CHAPTER 15

ETHICAL ISSUES IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

LEARNING OUTCOMES

15.1 Understand the difference between ethical dilemmas and moral temptations.

15.2 Know how to use principles to make ethical decisions.

15.3 Understand the role of values in career development interventions.

15.4 Know how to use ethical codes.

15.5 Understand the ethical standards of NCDA.

Ethics is a constant of our daily lives. Although ethical actions frequently stem from a subconscious or intuitive foundation of values, some aspects of ethical decision making are readily evident and require careful attention and deliberation. Vigilant adherence and commitment to ethics, ethical standards, and ethical principles is a hallmark of all professions, and all professionals are ethically accountable and liable. It may surprise many counselors and counselor educators to see the universality of many ethical principles manifest in ethical standards for professions as varied as computer associations, multinational corporations, and the U.S. military. Ethical principles common to the ethical standards of many professions center on respect for human beings; respect for privacy, accountability, responsibility, and truth; and diligent accuracy in crediting one's research sources.

Typically in counselor preparation and practice, ethics and ethical standards and principles are considered along with legal principles and practices, yet ethics is different from law in terms of the origins of ethics in philosophy and in terms of legality being far more explicitly definitive than ethics. In law, there is close attention to legal precedent and nuance in refining principles of justice—principles that guide legal behavior and adjudication of perceived illegalities. In ethics, there is attention to more general ethical standards and principles that guide ethical practice and adjudication. In the history of mental health professions, ethical principles and standards frequently are at risk of being lost among the laws and legal rules for practice. However, in the counseling profession and its many specialties, law and ethics can be a force for positive change in clients' lives, in counselors' efforts, and in the short- and long-term benefits to society when ethics and law intersect and interact for the common good. This chapter discusses these positive potentialities and provides pertinent examples.

Probably the most vital aspect of ethics in counselor preparation is close and deliberate attention to, and discussion of, ethics, ethical issues, and ethical standards within the quiet calm of a noncrisis classroom environment. Though one might typically think of legal and ethical standards as negative reinforcers that highlight what behaviors to avoid, a closer look at ethical standards and principles might help one see the fuller context of ethics as inspiring and empowering. One might sense this uplifting aspect of ethics in the preamble to the American

Counseling Association's Ethical Standards, which notes counselors' dedication to human worth, dignity, and uniqueness, and potential and similar perspectives at points in the Ethical Standards of the American Psychological Association. Finally, as career counselors and aspiring counselors realize that standards are minimal—the least they must do—they can begin to ponder and commit to maxima, to aspirational standards focused on the most they can ethically do for their clients.

This chapter presents these ideas as well as new perspectives for professional growth. Read, learn, ponder, and enjoy.

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The authors of this text, like others who teach and work in the area of career counseling, often deal with questions or statements that suggest that career counseling is not "real" counseling and question whether professional concepts such as ethical standards apply to those who are involved in career development interventions. We believe that all career practitioners (not just counselors) are subject to ethical standards. Likewise, those who work for or who are employed or supervised by counseling professionals in providing career counseling services must be aware of and, in most instances, adhere to these standards (Habbal & Habbal, 2016). We have elected to follow the National Career Development Association (NCDA) *Code of Ethics* (National Career Development Association, 2015) and use the term *career counseling professional* to refer to all those covered by that code. As you know by now, we also view career counseling as "real" counseling that is central to a person's life. This chapter is our attempt to provide an orientation to the ethical standards of the counseling profession, with emphasis and examples relevant for career-counseling professionals. Ethical, professional behavior requires adherence to applicable laws and regulations, and in some instances we suggest that those faced with certain dilemmas not only seek ethical consultation from a supervisor or respected colleague but also seek legal advice. Before we begin our exploration of ethical issues, however, we would like you to meet a counselee, José.

José, a 16-year-old student in the ninth grade, was asked to come into the school counselor's office to review his interest inventory results (the inventory had been administered to all ninth-grade students). José's academic record throughout his school years has been mixed. He was held back twice in elementary school and was often absent from school. His absences were mostly the result of José working with his father in the fields during harvest season. Lately, he has shown some interest in developing his career plans. A frequent computer user, José has gone online at the local library to explore career options in the computer field. He found a website that offered free "vocational aptitude testing." He took the test and was excited that the results seemed to suggest that he had the aptitude necessary for working as a computer programmer. He was eager to receive the information about becoming a computer programmer that the website offered to send everyone who took the online test. José was not sure what a computer programmer's job involved, but he knew that he loved playing computer games.

José's father was "dead set against" this type of work. A blue-collar worker all his life with no computer experience and only a ninth-grade education, José's father felt strongly that José should acquire training in a more traditional trade, such as carpentry. José's grandfather had been a carpenter in his home country, Guatemala. When the family relocated to the southeastern United States, the only work José's father could acquire was in agriculture. He thought that he had not been given serious consideration, due to being Guatemalan, for a number of jobs for which he was qualified. José's father thought that becoming a carpenter would be in line with the family tradition and would provide an income that would be sufficient for raising a family (something that was a constant struggle for him). José told his counselor that his father wanted to speak with the counselor about José attending vocational school. His father was also interested in exploring options that José might have in the military. In fact, he wanted José to meet with military recruiters when they visited José's school. José had no interest in becoming a carpenter and was not enthusiastic about the prospect of military service.

If you were José's counselor you would have several concerns about his situation. For example, you might be concerned about the quality of the online test José had taken. You might also be uneasy about "bursting José's bubble" and deflating the interest he had shown in making career plans. However, the results of the interest inventory administered at school gave no indication that José had high interest in computer-related occupations. His interests were more focused on artistic and helping occupations. If you were his counselor, you might also wonder about the strong, clear vision José's father had for the occupation and career path José would choose. In fact, the counselor wondered whether José's father's encounter with discriminatory hiring practices influenced the career goals he had identified for his son. Finally, the counselor was reluctant to encourage José to meet with the military recruiters but was not sure how to communicate this reluctance to José's father.

You may remember that when we introduced José, we used the term *school counselor* rather than *career counselor* to describe José's counselor. Yet José's presenting concern was certainly career related, if not explicitly a career counseling concern per se. A number of ethical issues and concerns are apparent in the brief scenario. For example, some of the ethical questions embedded in José's case include the quality of the assessment he took online, and even whether the assessment instrument the counselor administered to José was appropriate for a person from José's background; the ethics of the online service suggesting a specific career option as if it were the result of career counseling rather than a blatant marketing ploy; the ethical dilemma confronting the school counselor regarding José's father's wishes and José's wishes; and the always present ethical issue of the counselor's competence in dealing with the concerns and issues presented by José.

