

# Ethical guidelines

## DAKART

### **International Professional Associations for Anthroposophic Arts Therapists**

#### **PREAMBLE**

These guidelines serve as an orientation for ethically responsible conduct and practice by AATs. They were created for the benefit and protection of patients/clients using the professional services of AATs. They constitute an orientation for the conduct and practice of all members of participating associations. They serve a protection for our own profession as well as forming a basis for ethical guidelines in the various countries, in compliance with the prevailing national law.

Anthroposophic art therapies are an integral part of anthroposophic medicine. Both health and illness are seen as a dynamic interplay of diverse processes. An individual is not seen as totally sick or healthy, but moves constantly between these reciprocal illness and health-regulating processes. An AAT encourages a patient/client towards an active reduction of illness-incurring processes and in support of health-promoting processes. The individuality of the patient/client as well as the symptoms of his sickness and health are taken into account. Thus the patient/client becomes active and self determined.

Each human being can develop only his own ethical attitude. The professional associations describe these standards with this awareness. They are conscious of the spiritual dimension of morality. When one succeeds in acting with presence of mind in any given moment, a quality can be revealed, that is higher and more humane than that which the best code of ethics can prescribe. AATs strive to act as schooled and responsible human beings, who are subject to neither inner nor outer coercion. In moving toward this goal, established standards have a justified roll.

For a deeper understanding of the above we refer to The Philosophy of Freedom by Rudolph Steiner. (GA 45) Here the author describes a stage of human development in which a person is free from the dictates of nature as well as from external compulsion. In this purified state he can simply realize that which lies within him. "To live in love toward our actions and to let live in the understanding of the other person's will is the fundamental maxim of the free human being." These general guidelines have been created for AATs with the background described above. They take into account the fallibility of a developing human being, as well as the unique innermost core, from which a truly free person expresses himself. Every individual AAT moves between the priorities in these guidelines and their repercussions on his professional actions and his personal behavior.

These guidelines apply mutatis mutandis for Anthroposophic Arts Therapists who work in areas of Salutogenesis, teaching, research and management.

Because different countries use different terminology, the dual term patient/client is used here. In the context of these guidelines, the terms "art", "therapy" and "anthroposophy" are used solely within the scope of professional anthroposophic art therapy, which draws these terms together.

### **General Practice**

Anthroposophic art therapies are services based on human encounter.

- Anthroposophical Art Therapists apply their skills and knowledge for the benefit of the patient/client.
- They orient themselves to the individuality of the patient/client and his situation in life.
- They observe a well-maintained high standard in their personal and professional conduct.
- They treat patients/clients within the parameters of their specific discipline.
- They handle patient/client information with the discretion that therapist-client confidentiality dictates.
- They document each treatment session
- They sustain and update their professional knowledge and skills.
- They make sure that their personal conduct does not harm the reputation of the profession.

### **ANTHROPOSOPHICAL ART THERAPISTS**

#### **in relation to patients / clients in general**

The therapeutic relationship based on mutual respect and trust is the core of Anthroposophic Arts Therapies. Patients/clients are entitled to good and safe standards of care and protection from unprofessional or unethical behavior.

- The relationship with the patient/client may not be influenced by gender, biological and/or cultural origins, philosophy or worldview, lifestyle, disability, political stance or position in society. Anthroposophic Arts Therapists adopt an open attitude towards different points of view.
- They are aware of the responsibility that the special trust and dependency in a therapeutic relationship brings. They insure that the treatment proceeds in the best possible manner and that the confidence given them is preserved.
- They agree to refrain from any kind of abuse of power and manipulation, such as:
  - the imposition of their own values as universal norms
  - the continuation of treatment for their own financial reasons
  - the continuation of therapy in order to replace the social context of the Anthroposophic Arts Therapist
  - sexual assault
  - the exploitation of dependency, be it for political, economic or any other reasons

- the acceptance of gifts that are disproportionate.
- Anthroposophical Art Therapists will carefully deal with the fact that even after therapy has been completed, dependencies in the above sense may continue to exist.

### **Confidentiality and anonymity**

Anthroposophic Arts Therapists maintain confidentiality.

Discretion, confidentiality and anonymity pertain to:

- communication with any third parties, without the written consent from the patient/client or his legal representative. For example:
  - supervision and collegial consultation
  - precautionary data protection of patient/client, also in case of the therapist's occupational disability
  - any publications and professional/scientific documentations.
- This confidentiality applies beyond the patient's/client's and/or therapist's death.
- Confidential information may only be used in the context of scientific research or teaching/training if the anonymity of patient/client is guaranteed, and he or his legal representative has given written consent.

