

I N T E R N A T I O N A L  
**P R I M A L**  
A S S O C I A T I O N  
*Supporting Growth and Healing Through Deep Feeling Process*

## Code of Ethics

October 2007

### Membership Guidelines

#### Ethical Guidelines for Primal Integration Educators

#### Safe Group Process Guidelines

#### Safe Conflict Resolution Guidelines

#### IPA Board Responsibility If Safety is Undermined

These Guidelines reflect the IPA's commitment to foster relational environments that are conducive to the experience, exploration, education, research and promotion of deep-feeling therapies, and personal expression, growth and healing.

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### Membership Guidelines

1. Members shall respect the personal space and boundaries of others and undertake deep feeling work in a safe, contained manner.
2. Members shall endeavor to integrate the insights gained through their primal integration process in their daily lives, with particular regard to their relationships with others.
3. Members shall be sensitive and respectful to all forms of diversity, including but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, ability, nationality and country of origin, taking into consideration that members of particular groups traditionally have been the object of discrimination and oppression.
4. Members shall not divulge information about others obtained in confidence (e.g., workshops, circles, gatherings) to anyone without the expressed consent of the persons involved.
5. Members shall be sensitive when approaching someone to talk about their life and personal process, taking into consideration that not everyone is ready to speak about personal information outside workshops/circles settings.
6. Members shall not present themselves as representatives of the organization unless so authorized.
7. Members in elected positions, workshop leaders and those persons representing the IPA shall strive to be an example of the standard of conduct expected from all members.

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# **Ethical Guidelines for Primal Integration Educators**

## **Statement of Principles**

While not being a regulatory body, the IPA expects primal integration educators to exhibit ethical conduct and attitudes. It also seeks to help inform society at large of what constitutes the best practices in primal integration. Developing this information is an ongoing process.

Attempts to promote ethical conduct and attitudes include:

1. Articulating and promoting ethical principles, values and standards.
2. Researching and promoting the best practices in primal integration.
3. Developing tools to help primal integration educators monitor and evaluate their practice.
4. Responding to complaints of unethical behavior.

Primal integration draws upon many therapeutic modalities and primal integration educators come from various training backgrounds. These may include formal academic training in fields such as psychology, social work, counseling, education, medicine, and other training such as obtained through personal study, participation in workshops, seminars, specific training programs, and internships.

## **Guidelines**

Primal Integration Educators, especially those who are part of the IPA's referral list, either as an IPA Certified Practitioner or as a Member Facilitator, are expected to adhere to the highest ethical standards.

Primal Integration Educators:

1. in all cases should have experienced a personal primal integration process to a degree or extent that reasonably maximizes client safety and reasonably minimizes therapeutic error;
2. value and demonstrate self-knowledge, integrity, accountability and respect;
3. are encouraged to continue their personal healing process;
4. should be aware of the limitations of deep feeling process and make appropriate referrals when necessary;
5. should provide the necessary information to individuals and groups, who are seeking their services, to ensure that they can make an informed decision with regard to their personal healing through primal work;
6. should be aware of the particular challenges faced by members of minority groups that are often the target of oppression and discrimination, and adjust their approach accordingly;
7. should maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries;
8. should have in place a process for conflict resolution;
9. sometimes are present at or in an IPA event or forum at the same time as a client. At such times the Primal Integration Educator should attempt to ensure that the therapeutic relationship is preserved by taking appropriate steps;

10. should receive regular supervision;
11. are encouraged to maintain and enhance the quality of professional knowledge and experience by participating in workshops, seminars and conferences.