These are complex issues. To help career counseling professionals practice ethically, professional columns, publications, and workshops on ethics abound. Despite the increased attention to ethical practice in career services delivery, there are often no clear answers to many career practitioners' most difficult questions about proper practice. Given the frequency of litigation in the helping professions, it is perplexing that career development textbooks, at best, pay minimal attention to ethical issues confronting career counseling practitioners. The NCDA's *Code of Ethics* (National Career Development Association, 2015) states that a code of ethics "helps to define

professional behavior and serves to protect the public, the profession, and those who practice within the profession" (p. 1). Thus, in this chapter we hope to heighten the awareness of career counseling professionals to ethical issues and provide guidance for career development practitioners as they consider ethical issues. Because readers will have varied backgrounds in the ethical concepts that affect career counselors, we offer a primer on basic principles.

A good starting point for addressing ethical issues in career development interventions is to consider the following question: How can it be that career-counseling practitioners have multiple ethics codes to guide their practice and yet ethical violations continue? Even when practitioners are well trained and conscientious, situations can arise in which determining proper practice is a complex task. The following chart provides a useful framework for examining behaviors within the career counseling relationship.[1] This matrix can be used to classify career counseling practitioners' behaviors into one of four categories.

Ethical and Legal	Unethical and Legal
Ethical and Illegal	Unethical and Illegal

The obvious goal for career counseling professionals is to function ethically and legally and to avoid any activity that would be acknowledged as illegal and/or unethical. Although this goal seems straightforward, in some instances achieving this goal is not so simple. A career client might disclose her frustration with an unsuccessful job search by saying "I was so upset over my layoff that when my daughter asked me a question I snapped and hit her. I have never done anything like that before." Some career counselors would suggest an ethical (and legal) obligation to report the possible child abuse. Others might cite the circumstances of one episode without evidence of harm and the primacy of client confidentiality as a reason to oppose reporting. Some career-counseling professionals would include a counselor's "Miranda warning" about the limits of confidentiality and required disclosures in the initial discussion of counseling expectations, as part of informed consent, which some view as off-putting to clients. However, without such an orientation to the limits of confidentiality, the counselor who received the information might be reluctant to even consider reporting it.

Ethical issues can arise in which practices common outside the career-counseling professional's helping relationship deviate from what is ethically appropriate. For example, a business relationship between a career counseling professional and a client is considered unethical because it constitutes a dual relationship that could impair objectivity. A career counseling professional helping a friend, relative, or the child of a friend might cause a strain on objectivity, which could also occur for any other professional, yet the recognition is not so apparent

[1] Because we have seen this chart attributed to various authors, and thus its origin is somewhat ambiguous, we simply acknowledge that the concept of this 2 × 2 matrix is not ours.

to the person who asks for "a small personal favor." For example, if in the earlier scenario José's father and José's counselor were friends, then how should the counselor proceed to help José in this instance? The situation could become even more complicated if José's counselor were the only counselor in José's high school.

Career-counseling professionals are also likely to face dilemmas that could be labeled as "business ethics." Examples of such dilemmas are when clients ask career counselors awkward questions, such as how much to tell potential employers about other job options they have, or how to deal with multiple offers. Likewise, potential employers can ask the career counselors about their clients. Those who work in settings that offer a placement function often deal with inquiries from potential employers of their clients. The career counseling professional, in ways not so common in other types of counseling, is often asked to assist clients in dealing with workplace issues such as unethical behavior on the part of supervisors, sexual harassment, and unfair hiring and promotion practices. Career-counseling professionals might have access to nonpublic information that could be used unethically. For example, should a placement counselor tell a client that he overheard a recruiter say the client was the top choice for a position? What about information that might lead to a financial gain to the professional, such as information about the plans of a business that might have implications for noncounseling-related investments of the counselor? Career counseling professionals often need guidance in dealing with ethical situations that are not covered in current ethical codes.

Chapters and sections of chapters throughout this text recognize the role of school counselors in developmental career interventions for both individuals and groups. There is one area of ethical concern that troubles many secondary school counselors: the role of the secondary school counselor in assisting students with determining appropriate educational and/or training plans, and the role of secondary school counselors in providing recommendations to students for the institutions at which they might pursue postsecondary education. Many colleges have a specific expectation that secondary school counselors provide a recommendation for applicants. The simultaneous role of helping the students determine an appropriate institution and providing a recommendation to the institution could be considered a dual relationship. These issues are complicated by the role of parents, who, in addition to sometimes expecting counselors to help them realize their hopes and dreams for their children's educational and career plans, often want to review recommendations written for college admission. There are complex ethical and legal issues involved in such activities, and we advise school counselors to become well versed in their school systems' policies pertaining to student records and recommendations and to become familiar with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (1974). The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) has produced a *Statement of Principles of Good Practice* (2007). We suggest that secondary school counselors who provide required recommendations for their students study the statement and consult, when questions and issues arise, with supervisors and, when necessary, with the legal advisor for their school.

Although studying the *Code of Ethics* of the American Counseling Association (2014) is important and effective for career practitioners who are career counselors, more is needed. That "more" is an understanding of the bases and intention of the standards. It is not possible for an ethical code or standard to provide an unambiguous answer to every potential ethical question. There will inevitably be occasions when career counselors and other career professional practitioners will need the assistance of trusted professional colleagues to provide an assessment of the

proper action in response to an ethical dilemma. Thus, a useful rule of thumb for career-counseling professionals whenever they are unsure about the proper action to take to resolve an ethical dilemma is to consult with professional colleagues who understand career interventions.

Ethical Dilemmas Versus Moral Temptations

Learning Outcome 15.1 Understand the difference between ethical dilemmas and moral temptations

Clearly, resolving ethical dilemmas can be a complex task for career counseling professionals. It is important to note, however, that not all issues involving ethics or proper behaviors deserve the title "dilemma." Kidder (1995) contends that an ethical dilemma occurs only in instances in which there are competing "rights" or there is a struggle to determine the "least bad" course of action. Instead of dilemmas, Kidder labels situations in which the struggle is between right and wrong as *moral temptations*. Unfortunately, some counseling professionals struggle with moral temptations and may take actions that most peers would categorize as unethical. For example, a career counselor might become interested in a noncounseling business or personal relationship with a client and be tempted to prematurely end a formal career counseling relationship to start the "clock" or deny that a relationship was counseling. The involved professional might not be the best judge of whether the relationship meets the ethical standards to change from career counseling to a personal relationship. Attempting to judge the propriety of one's own actions might be the ultimate dual relationship.

