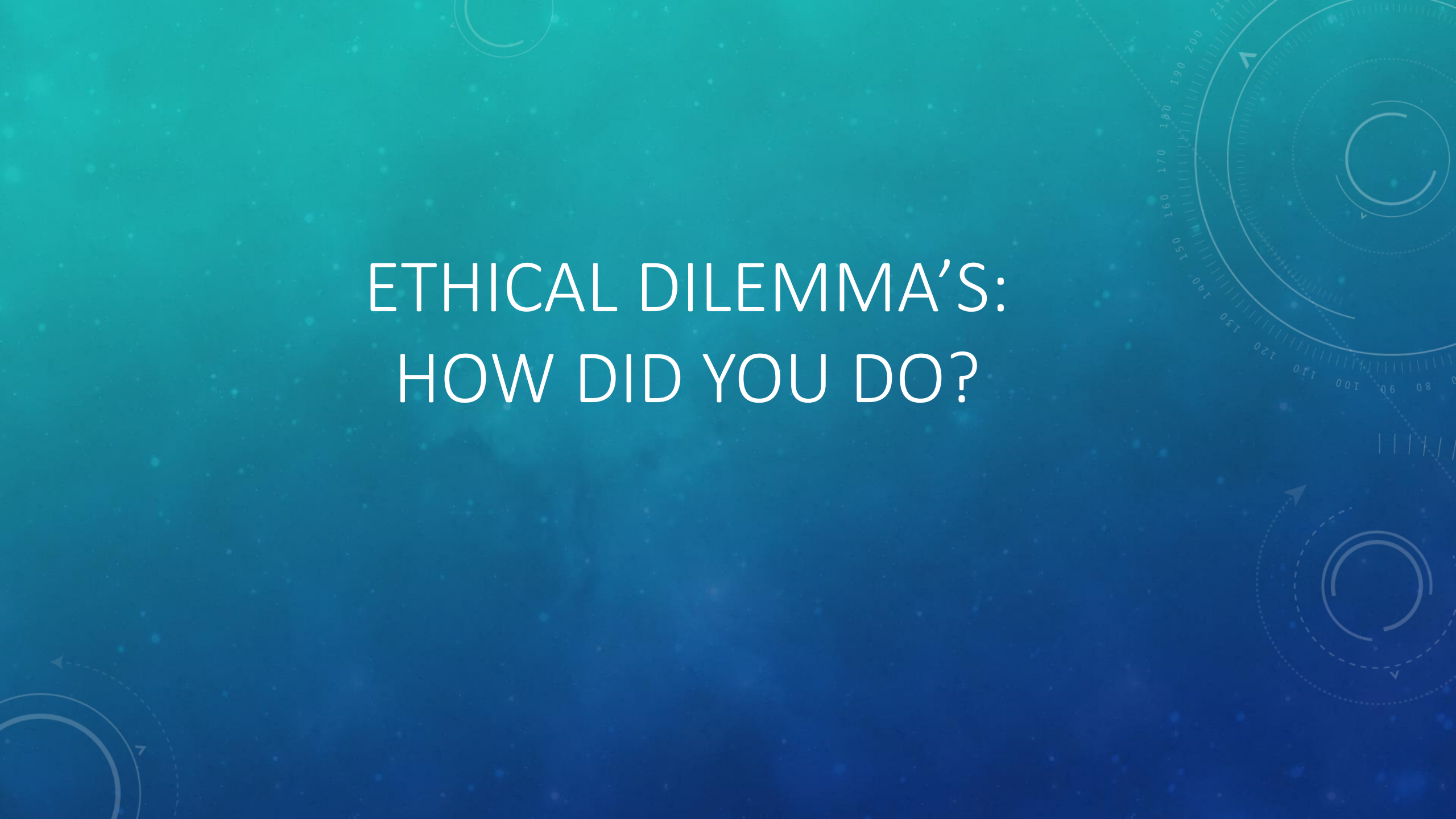


- REALIZE REFORM BRINGS GREATER RESPONSIBILITY AND/OR RISK
- PAY ATTENTION TO PATIENT STATUS ISSUES AND DOCUMENTATION
- BE A CHANGE ADVOCATE
- BE VISIBLE IN THE CASE MANAGEMENT CIRCUIT
- EMBRACE ON-LINE RESOURCES
- UNDERSTAND SOCIAL MEDIA
- BROADEN YOUR PERSPECTIVE

MANAGING ETHICAL CHALLENGES



ETHICAL DILEMMA'S: HOW DID YOU DO?



