

## **FAMILY LIFE COACHING CODE OF ETHICS**

**Family Life Coaching** is a process where a client and a trained coach work together to achieve client-identified family goals. The process is collaborative and client-directed, working from a strengths-based perspective.

**Family Life Coaches** utilize research-based coaching strategies and techniques to encourage and support the competence and achievement of client-identified goals. They build respectful, trusting relationships with parents, children, caregivers, and/or families in order to facilitate positive growth in family life, enabling families to maximize their strengths and potential.

### **Family Life Coaching Association Core values**

- Respect
- Professionalism
- Support
- Diversity
- Universal Access
- Collaboration
- Inclusivity
- Evolving Practices

### **Key Principles**

- Do no harm to the client
- Respect and right to privacy
- Report abuse/neglect
- Report actual or potential harm to client or others
- Maintain rapport and trust
- Facilitate resolution
- Refer clients who cannot be worked with in an ethically and unbiased manner
- Provide research based best practices

### **A. Family Life Coaches are committed to:**

#### **A.1 Maintaining Confidentiality**

*Coaches protect knowledge of the experiences and identities of their clients, except in situations where the client has harmed or is at risk for harming themselves or others. Coaches treat the knowledge they have of the client respectfully. Aside from suspected abuse, mandated reporting or legally required circumstances, coaches only share information with the permission of the client. Clients should be made aware of the boundaries of confidentiality at the beginning of the relationship.*

#### A.2 Reporting any harmful or potentially harmful behavior

*Coaches are mandated reporters. They must report, or ensure the client self-reports, any behavior or potential behavior that poses a risk to themselves or another. Coaches need to inform clients of this responsibility at the beginning of the relationship.*

#### A.3 Creating clear agreements with clients that define all relationship and service parameters

*Coaches are transparent with clients about the scope of the coaching relationship. Coaches and clients create a clear understanding about the logistics, financial arrangements, and locations of services. Coaching agreements may only be entered into with individuals that are of legal age and have the ability to enter into agreements for services. Agreements with minors or adults with special needs should have the knowledge of a responsible caregiver and cooperation of the client.*

#### A. 4 Providing client-oriented services

*Coaches focus on the client's goals and interests. Coaches facilitate, not direct, change.*

#### A. 5 Offering unbiased work

*Coaches check their biases and work to treat all their clients without preconceived notions of characteristics, behavior, or abilities*

#### A.6 Empowering clients

*Coaches support clients in making their own changes on issues they prioritize and do so using strengths-based coaching approaches.*

#### A. 7 Following the client's lead

*Coaching is client directed, focused on client goals. A coach's role is to help a client explore, not to offer direction or solution, unless additional information is requested by the client.*

#### A.8 Expressing openness and honesty about the service and limits of the service

*Coaches accurately explain the scope of coaching services to clients at the beginning of the relationship and additionally as needed to allow clients to choose the most appropriate helping services.*

#### A.9 Using research-based knowledge and practices

*Coaches utilize current knowledge of theories, proven findings, and techniques.*

#### A.10 Building skills

*Coaches use a client's strengths to improve their relationships, hone abilities, and address their goals.*

#### A.11 Maintaining safe boundaries

*Coaches balance authentic, warm relationships with maintaining professional distance from ownership of client's experiences.*

**A.12 Setting aside personal beliefs**

*Coaches separate their personal experiences and preferences to demonstrate respect for their client's right to choose their own actions and beliefs.*

**A.13 Asking permission if stepping out of coach role**

*Coaches with credentials in other helping fields may come out of their coaching role with clients to provide education or intervention only with the expressed permission of the client. This maintains a client-controlled relationship and keeps the parameters of coaching clear.*

**A.14 Using unconditional positive regard**

*Coaches operate from the perspective that clients are doing the best they feel they can do in their present situation. Coaches validate the client's worth and work from a strengths-based perspective to empower clients to make self-identified changes.*

**A.15 Utilizing appropriate assessment and data collection to ensure effective strategies**

*Coaches monitor the progress of clients to ensure techniques are appropriate and the coaching relationship is helpful and meaningful to the client. Progress may be monitored using session notes, exercises or instruments appropriate to the client.*

**A.16 Respecting the client, even in third-party payer situations**

*Coaches recognize their client is the person who they are in a relationship with, regardless of who is paying for the fees. Coaches are clear with both the client and the payer about the boundaries of the arrangement. There are clear understandings with all parties about responsibilities of each, the nature and conditions about sharable information, and the nature of the coaching relationship. This applies whether the payer is a parent, an employer, or another party.*