## **Safe Group Process Guidelines**

*The IPA is a self-regulating community. Gatherings, meetings and special events offer to members a chance to come together, share, provide support to one another, learn, grow and heal. These guidelines exist to maintain safe process and communications and to help with the resolution of conflicts that may occasionally arise.*

### **Statement of Principles**

1. A sense of safety is of paramount importance for healthy primal process and communication.
2. Safety arises when confidentiality is respected and when the environment is free of endangering behaviors such as threats or actual physical and emotional harm, slander, libel, vendettas, aggressive forms of attention, sexual harassment, stalking, attacking, blaming, criticizing, judging individuals or groups, shaming, insulting, unsolicited advising, patronizing, projecting, withdrawing, withholding, or using indirect contempt such as sarcasm, condescension and ridicule.
3. When such behaviors occur they offer an opportunity for individuals to work through and own their feelings.
4. Safety is increased when members are heard and supported in the expression of their feeling issues, which have their own validity. In such a climate of mutual caring and ownership, expression of empathy and understanding can facilitate healing.

### **Guidelines**

1. Speak of your own feelings and feeling process.
2. Accept others and their process as they are.
3. If you wish to comment on another's process, be sure to indicate that these are your perceptions/views/projections.
4. If someone comments on your process, you have the right to ask him or her to stop.
5. Feeling supported is feeling heard - not being judged, analyzed, or advised.
6. If you feel "dumped on," reply with your feeling, owning your trigger as best you can.
7. If someone respectfully points out that you may be acting in a way that is hurtful to others, look at your feeling, respond with your feeling as best you can and engage in a reparative/restorative process (e.g., apology) if you can.



## **Safe Conflict Resolution Guidelines**

1. At IPA events, the group is expected to be self-regulating.

2. At IPA events, members are encouraged to resolve their own conflicts using the guidelines stated above and the principles of non-violent communication:
  - ~ Describe your observation (When I see / hear you ...)
  - ~ Identify your feelings (I feel ...)
  - ~ Explain the reason for your feelings in terms of your needs (The reason I feel ... is ... and I need ...)
  - ~ State your request (I would like it if ...)
3. Members are expected to take responsibility for their role in a conflict.
4. Members, regardless of their role in the IPA, have the right to intervene in a conflict if it is perceived as compromising group and/or individual safety. Members intervening, however, should be careful about their intervention, especially if there may be a conflict of interest.
5. Members of the Crisis Team (if the conflict occurs during an official IPA retreat or convention) have the right to insist that all involved members join them in a Conflict Resolution Group.
6. Members who have complaints of conflicts with other members have a number of options to work toward resolution. Whenever possible, members are encouraged to work through conflicts directly and personally. If that is not possible, members can consult with the Member Advocate, the Ethics Committee, the Board of Directors or the Council of Elders. When assistance is needed during an official IPA gathering (e.g. a convention or retreat), a member of the crisis Team may also be consulted. A member may also write a formal complaint.
7. All written complaints will be confidentially reviewed by the Ethics Committee of the Board, unless there is a conflict of interest. In this case, an independent committee will be appointed to respond to the matter brought forward.
8. When a conflict involves matters of professional practice between a member practitioner and a member client of that practitioner, and the matter cannot be resolved without mediation, the parties to the conflict are requested to seek the services of a professional mediator well versed in these matters, outside of the IPA. Such a situation calls for arms-length, unconflicted mediation, which would be nearly impossible within the IPA where most people know each other.

The current Member Advocate, Council of Elders and the Board of Directors are listed on the IPA Website at [www.primals.org/board](http://www.primals.org/board).

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## **IPA Board Responsibility If Safety is Undermined**

The IPA supports all types of feeling expressions in contained environments as long as they pose no danger to self, others, or property. If strong feelings come up in social settings, the personal space and boundaries of individuals and the ongoing activity of the group must be respected. If an individual undermines personal or group safety, the Board of Directors, or members acting on the authority of the Board of Directors, may ask that individual to leave an IPA event, may bar that individual from attendance at a future IPA event, and may bar that individual from IPA membership. Types of behavior that may undermine safety include:

- Threats or actual physical and emotional harm
- Aggressive forms of attention, sexual harassment, stalking or similar behaviors
- Attacking, shaming, insulting, blaming, shouting at people, or similar behaviors
- Slander, libel, vendettas