

# Effective Use of Boundaries in Clinical Settings: An Ethical Approach

Chaz Franke, MSW, LCSW

Light Source

[chaz@findyourlightsource.com](mailto:chaz@findyourlightsource.com)

# Ethical Implications of Boundaries

- Boundaries as a source of compassion
- Boundaries as a clinical tool
- Boundaries as self care
- Boundaries as value connections
- Boundaries in clinical development

# Boundaries as a Source of Compassion

- Self Compassion- Mindfulness, Common Humanity, Kindness/Curiosity(Kristen Neff)
- Our Ethics are the ultimate expression of our compassion.
- Boundaries and limits are an expression of our ethics.

# Boundaries as a Source of Compassion

## BEST PRACTICE

- Boundaries
- Education
- Safety
- Therapeutic Rapport

# Boundaries as a Clinical Tool

- Ethics of Informed Consent
- Safety as established by boundaries
- Singularity of the role of the clinician
- Treatment Planning and Course of treatment

# Boundaries as a Clinical Tool

- Self of the therapist
- Understanding the role of transference and countertransference.
- Accepting your own limits and influence through your application of boundaries.
- Role of modality in the boundary process.
- “How are we doing?”
- Words that make us cringe!

# Boundaries as Self care

## The Ethics of the healthy practitioner

- The clinician is responsible for modeling, communicating, guiding, and creating a container.
- To do this the clinician must build boundaries to their work that allow for optimal engagement.
- Poor boundaries are frequently a result of poor self care and lack of respect for role.
- Know your number

# Boundaries as value connections

- What traits do you embody as a clinician?
- How can these traits be best exemplified within the framework of your ethical obligations?
- Values must reflect your boundaries.



# Boundaries as Value Connections

- Modeling of values in session
- Creating space for the other
- Exhaustion, poor boundaries, ethical failings represent a removal from values.

# Boundaries in Clinical Development

- Staffing
- Consulting and the ability to build trust
- Reducing isolation and finding a space to express concern
- Normalizing mistake without a focus on fear

# Boundaries in Clinical Development

- Clinical supervision
- Mentoring
- Becoming a mentor or supervisor (holding the standard)
- Creating supportive roles within your environment as a boundary practice
  - Therapist
  - Supervisor
  - Peer

# Boundaries in Clinical Development

- Finding your voice
- Offer what you offer
- Staying within the framework of your skills is ethical practice
- Normalizing “NO”
- YOU ARE ENOUGH
- People pleasing as a loss of safe boundary

# Ethical Notes

- We are all doing our best.
- We have to support each other and reduce isolation to ethically build boundaries.
- Boundaries are a stable source of ethical protection when applied consistently.
- Utilize and pursue supervision and support regardless of experience.

[findyourlightsource.com](http://findyourlightsource.com)

Interested in receiving our newsletter?