Sometimes the career counseling practitioner faces choices between actions that may help the client but have some risk to the counselor. For example, the ACA (2014), NCDA (2015), and American Psychological Association (APA) (2017) ethics statements address the topic of bartering (as a means of paying for services) as a specific of dual relationships, and they discourage the practice. Many bartering relationships begin innocently, and bartering may even be based on the career counselor's desire to provide a way for a client to invest in counseling and be motivated by clinical, rather than financial, reasons. However, if problems develop in either the counseling or the bartering aspect of the relationship, the potential for the client to raise ethical issues *ex post facto* exists.

To guide career-counseling professionals in resolving ethical dilemmas, we will review the principles on which ethical codes are based. We will then examine the basic ethical concepts included in all counseling ethical codes. It is important to note again, however, that no ethics code and certainly no book or chapter can provide answers to all the questions that will arise in the delivery of career counseling services. The following excerpt from the "Purpose" section of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) *Code of Ethics* (2010) eloquently states and reinforces this point:

> A code of ethics cannot guarantee ethical behavior. Moreover, a code of ethics cannot resolve all ethical issues or disputes, or capture the richness and complexity involved in striving to make responsible choices within a moral community. Rather a code of ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged. (p. 2)

The NCDA *Code of Ethics* (2015) requires all career counseling professionals who believe an ethical violation has occurred to take action. We hope that your exploration of the topic will heighten your awareness of potential ethical problems and the multiple considerations involved in addressing those problems.

Using Principles to Resolve Ethical Decisions

Learning Outcome 15.2 Know how to use principles to make ethical decisions.

VanHoose (1986), a pioneer in the study of counseling ethics, observed that "ethical principles provide a more solid framework for decision making than do ethical codes or statutes" (p. 168). VanHoose recommended that counselors use the following five principles, which Herlihy and Corey (2006, 2015) continue to consider foundational and essential to counseling practice and the basis of the ACA ethical standards:

1. *Autonomy* refers to independence and self-determination. Under this principle, counselors respect the freedom of clients to choose their own directions, make their own choices, and control their own lives. We have an ethical obligation to decrease client dependency and foster independent decision making. We refrain from setting imposing goals, avoid being judgmental, and are accepting of different values.
2. *Nonmaleficence* means do no harm. Counselors must take care that their actions do not risk hurting clients, even inadvertently. We have a responsibility to avoid engaging in practices that cause harm or have the potential to result in harm.
3. *Beneficence* means to promote good, or mental health and wellness. This principle mandates that counselors actively promote the growth and welfare of those they serve.
4. *Justice* is the foundation of our commitment to fairness in professional relationships. Justice includes consideration of such factors as quality of services, allocation of time and resources, establishment of fees, and access to counseling services. This principle also refers to the fair treatment of an individual when his or her interests need to be considered in the context of the rights and interests of others.
5. *Fidelity* means counselors make honest promises and honor their commitments to clients, students, and supervisees. This principle involves creating a trusting and therapeutic climate in which people can search for their own solutions and taking care not to deceive or exploit clients. (pp. 9–10)

The principles are similar to those suggested by Beauchamp and Childress (2001) in their classic text on medical ethics. They also identified the following additional principles as relevant for professional–patient relationships:

1. *Veracity*—Tell the truth and do not lie or deceive others.
2. *Privacy*—Allow individuals to limit access to information about themselves.
3. *Confidentiality*—Allow individuals to control access to information they have shared.

Collectively, the ACA principles and those offered by Beauchamp and Childress (2001), including their suggestions for professional–patient relationships, provide guidelines for ethical behavior in career counseling services. The principles are the basis for mandatory ethical standards, those behaviors of the counselor that can be enforced, whereas aspirational ethics refer to the highest standards of conduct to which career counseling professionals can aspire (Herlihy & Corey, 2006, 2015). Herlihy and Watson (2006) suggest that virtue ethics as contrasted with principle ethics are necessary to produce a culturally sensitive approach to making ethical decisions. Herlihy and Corey offer the following as virtue ethics (distilled from the literature on virtue ethics):

- Discernment or prudence
- Respectfulness
- Integrity
- Self-awareness
- Acknowledgement of the role of emotion
- Connectedness with the community

When questions arise pertaining to proper practice, these principles can be used to help career-counseling professionals identify appropriate behaviors. Career counselors should feel especially comfortable with the principles of autonomy and beneficence because they represent the hallmarks of career counseling at its best. Finally, it is worth noting that despite the various purposes and audiences to which ethical codes and principles are addressed, ethical codes and statements for the major psychologically based helping professions (counseling, psychology, and clinical social work) are remarkably similar. According to the ethical standards for the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) (2010), the following steps should be taken when there is doubt about the ethical behavior of a colleague(s): (a) consult confidentially with a professional colleague, (b) when possible, confront the colleague whose behavior is in question, (c) document all action steps taken, (d) utilize the established channels for addressing ethical concerns (e.g., within the school, agency, or school district, and relevant state ethics board), and (e) if the matter remains unresolved, contact the relevant state professional association (e.g., state school counselor association) and/or national association (e.g., American School Counselor Association, National Career Development Association, American Psychological Association).

However, some ethical questions and decisions related to career interventions cannot be easily resolved by reference to ethical codes that were written to address therapeutic. Some of those issues in career interventions have their basis in values that are often the basis of aspirational and virtue ethics.

The Role of Values in Defining Career Development Interventions

Learning Outcome 15.3 Understand the role of values in career development interventions.

Values assumptions underlie all questions (and answers) related to ethical behavior in career development interventions. Values assumptions are particularly relevant regarding the counselor's and the client's understanding, and definition, of the career-counseling relationship. Bergin (1985) suggests, "values are orienting beliefs about what is good for the clients and how that good should be achieved" (p. 99). As such, value issues permeate the career development intervention process. Any intervention in the life space or lifestyle of people carries with it values implications (London, 1964). The need for practitioners to clearly understand their own values represents an essential starting point for career services delivery and is an ethical issue within career services. Because value-free career interventions do not exist, career practitioners must be cognizant of how their personal values influence their work with clients.

Tjeltveit (1986, pp. 515–537) suggests the following strategies for minimizing the likelihood of counselors behaving in ways that are insensitive to clients' values:

1. Become informed about the variety of values held in society.
2. Be aware of your own values.
3. Present value options to clients in an unbiased manner.
4. Be committed to clients' freedom of choice.
5. Respect clients with values that differ from your own.
6. Consult with others when necessary.
7. Consider referring clients to another counselor when substantial moral, religious, or political value differences exist.

When career counseling professionals incorporate Tjeltveit's strategies into their daily practice, they go a long way toward ensuring that their interventions will be ethical. Career counselors must constantly monitor their own values and how those values affect their career interventions.