### **Patient/client Documentation**

- Anthroposophic Arts Therapists carry out the legally required documentation.
- Anthroposophic Arts Therapists protect patient/client documented information against loss, damage or unauthorized access.
- The use of computerized documentation systems must be securely protected against falsification.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Anthroposophical Art Therapists provide clear and effective communication with patients/clients and their next of kin.

- Before the start of therapy Anthroposophical Art Therapists inform their patients/clients and/or their legal representatives about:
  - the therapeutic method
  - the duration
  - the treatment plan
  - the costs and appointment schedule
  - the art-therapeutic diagnosis
  - possible side effects and relapses

- the therapist's proprietary rights and copyrights of any publications resulting from the therapy
  - their right to access therapy documentation
  - confidentiality and data protection against third parties
  - the necessity for their consent for the inclusion of their data and/or works in teaching and research
  - their rights and obligations
  - the possibility of therapy termination at any given moment
- If appropriate, anthroposophic art therapists refer their patients/clients to other practitioners and inform them of treatment options.
  - Anthroposophic Arts Therapists will obtain consent from the legal representatives of minors or mentally incapacitated (non compos mentis) individuals.

### **ANTHROPOSOPHICAL ART in relation to third parties**

The Anthroposophic Arts Therapists stand in relation to the legal, social and therapeutic environment of the patient/client.

- They work as equal and respectful partners in their own fields as well as in cross-professional collaboration with colleagues in other health care professions.
- They communicate their findings and assessments with colleagues and collaborate with them for the benefit and well-being of the patient/client.
- In institutions or health centers they coordinate their own therapeutic approaches with those of the institution. This also applies when patients/clients are referred from private practice to hospital or vice versa when dismissed and referred for after-care treatment.
- In collaboration within a team and/or with members of other health professions, they are responsible for their own practice. Loyalty to their patients/clients and the protection of their interests is their main focus.
- Apart from health promotion and prevention, they aim to collaborate with a physician.
- They know the national laws for their professional practice and implement them.
- Their promotional literature is truthful.
- Anthroposophic Arts Therapists in function as teachers/trainers comply with these ethical guidelines analogously in basic and postgraduate training. Interns on practice placements fall under the responsibility of the Anthroposophic Arts Therapists. The ethical guidelines given here also apply to the trainee. The internship will be supervised and documented.

### **The maintenance of personal hygiene**

Anthroposophic Arts Therapists continuously expand and deepen the quality of their knowledge, skills and services. They update these regularly with regard to their particular field of work. They comply with the current standards and developments in anthroposophic art therapy and medicine.

The Anthroposophic Arts Therapists handle their own resources responsibly.

These include:

- Healthcare on a physical, mental and spiritual level
- Conscientious handling of their own physical, psychological and mental well-being
- Cultivation of resources that lie in the active practice of their own art form.
- The spiritual power of initiative, which can be gained through the regular use of the anthroposophic spiritual science. This can be a source of motivation and therapeutic courage.

The Anthroposophic Arts Therapists always strive towards freedom of action, based on knowledge and self-knowledge, responsibility, compassion and love. Their conduct can only be measured in the humanity and professional expertise with which they deal with others - in the understanding that they are always simultaneously teachers and students.

## **A SUMMARY OF RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

### **Patient's/client's Rights**

- information and self-determination
- clarification of the art therapeutic diagnosis, the cost consequences and possible side effects
- termination of therapy anytime
- access to therapy documentation the right to decide on their further use
- lodge complaints

Rights of minors and mentally handicapped individuals (non compos mentis) will be asserted by their legal representatives.

### **Obligations of the Anthroposophical Art Therapists**

- maintenance of therapeutic skills
- artistic practice in their own art form
- qualified CPD and further continuous education
- intervision / supervision
- collegial exchange
- in-depth studies of anthroposophic and specialist literature
- documentation requirements (documents to be kept for ten years)
- confidentiality - discretion with third parties (data protection)
- promotion of quality [quality assurance]
- comprehensive information to patients/clients about the nature of the therapy, the duration, the treatment plan, the costs and appointment times, art therapy, the diagnosis, possible side effects and relapses
- treatment of any complaint in a constructive way
- insurance of the patient's/client's welfare and safety
- maintenance of therapeutic/professional distance
- protection of the personal and intimate sphere
- awareness of the asymmetrical relationship with the patient / client

- obtaining consent from legal representatives of children or immature, mentally handicapped (non compos mentis) individuals
- responsible handling of one's own person and the therapeutic task
- protection and responsible representation of Anthroposophic Arts Therapies
- appropriate care of interns; practical guidance and supervision must be separate from therapy
- respect for and protection of the intellectual property of colleagues
- knowledge and application of national law applying to one's profession
- possession of professional liability/indemnity insurance