

Integrative Paper

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Clients Rights and Values

The practice of Social Work in the time of modern development began in the 19th century. The social and economic disruption of the industrial age and revolution brought on societal struggles and a mass of urban based poverty. Systems created in the past by churches and families were replaced with social welfare services. Social work was created to bring change, create solutions and hopefully reform a society imbalanced. Many go into the profession of social work already having the understanding of wanting to bring their compassion as well as competence to practice. Christian social workers often at times have a view that the career of social work is not only a profession, but a ministry to carry out what Christ has commissioned them to do as part of the Faith. To love thy neighbor as thyself and to treat the less fortunate with mercy. The NASW Code of Ethics creates a foundation to where those goals are met in every social worker according to ethical standards, not accompanied by any biases.

Violation of Code of Ethics

Frank Anthony Amoruso violated section 1.06 of the NASW Code of Ethics. The social worker admitted to engaging in inappropriate communication with a client during the course of therapy. The action taken against him and agreed up resulted in 2 month actual suspension, 22 months stayed suspension, and 2 years of probation. The conflict of interest had been violated and could have resulted in exploitation and potential harm to the client. There are few details given or any that can be found further on record. However the information is substantial to exhibit how the client, social worker the profession itself can be affected. Violations hurt and do not help the moral and professional values the the practice of social work looks to maintain.

Let us review The NASW 1.06 ethical standard principle which states: "Social workers should be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment. Social workers should inform clients when a real or potential conflict of interest arises and take reasonable steps to resolve the issue in a manner that makes the clients' interests primary and protects clients' interests to the greatest extent possible. In some cases, protecting clients' interests may require termination of the professional relationship with proper referral of the client" (standard 1.06[a]). One can attest the conflicts of interest can arise in clinical practice no matter the specialized field, social workers must remain vigilant to avoid them, not going between the lines and beyond the principles and standards. If in any given event of uncertainty the social worker should seek out professional instruction and advice of a superior or colleague knowledgeable of ethical standards. In the case of Mr. Amoruso his relationship with the client violates their therapeutic contract and crosses boundaries. Services were not professionally given during the course of therapy, therefore his treatment as a clinical social worker were not effective. Ethical violations affect the agency that the social worker may represent. The agency can be sued for negligence and misconduct. Mr. Amoruso could have documented as well as articulated with the client once he felt an ethical issue existed. The worker could have identified the issues as well as created boundaries. Studies of Ethics cases show that at times conflict of interest can happen by how the social worker display themselves behaviorally. Maintaining clear communication and outlining how services are to be given can allow this to be avoided. To look at this case I would have taken preventive measures as best as possible while understanding that I am only human. As an aspiring LMSW professional I would

seek the solution of not only following the ethical standard but doing so in wisdom and prudence.

Integration of Christianity and Ethical Codes

So as believers in Christ what do we do in cases like these? I am not aware of the reasoning or have enough vital information in my possession to assess how Mr. Amoruso crossed boundaries with his client. I do not know the circumstances that allowed him to have inappropriate communication with his client. That communication can range between anything innocent such as sharing a faith concept or sexual. The case and its consequences display the seriousness of violating any ethical code. In Romans 13 as christians we are told by the apostle Paul the importance of submission and obeying authority. As christian social workers no matter what the cause, reasoning and even temptation we are to abide by the ethical principles given to us.

Only in relevance to the subject of this case I will give example to a possible similar conflict that could occur as a christian. We may encounter clients in whom we would want to assist further in help and support by ministering to them. This would require wisdom and again communication with the clients needs and identifying the type of treatment they desire. Rick Chamiec-Case brings up great points of how to successfully integrate social work and christianity. We can go about this by looking into the effects of integration on motivation and character/identity. Understanding of faith and social work and integration of the practice of faith and social work. Adapting these model tools can help us carry out our services both righteously and professionally. David E. Sherwood also insists that we use an ethical decision making model

for christian helping professionals that is broken down into how we should assess and take action in various situations.

Lastly personal reflection, self assessment and transparency with one self in my opinion is the key to keeping ethical standards. Only Mr. Amurose knew what he could of done differently I can assume the results of the actions taken against him has allowed him to trace back moments that could have been prevented. As professionals it is important to know our own limits, biases, worldviews, triggers, and ways that we communicate that can be viewed as being suggestive. Taking these important self-measures along with adhering to the codes can assure positive outcomes in the cases we have and in our professional career.

References

Scales, . T, Kelly, . M (2016). Christianity and Social Work: Readings on the Integration of Christian Faith and Social Work Practice. Pgs 123-127, 175-179