

## SGfB's Ethical principles

Respecting the universal human rights and individual, gender specific, cultural, religious and social differences are regarded as fundamental by SGfB's members.

Respecting implies the unconditional acceptance of the client (individuals, couples, families, groups, teams, organizations) and being aware of their individual, gender specific, religious, social and cultural characteristics. It does not mean that the counsellor unconditionally agrees with their behavior or actions.

Integrity, self-determination and the client's privacy are the key elements of the counselling process.

Integrity recognizes the client's right to physical and psychological limits and protection against abuse.

Self-determination recognizes the client's right to start or end a counselling relationship voluntarily and without external pressure, regardless of whether it was directly or indirectly initiated. Likewise, the freedom of expression as well as speaking out one's needs and requirements are respected.

Privacy is protected. Observations by others that have not been agreed upon or are otherwise inadequate, external intrusions or interferences during counselling sessions are inappropriate.

Confidential information provided during counselling sessions, are subject to professional secrecy.

SGfB counsellors should only offer services and use methods they are qualified and legitimized to employ on the basis of their education, further training and experience. They ensure a high level of professional skills. They consider research data, include developments in their work and recognize the necessity of their own learning process.

As collective members of SGfB, the associations, organizations and institutions are responsible for drawing up their own ethical guidelines and will ensure that they are observed. These should correspond with SGfB's ethical principles.

These ethical principles are based on the "philosophical principles" of the European Association for Counselling, EAC. They came into effect on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2006.