Tjeltveit's suggestions to consult with professional colleagues and to refer clients to more appropriate service providers when necessary also apply to instances in which the client's concerns extend beyond the traditional issues of clarifying, specifying, and implementing a career choice. For example, it is increasingly evident that adults in career transition experience ego dystonic emotions that must be addressed within the career counseling process (Anderson & Niles, 1995; Subich, 1993). When clients' concerns include depressive feelings, low self-esteem, low self-efficacy, and so on, career practitioners need to evaluate whether they are competent to address such issues. In this regard, Niles and Pate (1989) argue that a career practitioner must, at the minimum, be able to identify mental health issues presented by a client. Once such issues are identified, the career practitioner must determine whether it is appropriate to refer the client to a mental health practitioner (if the career practitioner does not feel competent to deal with these issues, then a referral is the ethical decision) or address the client's mental health issues within the context of career counseling.

The ACA *Code of Ethics* (ACA, 2014) requires that counseling including career development interventions also requires counselors to be aware of the client's values and the values embedded

in career development intervention models. Each of these value sets (i.e., the counselor's, the client's, and the values embedded in interventions) interacts. Personal values influence such dynamics as the client behaviors the practitioner attends to in the career-counseling process and the intervention strategies selected by the practitioner. Career practitioners communicate personal values through nonverbal and verbal behavior. Thus, the counselor's values can inadvertently influence the client's behavior. For example, if a client seeks to earn the counselor's approval, the client may opt for career options that the client perceives will please the counselor and disregard other factors in the career decision-making process. In such instances, a career practitioner can unknowingly convert a client to the counselor's values.

Referring to counseling and psychotherapy, Herr and Niles (1988) noted that:

> Western therapies have a particular way of looking at and processing human behavior; Eastern therapies have a different way of defining such behavior and planning interventions. One is not a substitute for the other because value sets, assumptions, and cultural artifacts make some forms of counseling and psychotherapy unacceptable or ineffective in cultures different from those in which such interventions were invented. (p. 14)

This statement applies to career interventions as well. Career intervention models based on European American values emphasizing individualism do not mesh with family expectations or traditions in societies in which group decisions are the norm and the family is the principle arbiter of appropriate occupational choices. Thus, a career-counseling professional adhering to European American career intervention models steeped in individual action runs the risk of violating clients' values when those values reflect a collectivistic orientation. An illustration of this point is provided by the career-counseling case of Kenji.

Having recently relocated to the United States from China, Kenji came to the guidance office during his senior year in high school with the concern of whether poor performance in his physics and math courses would prevent him from being able to major in engineering in college. In the course of meeting with Kenji, it became obvious to the counselor that, although his concerns were projected toward a college major in engineering, his interests and abilities pointed toward a program of study in a nonscience area. In fact, he had failed physics and just barely passed several math courses. He thoroughly enjoyed the social sciences and had performed well in classes related to this area. When asked to discuss his tentative decision to pursue a college major in engineering, it quickly became apparent that his decision was based on the plans his father had made for him. When asked about the appropriateness of this goal, given his prior academic performance and his interests, it was clear that Kenji was not about to enlarge the range of options under consideration.

A counselor who believes Kenji should adhere to the need for students to develop traditional European American career development values of individual action and an internal locus of control may decide to use a counseling strategy that would challenge Kenji's tendency to adhere to the wishes of others (his father in this case) in his career decision making. The projected treatment plan may even include assertiveness training with the goal of having Kenji confront his father about his career development goals. Unfortunately, this type of career counseling strategy is not sensitive to Kenji's culture of origin in which it is not uncommon for fathers to dominate the career decision-making of their sons. Any attempts to influence Kenji's career direction would need to include sensitivity to this very important cultural dynamic. (Interestingly, after the case of Kenji was developed from a composite of the authors' experiences, one of the authors discovered

a novel with a plot strikingly similar in many ways to the case [Lee, 1994]. We believe the case of Kenji is based on experiences that are, unfortunately, too common.)

The case of José, presented at the beginning of this chapter, also illustrates the potential for value conflicts among the counselor, José's family, and José. If José becomes acculturated into European American values of individualistic action but his father maintains a collectivistic orientation toward José's career development, then, as with Kenji, the counselor will need to be sensitive to these culturally based values interactions. Such value conflicts illustrate that career development practitioners must be sensitive to the interaction among their personal values, the values prized by the client, and the value sets embedded within specific career counseling models. The latter often reflect the values promulgated at the national level.

Because career development interventions promote specific values, national governments vary in their support and expectations of career interventions. Super (1983) notes that countries that are relatively prosperous and free from the threat of outside interventions tend to view career development interventions as vehicles for fostering the individual's abilities, personal values, and interests. Conversely, countries experiencing economic hardships or the possible threat of outside intervention tend to view career development interventions as vehicles for channeling people into occupations deemed as being crucial for national survival. In the United States, the Soviet Union's *Sputnik* program provides an example of the latter. Feeling threatened by the apparent superiority of Soviet space technology in the late 1950s, the U.S. government focused funding and legislative efforts on directing young people into science-related occupations. More recently, the shifting winds of the political climate in the United States have resulted in funding support at the national level for increasing the talent pipeline into science/technology/engineering/math (STEM) occupations. Often, career development programs, initiatives, and interventions "follow the money" or the financial support that government provides for such initiatives.

In summary, avoiding unethical practice in career development interventions requires career development practitioners to be sensitive to the assumptions underlying their personal values, their clients' values, career interventions models, and the values being prioritized at the national level at any point in time (Herr & Niles, 1988). Practicing only within one's area of training and competence is an additional requirement for ethical practice in the career development intervention process. Again, we offer the suggestion of consultation with professional colleagues because counselors may need help to objectively judge their competence. When professional career practitioners possess value awareness, use ethical principles in their professional decision-making, and adhere to the relevant ethical codes, they increase the likelihood that they will function ethically in providing career development interventions to their clients.

Using Ethical Codes

Learning Outcome 15.4 Know how to use ethical codes

Many believe that there are too many ethical codes and that we should move toward a unified ethics code for the counseling profession (Herlihy & Remley, 1995). Most readers of this chapter are, or will be, subject to the ethical codes of the ACA (2014), the NCDA (2015), the APA (2017), the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (1995), and/or the ASCA (2010).