VIGNETTE 1

- A social worker is helping a 21 year old female client work through residual problems related to sexual abuse by her father many years earlier. The client had been removed from the home for a period, and her father had gone to treatment. The client's father is a third-grade teacher, and the client strongly suspects that he may be molesting children in his class. The client is unwilling to contact child protective services (CPS) agency or to confront her father. The social worker shares her client's concern about the father's access to children but is uncertain about the client's clear preference to not report her concerns or evidence to CPS and whether he has any responsibility to report.

VIGNETTE 2

- A social worker/case manager employed at a juvenile detention center has a strong reason to suspect that two of her clients in the center have become sexually involved. She is aware that one of these youths is HIV positive. She knows that if she advises the non-HIV-positive youth of her partner's HIV status, the girl may likely tell others in the center. The boy is ambiguous as to whether they are sexually active and, if so, whether they use appropriate protection. The social worker seeks supervision regarding the conflict between a duty to protect the girl and the client's right to confidentiality.

VIGNETTE 3

- Two practitioners (one a social worker & case manager) have been friends for nearly 20 years. One is an independent case manager and has never sought to become licensed or to join any professional organizations. The solo practitioner discloses in her social worker friend that she is actively sexually involved with a client whom she is treating for clinical depression and for whom she receives insurance reimbursement for fees.

VIGNETTE 4

- Case managers in a hospital will be rewarded in their role as case managers for helping generate revenue. It is intended that third-party reimbursement funds will become a more prevalent source of income for the hospital. The social workers may thus be forced into the position of giving preference to privately insured clients and providing less service to Medicare and Medicaid patients.

VIGNETTE 5

- A practitioner for a nonprofit mental health agency believes the agency engages in racially discriminatory practices in their service delivery—for example, determination of eligibility, assignment to staff, length of waiting time for initial visits, and so forth. The practitioner's previous efforts to address these concerns with the agency administration have been fruitless. After discussing these concerns with colleagues, she considers making public excerpts of agency records without the agency's permission, but disguising all identifying information regarding clients.

VIGNETTE 6

- While researching practice methods related to his client population—children with emotional disturbance—a social worker in a residential treatment setting learned of a controversial intervention in which the therapist physically restrains a child for a period of time. He reviewed professional literature claiming that the practice appears to have been effective treatment for some children with severe behavioral disturbances. He also found social work articles that were extremely critical of the method of treatment calling it coercive, counterproductive, and injurious to children's mental health. Interested in gaining more information, the social worker attended a week-long training session regarding the method. He concludes that one of his clients is the sort of child for whom the treatment seems appropriate and wants to use this technique on his client.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS SERVE TO:

- To **protect** the public from incompetent, unethical and unlawful social work/case manager practice
- To **enforce** qualification standards for all levels of licensure and certification
- To **delineate unlawful conduct** through disciplinary procedures against practitioners who violate applicable laws or rules

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

- Most people find themselves in a tug-of-war between their ethical standards & their emotional desires/feelings—which tends to lead to the breakdown of moral bhr
- Individuals who are motivated primarily by emotions are often emotionally unstable not because their emotions are wrong, but because their values and principles are not well developed/defined to regulate their behavior
- It is important to understand the relationship between ethical values & emotions because one tends to use emotions to justify unethical behavior (ie. Cheating on a test/partner, violent bhr, etoh/substance abuse, etc)
- One of the primary functions of ethical values is to keep us on a good moral track, especially when we find our ethical values at odds with our emotional desires/urges.

THANK YOU



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