**A.17 Referring as needed**

*Coaches recognize the limits of their work with clients. When clients exhibit or express needs beyond the scope of coaching, coaches are familiar with appropriate options of other professionals and are able to offer referral suggestions to clients.*

**A.18 Honoring a client's right to terminate relationship**

*Coaches maintain an open and voluntary relationship with the client. Coaches recognize the client's benefit is primary, and honor a request to end the relationship, not taking it personally.*

**A.19 Respecting their own right, as a coach, to terminate relationship**

*Through the open and voluntary relationship, a coach recognizes when the coach-client relationship has reached an end or if it may not be a good fit. Before terminating the coach-client relationship, the coach will discuss the situation with the client and help to find a suitable replacement coach when appropriate.*

**B. As a professional, Family Life Coaches are committed to:**

B.1 Sustaining strong foundational knowledge in Family Science and Coaching Methodology.  
*Coaches have formal training both in Family Science and in Coaching Methodology.*

B.2 Continuing familiarity and compliance with laws and regulations that guide work with individuals and families.  
*Coaches are current in knowledge of the laws that govern the locations where they practice. They comply with all legal aspects of interactions with clients.*

B.3 Maintaining professional and confidential storage of records related to clients.  
*Coaches collect only necessary, required personal information from the client and maintain organized records of their work in a protected, confidential area.*

B.4 Avoiding any disruptive or harmful situations that may lead to misinterpretation caused by multiple roles/relationships with clients.  
*Coaches are clear in the parameters of their role with clients. Coaches avoid serving too many roles with clients, such as coaching their child's teacher, that may not serve the client's best interest. Where possible, the coach should avoid additional roles with the client outside of the coaching relationship.*

B.5 Maintaining confidentiality within the client's community.  
*Coaches protect not only the client's personal information but also the existence of the coaching relationship unless they have the client's expressed consent. For example, the coach will not divulge the coach-client relationship to a client's friend or neighbor unless the coach has permission.*

B.6 Avoiding any sexual or romantic relationships with clients or former clients.  
*Coaches refrain from a sexual or romantic relationship with any client who is in a formal coaching relationship or has been in the past two years. Coaches also refrain from any sexual or romantic relationship with anyone closely connected with the client for the same period of time.*

B.7 Avoiding any conflicts or potential conflicts of interest in work with clients or organizations.  
*Coaches prioritize client interests above their own within the coach-client relationship. Coaches recuse themselves from relationships where their actions may appear to benefit themselves at the cost of the client.*

B.8 Ensuring honesty in marketing.  
*Coaches represent their background and services accurately in all communications and materials designed to recruit clients.*

B.9 Continuing awareness of own biases.

*Coaches self-reflect and inspect their own tendencies and biases towards others. Coaches take steps to maintain effective and equitable treatment of all clients. Coaches continually work towards improved cultural competence.*

B.10 Maintaining a continual internal check of self.

*Coaches continually self-reflect on personal beliefs and actions to improve their skills and maintain professional and ethical practice.*

B.11 Receiving regular mentoring and/or supervision.

*Coaches participate in regular review of practice with another similarly trained professional, or group of professionals, through mentoring and/or supervision. Feedback received is used to monitor and improve interactions with clients. Confidentiality regarding client identities should be maintained even in mentoring/supervision.*

B. 12 Preserving confidentiality during consultation with colleagues.

*Even while consulting colleagues about a client, coaches respect confidentiality. Only with a client's consent can a coach reveal identifying information.*

B.13 Continuing education and update research-based knowledge.

*Coaches maintain continual learning in trends and findings in both Family Science and Coaching*

B.14 Advocating for all individuals and families, especially the most vulnerable.

*Coaches educate others and work toward improving conditions and experiences for individuals and families, both formally and informally.*

B.15 Supporting policies and laws that promote the well-being of individuals and families.

*Coaches utilize their experience, knowledge, connections and actions to educate and influence power sources within their communities for the betterment of all families.*

B.16 Contributing to and supporting the profession of Family Life Coaching.

*Coaches donate their time, talents and knowledge to grow the profession. Coaches also advocate for the profession by informing the general public about what family life coaching is, what its benefits are, and what the field as a whole provides to society.*