We agree with the position that too many ethical codes exist, and we hope that at some future time the counseling profession will move toward a model of a single ethics code with annotations or appendices for special situations and areas of practice. However, we doubt that the multiple codes themselves are the source of ethics violations. There are many situations that are unique to specialized areas of counseling practice, such as career counseling. The authors commend those responsible for the NCDA *Code of Ethics* and for structuring the code to be compatible with the ACA code while making the code profession specific for NCDA members. Likewise, the authors of the NCDA code recognized that many career practitioners are associated with professional associations in addition to or instead of ACA. This effort is an important step in addressing the problems of multiple codes identified by Herlihy and Remley (1995).

In the previous edition of this text we discussed three areas for which we found the then-current ethical codes inadequate to provide direction for career counseling professionals: (a) the definition of a career counseling relationship, given the fact that not all career interventions constitute therapy; (b) ethical standards for the appropriate and proper role of those who provide career counseling services but are not professionally trained counselors; and (c) the ethical use of the Internet to provide or enhance services. These three areas demand greater attention in professional training and workshops. They also present important challenges to be addressed by the profession.

Progress on Ethical Challenges Facing Career Counselors

This section reviews and explores recent progress on the three challenges that we identified in our previous edition. The issues are: (a) whether all career interventions are counseling relationships subject to the ethical standards of counseling; (b) the proper role of those who have training and experience in career interventions but do not have the training, education, and experience that are accepted as essential for one to be a professional counselor; and (c) the proper use of Internet technology in career interventions. We have considered the existing ethical codes lacking in adequate guidance for career counselors in these areas, and we have been bold enough to offer suggestions about needed clarifications. We are happy to report that progress has been made in each of the areas, and we offer the following progress report, which demonstrates that ethical codes are as they should be: dynamic and responsive to current situations.

Are All Individual Career Interventions Governed by the Same Ethical Standards?

An area of continuing ethical concern is personal relationships with clients. Confidentiality, counseling relationships, professional responsibility, and relationships with other professionals consistently remain at the top of the list of inquiries received by the American Counseling Association (ACA) Ethics Committee (Glosoff & Freeman, 2007; Herlihy & Corey, 2015). Some ethical requirements are clear and unambiguous. For example, sexual relationships between career counselors and their clients are unethical. However, situations exist in which the expected ethical behavior is not so clearly defined. For example, the psychologically based helping professions are not uniform in their view of how much time must elapse before a "helper" might make a case that an intimate relationship with a former client was not exploitative. We believe

that career counselors are professional counselors with specialized education and experience in career interventions (Niles & Pate, 1989). However, there are many questions about the nature of helping relationships that focus on career issues. Career counseling professionals within and outside of educational settings often provide services that are typically not considered therapy. For example, consider the case of a career counseling professional in a university career center who reviews a résumé for a graduate student of the same age. Some weeks later, they meet at a social event and begin a social relationship. Is that relationship subject to the same ethical scrutiny as a relationship that involved multiple sessions of counseling in a university counseling center and complex career issues? Reasonable counseling professionals might offer different answers.

Additional complications in determining proper action can arise because the specific requirements of many laws governing counselor behavior are far from clear, and the standards of practice incorporated in the regulations of many states are inconsistent with the ethical codes they resemble. For example, the regulations of the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Counseling (2007) contain a standards of practice section. Included in that section is a statement about sexual relationships:

> Counselors shall not engage in any type of sexual intimacies with clients or those included in a collateral relationship with the client and not counsel persons with whom they have had a sexual relationship. Counselors shall not engage in sexual intimacies with former clients within a minimum of five years after terminating the counseling relationship. Counselors who engage in such relationships after five years following termination shall have the responsibility to examine and document thoroughly that such relations do not have an exploitive nature, based on factors such as duration of counseling, amount of time since counseling, termination circumstances, client's personal history and mental status, or adverse impact on the client. A client's consent to, initiation of or participation in sexual behavior or involvement with a counselor does not change the nature of the conduct nor lift the regulatory prohibition. (p.15)

The ACA *Code of Ethics* (2014) similarly addresses sexual relationships between counselors and clients:

> **A.5. Roles and Relationships with Clients**
>
> (See F.3., F.10., G.3.)
>
> **A.5.a. Current Clients**
>
> Sexual or romantic counselor–client interactions or relationships with current clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited.
>
> **A.5.b. Former Clients**
>
> Sexual or romantic counselor–client interactions or relationships with former clients, their romantic partners, or their family members are prohibited for a period of 5 years following the last professional contact.
>
> Counselors, before engaging in sexual or romantic interactions or relationships with clients, their romantic partners, or client family members after 5 years following the last professional contact, demonstrate forethought and document (in written form) whether the interactions or relationship can be viewed as exploitive in some way and/or whether there is still potential to harm the former client; in cases of potential exploitation and/or harm, the counselor avoids entering such an interaction or relationship.

A.5.c. Nonprofessional Interactions or Relationships (Other Than Sexual or Romantic Interactions or Relationships)

Counselor–client nonprofessional relationships with clients, former clients, their romantic partners, or their family members should be avoided, except when the interaction is potentially beneficial to the client. (*See A.5.d.*)

A career practitioner might have previously believed or asserted that engaging in an intimate personal relationship with a former client was permissible because, as in the previous résumé critique example, the professional service was not counseling. However, the same career counselor (who would be required to be licensed if she practiced privately in Virginia and called herself a counselor) might be judged to have behaved unethically by those with different interpretations of the ethical requirements. Likewise, a career counseling professional might have believed that the 2-year standard could apply to begin to make a case that an intimate relationship was nonexploitive (APA, 2017).

The NCDA *Code of Ethics* (2015) recognizes in section A.1.b. that career counseling professionals provide different types of services. The responsibility of all career counseling professionals to provide only those services within the scope of their competence and qualifications is made explicit. Although the discrepancy between the APA (2017) "two-year standard" and the ACA and NCDA 5-year standard for sexual intimacy to even be defended as other than exploitive continues, section A.5.b of the NCDA code makes the 5-year limitation applicable to all career counseling professionals. The issue has been addressed clearly and explicitly. All career counseling professionals are subject to the code in their professional activities.

Should Those Without Traditional Training and Credentials as Professional Career Counselors Provide Career Counseling Services?

The issue of the proper role of those providing career-counseling services (e.g., providing career information, career advising) without the customary training and credentials for professional counseling relates to managed care and third-party payers because many professional counselors depend on those sources for their livelihood. These counselors are understandably concerned about anything that would make the competence of those delivering counseling services subject to question. However, many consider prohibiting persons with appropriate talents and skills from providing the services for which they are qualified as itself an unethical and unnecessary restraint. Still others contend that having any person other than a fully qualified counselor provide any career counseling services is a threat to client welfare and the reputation of the counseling profession. These are contentious issues within the profession. Regardless of one's opinion, the reality is that many individuals engage in providing career counseling services with little or no formal training in career development theory and practice. Moreover, many of these individuals have no training in the helping professions. Counselor and psychology licensure laws typically do not prohibit unlicensed individuals from providing training in job search skills, résumé writing, and so on.

Section A.1.b. of the NCDA *Code of Ethics* (2015), mentioned previously, recognizes that career-counseling professionals provide different types of services. That same section makes it obligatory for career-counseling professionals to make explicit the limits of the services for which they are competent and qualified and which they can offer. As explained, the section that

addresses sexual intimacy with former clients also makes explicit the obligation of all career counseling professionals to follow the *Code of Ethics*. Likewise, section A.1.c. makes clear the obligation of all career counseling professionals to engage only in nonprofessional interactions that are beneficial to their clients.

Great progress has been made. NCDA has recognized, by supporting training and credentialing for Global Career Development Facilitators (GCDF), and more recently the Certified Career Services Professional (CCSP), that there are persons who, although they are not trained as professional counselors, can provide career-counseling services. The NCDA *Code of Ethics* (2015) has made those who are recognized as career-counseling professionals subject to the code. The basic question has been answered; but the challenge of the many who provide career-counseling services who are not subject to the NCDA, or any other, ethical code remains as a concern to all career counseling professionals and a potential threat to the clients who are unaware of the distinctions among those offering career counseling services.

How Should the Internet Be Used in Career Development Interventions?

The dimensions of the Internet counseling controversy are in many ways similar to the issues in endorsing career interventions by the untrained or undertrained professional counselor. Most counselors acknowledge the potential of the Internet as a source of information that can be accessed by people who might not have access to other sources of the information (Kettunen & Makela, 2019; Sampson, Osborn, Kettunen, Hou, Miller, & Makela, 2018). They also recognize the superiority, breadth, depth, and currency of the information available through the Internet. Sampson and his colleagues note that while variability in career information validity has long been an issue, the rapid growth in the use of social media creates some unique challenges in this regard:

> The ease with which social media–based career information can spread creates the potential for rapid widespread dissemination of disinformation and biased perceptions. Potential sources of invalidity include intentional bias (with or without profit motive), unintentional bias, restricted range of experience, out-of-date information, popularity bias, similarity bias, and context deficiency. (p. 121)

They argue that to help differentiate between useful information and disinformation, career counselors need to be actively engaged in the use of social media, practitioner training programs need to address this topic, and practitioners need to be competent and ethical in including the use of social media in service delivery (Kettunen & Makela, 2019).

Assessment and Copyright Considerations

Although some copyright issues about information and assessment are provided through the Internet, ethical issues most often arise when the services are considered to be professional counseling. Many career counselors define counseling as face-to-face contact, and that ends the consideration. Others allow the possibility that some career counseling services (e.g., information) might be provided through the Internet, but they wonder about regulation. How can service providers potentially thousands of miles from the person helped be accountable? Does the practitioner possess valid credentials to provide services both in the state where he resides and in the state where the client resides? What precautions is the practitioner taking to safeguard the client's

information? The questions are many. NCDA developed guidelines for the use of the Internet for providing career information and planning services (NCDA, 1997). In addition, NCDA published a guide to using the Internet in career planning (Sampson, Dikel, & Osborn, 2012). These guidelines acknowledge that the Internet can be used in four ways for the purpose of providing career counseling services to clients:

1. To deliver occupational information
2. To provide online searches of occupational databases for the purpose of identifying occupational options
3. To deliver interactive career counseling and career planning services
4. To provide online job searches

These four purposes are subject to guidelines that address a variety of ethical issues. For example, the qualifications of the website developer or provider must be clearly stated on the site. Clients have the right to be informed about the expertise and experience of the career counseling professional. Moreover, the career-counseling professional must not use a false e-mail identity when interacting with clients. The provider must clearly state the appropriate uses (and limitations) of the website. The career counseling professional must appropriately screen clients to determine whether the client can benefit from using the online services provided. The career counseling professional must also provide adequate support for the client via periodic telephone contact or videoconferencing.

Providing telecareer counseling services to clients in other geographical locations presents a variety of challenges to the service provider. For instance, the career counseling professional has the obligation to be aware of local conditions, cultures, and events that may have an impact on the client using the online services. The career counseling professional must also be able to refer clients to local practitioners when the client is in need of additional services. Internet providers of career counseling services must also ensure that the content of the website is current and appropriate for use in electronic form. Current online information is especially critical when the service includes online job searching. The costs of all services provided must be clearly stated. When the services include assessment instruments, only assessments with adequate psychometric evidence of their reliability and validity may be used. The issues of confidentiality and storage of client data must be clearly addressed on the website.

The use of the Internet to provide career counseling services increases each day. With its increased use, career-counseling practitioners are consistently presented with new ethical issues in services delivery. Adhering to guidelines offered by NCDA, consulting with others and having external consultants evaluate online services are some strategies career counseling practitioners can use to ensure that their online services are ethical. Clearly, this mode of services delivery will continue to present practitioners with ethical dilemmas as its use increases in the future.

The Ethical Standards of NCDA

Learning Outcome 15.5 Understand the ethical standards of NCDA

Last, but certainly not least important, we focus directly on the ethical standards of NCDA (2015) and offer what we hope will be a summary of ethics for career-counseling professionals. We have included the introduction to each of the nine main sections of the NCDA code, and we urge careful reading of the entire code included as Appendix A.

Section A: The Professional Relationship

Career professionals facilitate client growth and development in ways that foster the interest and welfare of clients and promote formation of healthy relationships. Trust is the cornerstone of the professional relationship and career professionals have the responsibility to respect and safeguard the client's right to privacy and confidentiality. Career professionals actively attempt to understand the diverse cultural backgrounds of the individuals they serve. Career professionals also explore their own cultural identities and how these affect their values and beliefs about the working relationship. Career professionals are encouraged to contribute to society by devoting a portion of their professional activity to services for which there is little or no financial return (*pro bono publico*).

Section B: Confidentiality, Privileged Communication, and Privacy

Career professionals recognize that trust is a cornerstone of the professional relationship. Career professionals work to earn the trust of clients by creating an ongoing partnership, establishing and upholding appropriate boundaries, and maintaining confidentiality. Career professionals communicate the parameters of confidentiality in a culturally competent manner.

Section C: Professional Responsibility

Career professionals provide open, honest, and accurate communication in dealing with the public and other professionals. They practice in a nondiscriminatory manner within the boundaries of professional and personal competence and have a responsibility to abide by the NCDA *Code of Ethics* (2015). Career professionals actively participate in local, state, and national associations that foster the development and improvement of the provision of career services. Career professionals are encouraged to promote change at the individual, group, institutional, and societal levels in ways that improve the quality of life for individuals and groups and remove potential barriers to the provision or access of appropriate services being offered. Career professionals have a responsibility to the public to engage in ethical practice. Career professionals engage in professional practices that are based on rigorous research methodologies. Career professionals are encouraged to contribute to society by devoting a portion of their professional activity to services for which there is little or no financial return (*pro bono publico*). In addition, career professionals engage in self-care activities to maintain and promote their emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual well-being to best meet their professional responsibilities.

Section D: Relationships with Other Professionals

Career professionals recognize that the quality of their interactions with colleagues can influence the quality of services provided to clients. They work to become knowledgeable about colleagues within and outside the profession. Career professionals develop positive working relationships and systems of communication with colleagues to enhance services to clients. Career professionals may provide coaching and/or consultation to individuals, groups, or organizations. If career professionals perform such services, they must provide only the services that are within the scope of their professional competence and qualifications.

Section E: Evaluation, Assessment, and Interpretation

Career professionals use assessment instruments as one component of the career services process, taking into account the client's personal and cultural context. Career professionals promote the well-being of individual clients or groups of clients by developing and using appropriate career, educational, and psychological assessment instruments.

Section F: Providing Career Services Online, Technology, and Social Media

Career professionals actively attempt to understand the evolving nature of the profession with regard to providing career services online using technology and/or social media, and how such resources may be used to better serve their clients. Career professionals strive to become knowledgeable about these resources, recognizing that periodic training is needed to develop necessary technical and professional competencies. Career professionals understand the additional concerns related to providing career services online and using technology and/or social media, and make every attempt to protect confidentiality and data security, ensure transparency and equitable treatment of clients, and meet any legal and ethical requirements for the use of such resources.

Section G: Supervision, Training, and Teaching

Career professionals foster meaningful and respectful professional relationships and maintain appropriate boundaries with supervisees and students. Career professionals have theoretical and pedagogical foundations for their work and aim to be fair, accurate, and honest in their assessments of other career professionals, students, and supervisees.

Section H: Research and Publication

Career professionals who conduct research are encouraged to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession and promote a clearer understanding of the conditions that lead to a healthy and more just society. Career professionals support efforts of researchers by participating fully and willingly whenever possible. Career professionals minimize bias and respect diversity in designing and implementing research programs.

Section I: Resolving Ethical Issues

Career professionals behave in a legal, ethical, and moral manner in the conduct of their professional work. They are aware that client protection and trust in the profession depend on a high level of professional conduct. They hold other career professionals to the same standards and are willing to take appropriate action to ensure that these standards are upheld. Career professionals work to resolve ethical dilemmas with direct and open communication among all parties involved and seek consultation with colleagues and supervisors when necessary. Career professionals incorporate ethical practice into their daily work. They engage in ongoing learning and development regarding current topics in ethical and legal issues in the profession.

If you have not read the NCDA *Code of Ethics* (2015), please stop now and read the code in Appendix A before you proceed. As you read these standards, it is important to be aware of the fact that ethical statements contain both mandatory and aspirational standards. The authors' reading of the NCDA, IAEVG, APA, ACA, ASCA, GCDF, and other ethical statements suggests variation primarily among the aspirational standards (i.e., standards that reflect the philosophy of the profession but are not easily enforceable). There is, in our interpretation, more consistency across ethical codes regarding the mandatory standards.

Based on our interpretation of multiple ethical codes, we offer standards that are central to ethical standards and ethical practice. These standards are each based on an overriding principle of concern for the welfare of the client. Maintaining an overriding concern for client welfare means that career counselors must constantly test all potential actions they take against the principles of promoting client autonomy, promoting client good, never acting to harm a client, promoting equal treatment of those similarly situated and adapting services based on client needs, and keeping promises to clients. As a result of the enhanced emphasis on advocacy and social justice in the ACA and NCDA codes of ethics, we offer the following as critical ethical concepts for career professionals:

1. Career professionals offer only services they are competent to offer. Competence includes training, supervised experience, and some external validation of that competence. This includes all counseling techniques and strategies, assessment devices, and technology-assisted counseling.
2. Career professionals respect and value individual differences among clients and potential clients. To respect and value these differences, it is necessary for counselors to study ways to serve diverse populations.
3. Career professionals treat information received from and about clients as owned by the client and held in trust by the counselor. Such information is revealed only with the consent of the client, when required by law, or to protect the client or others from harm. The basis of career professionals' relationships with clients is the assumption that their communications will be respected as confidential.
4. The career professional does not engage in any professional relationship in which the counselor's objectivity and ability to work solely for the welfare of the client might be impaired. This includes but is not limited to intimate emotional and physical relationships. Professionals must anticipate how potential nonprofessional relationships could possibly lead to future ethical conflicts and take action to avoid future problems.
5. Career professionals assume professional responsibility for clients, and if they are unable to assist, they help the client to obtain alternative services. This requirement extends to assisting clients who cannot, or do not, pay for services as agreed, and for providing services when the career counselor is not available.
6. Career professionals recognize that they have obligations to other members of the profession and to society to act in responsible ways and to consider the effects of their behavior on others. This requirement extends to research and publication, to online services, and to business relationships, so that counselors do not use their profession for inappropriate financial gain (e.g., diverting clients from a provided service to a private practice).

Career professionals are advocates for their clients and for social justice. The latest revision of the NCDA (2015) ethical standards recognizes career professionals' responsibility for advocacy on behalf of their clients and for social justice. The chapters of this book leave no doubt that work is a vital component of people's ability to achieve their potential to contribute to society. Advocacy for career professionals can range from appropriate advocacy for individual clients to advocacy for changes that expand the opportunities for all and remove barriers to employment. The ethical principle of justice suggests that career professionals have a special obligation to work to ensure that those who are equal on criteria related to any selection are treated equally, and that those who have potential that might not be recognized without encouragement and assistance receive the appropriate encouragement and assistance from career professionals. This is a statement of aspirational and virtue ethics that is difficult, if not impossible, to mandate for enforcement. However, we believe career professionals not only have the unique expertise to advocate for expanded and equal access to meaningful and rewarding work, but that they also have an ethical obligation to do so.

Using an Ethical Decision-Making Model

The information we have provided in this chapter thus far provides useful information for understanding the various dilemmas that career practitioners often confront. Integrating this information into an ethical decision-making model will also guide you in determining a specific course of action to take when you encounter such dilemmas. Forester-Miller and Davis (1996) provide an ethical decision-making model for professional counselors that can be applied to career counseling. Specifically, they identify the following steps in ethical decision making:

1. Identify the problem.
2. Apply the NCDA *Code of Ethics*.
3. Determine the nature and dimensions of the dilemma.
4. Generate possible courses of action.
5. Consider the potential consequences of all options and choose a course of action.
6. Evaluate the selected course of action.
7. Implement the course of action selected.

In identifying the problem, career counseling practitioners should gather extensive information to clarify the ethical concern. Being specific, objective, and factual will help remove bias and opinion from the problem being identified. Forester-Miller and Davis (1996) recommend considering the following questions: Is it an ethical, legal, professional, or clinical problem? Is it a combination of more than one of these? Is the issue related to me and what I am or am not doing? Is it related to a client and/or the client's significant others and what they are or are not doing? Is it related to the institution or agency and its policies and procedures?

After you have clarified the problem, refer to the NCDA *Code of Ethics* (2015) to see if the issue is addressed there. If so, then follow the course of action described by the standard. "If the problem is more complex and a resolution does not seem apparent, then you probably have a true ethical dilemma and need to proceed with further steps in the ethical decision making process" (Forester-Miller & Davis, 1996). In the latter case, consider the moral principles described previously in this chapter (e.g., autonomy, nonmaleficence, etc.) to determine if any apply to the current dilemma. Draw upon the professional literature for guidance in deciding a course of action.

To determine the nature of the dilemma and to generate possible courses of action, it is helpful to consult with experienced professional colleagues and/or supervisors. They may be able to provide alternative viewpoints, or they may identify additional dimensions regarding the situation. Consulting with the ethics professional within the relevant professional association (e.g., ASCA, ACA, APA) is also an important consultative step.

Use the information gathered through this process to generate several potential courses of action. It may also be helpful to involve a colleague in this process. Brainstorm as many courses of action as possible and consider the potential consequences of each action. Evaluate each potential course of action relative to its impact on your client, you, and others. Consider whether the course of action creates any additional ethical concerns. Review whether the course of action is fair, whether it is the sort of action that you would recommend to others in a similar situation, and whether you would be comfortable if the public knew about the course of action should you take it (Forester-Miller & Davis, 1996).

Once an appropriate course of action has been identified, it should be implemented. Forester-Miller and Davis (1996) recommend that, after implementing your course of action, it is important to assess whether your actions had the anticipated effect and consequences.

SUMMARY

The need for career-counseling professionals to be vigilant in providing interventions that are ethical is, perhaps, obvious. Unfortunately, ethical practice itself is not always obvious. Career development practitioners and, most important, their clients, will be best served when practitioners use multiple strategies to guide their ethical decision-making. Using ethical principles, possessing values awareness, and adhering to the relevant ethical codes (e.g., those published by the NCDA, ACA, APA, ASCA, GCDF, and IAEVG) are strategies that career counseling professionals can use to increase the probability that they will engage in proper practice. We recommend the use of the strategies for ethical practice that are discussed in this chapter. Whenever possible, we also encourage readers to discuss their questions and concerns with trusted and respected consultants. Discussion of these issues will provide multiple perspectives related to each issue presented.

What do you think would be proper behavior of the career counselor faced with the following challenges?

1. A school counselor has reservations about military service. The father of the client, whom the counselor knows to be caring and concerned, asks the counselor about giving his child information about military service as a means to help the child become more mature and live up to his high potential. The counselor knows the child has high potential but lacks self-discipline. The counselor tends to agree with the father but questions the military as the source of that discipline.
2. A small career counseling services office counselor helps a second-year, 32-year-old college student write a résumé and then has no further contact with the student until the counselor enrolls in a yoga class in which the student is also enrolled. The student asks the counselor to go for coffee after class.
3. A career counselor in private practice is counseling an executive about her career plans. She shares information about her excitement concerning an offer she will accept and tells the counselor about the IPO Corporation and her anticipation of a position with stock options. The client believes the stock options will multiply over a short term. The counseling is terminated, and the counselor wonders about an

investment in IPO. The counselor does not think there is a counseling dilemma because the gain or loss could not affect the terminated counseling relationship.

4. A high school counselor meets with a student who is excited about military service due to recent advertisements about the military service providing resources for higher education. The student has no resources for further study and no potential family support. The student has great potential, but the counselor is concerned about recent press information about the military attitude toward gays and lesbians in the military. Rumors about the young person's sexual orientation abound in the school, but the counselor has no information that the student has ever mentioned her sexuality.
5. An elementary school counselor is planning career-related activities and has arranged a class trip to a large, nearby dairy that has supported the school. A parent objects not only to his child's participation but also to any participation of the school because the parent believes dairy farming is an unethical exploitation of animals. The parent has written the local press and has been on call-in radio objecting to the school serving milk, in spite of meetings with officials that have demonstrated legal requirements for serving milk in lunch programs.

Case Study

Molly is an 18-year-old college freshman experiencing substantial stress related to her inability to identify a college major. Her father, a CEO of a large pharmaceutical company, has told her to major in business to prepare for working within his company when she graduates. Molly's mother, a painter, has been silent about her expectations for Molly. Molly feels that her father is overbearing and her mother is nonsupportive. Molly's struggles have resulted in her experiencing depression and a sense of urgency about how to resolve her dilemma. She lacks academic motivation and has been spending afternoons smoking pot and listening to music. Recently, she and her younger sister, Susan, have concocted a plan to leave school and home to travel throughout Europe. They have already saved money for this experience and plan on simply leaving without informing their parents. At the same time, you have recently received an e-mail from Molly's father, who would like to meet with you during the upcoming Parents' Weekend.

Molly's father wants to discuss Molly's career plans. Molly wants your advice about her trip to Europe. What potential ethical issues do you foresee?

Student Activities

1. Identify which of the following topics could present personal ethical/moral issues for you in your work as a career counselor.
   - A student who wants to explore a career in the military
   - A client whose religious beliefs lead him to conclude that a "woman's place is in the home"
   - A parent who wants you to convince her child to pursue a career in engineering because the student is good at math
   - A student who firmly believes she should choose the occupation her parents have identified for her, despite the fact that she has no interest in this occupation

- An acquaintance who is out of work but asks you to provide career counseling in exchange for him performing some light maintenance work around your home
- A mother of a student for whom you are a school counselor who asks you to tell her which educational options her daughter is considering
- An adult college student for whom you once provided a résumé critique who (unbeknownst to you) has been asked to play on your YMCA volleyball team

2. What are the similarities and differences between the ethical standards for the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (1995) and the ethical standards for the National Career Development Association (2015)?