



Coach Mastery Certification

Unit Five

Maintain Ethical Standards and Communicate with Spiritual Sensitivity

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Section 1

1.1 Arrow Coaching+ - Coaching Disclaimer

Arrow Coaching+ (formerly known as Christian Coaching Institute) is passionate about coaching and empowering Christian leaders in their context to coach others. Therefore, we make this material available on the understanding that users exercise their own skill and care and respect in its use. Attendance at coaching training does not qualify you to use the training other than in your own leadership context. Please do not pretend this is your stuff, and reference Arrow Leadership Australia where appropriate.

1.2. Common Courtesies

Everyone is free to participate at the level they desire. Below are some basic “ground rules” or “common courtesies” that we will value during the training.

- Confidentiality – what happens in the room – stays in the room
- Phones off – send/receive messages during breaks
- We are all learners – expect to learn and make mistakes
- Participate fully – be present
- Arrive and leave on time (we will start and stop on time)
- Ok to move around as needed
- Be yourself
- Share your experience
- Embrace confusion and uncertainty
- Have fun!

Before we begin... empty the glass...

You may be familiar with some of the content in this course. But in order to gain the most for yourself – start afresh and look for what you don’t know – this will ensure you are learning as much as possible.

1.3 Introduction to the Unit

In this unit we want to explore our own inner world of ethics – behaviours that are right and cohere with the way of Christ; attitudes that reflect the Father’s purposes through Christ, and spiritual awareness that recognises the Spirit of Christ is profoundly involved in the coaching process.

Are there external and objective ethical standards? Yes, there are. The word of God contains clear and specific guidelines – so does the ICF Code of Ethics. Yet it is equally true that each of us has our own ethical guidelines, shaped by our family, our tradition, and our own life history. We want to try to articulate that “inner” code, and see how it works, and why it works the way it does. Then we can compare it to what the ICF requires.

While ethics is a big deal, we as Christians say that the Holy Spirit has a hugely significant part to play in our lives, and so we will explore the interplay between the role of the Holy Spirit and the place of ethics. Ethics, we suggest, looks like Jesus, but what might that mean for me as a coach? What’s more, we’re convinced that God works for our good, and he gives us his Spirit as a down-payment on good things to come. But what does flourishing actually look like, and how does our view of flourishing inform our coaching practice? Is there a sneaking possibility that we might just want our clients to see things the same way as we do?

We’re also going to explore some issues where we have been ethically wronged. The aim is not to rake over the coals of past hurts or scratch some of our life scars. Rather, it is to try to articulate as clearly as possible what the *ethical* issue was. Not the wound, not the pain, not the memory – but the *ethical* issue. It’s sometimes quite easy to feel aggrieved and hurt, but we need to focus on the ethics of it.

1.4. Recommended Reading

ICF Code of Ethics

<https://coachfederation.org/code-of-ethics>

Section 2

2.1 Ethics and Morals

Take a stand

We are going to play a game where we may disagree and it's important that we treat each other with grace and truth as we do it.

Strongly Disagree _____ Strongly Agree

- The line above is a continuum, and everyone must take a stand on it. If you strongly agree you will be far left. Strongly disagree far to the right, but it's a scale so you can place a cross anywhere along the line.

What extra questions might you plot on your line?

2.2 Definition: Morals vs Ethics

1. How would you describe the difference between morals and ethics?
2. Think of 2 or 3 ethics or rules and then figure out what the morals behind them might be.
 - Some examples: -
 - The Ethic – not speeding. The Moral – the value of life.
 - The Ethic – not dating a coachee. The Moral – sacredness of equality.

Maybe you've heard these terms and wondered what the difference is. A lot of people think of them as being the same thing. While they're closely related concepts, morals refer mainly to guiding principles, and ethics refer to specific rules and actions, or behaviours.

A moral precept is an idea or opinion that's driven by a desire to be good. An ethical code is a set of rules that defines allowable actions or correct behaviour.

(<https://www.dictionary.com/e/moral-vs-ethical/>)

2.3 Case Studies

Case Study 1 – John and Mary A. Everybody.

Let me introduce you to John and Mary – the A stands for “Almost.” They are not, of course, everybody, but they are almost everybody. They’re fine, law-abiding citizens, with a high respect for the law, a solid social conscience, and they’re big-hearted and generous besides. They give willingly to good causes, they sponsor two children from the two-thirds world, and they are actively involved in the soup kitchen their church runs; they both cook for it and help serve there. Salt of the earth people.

With two high-school aged children as well as one at primary school, Mary knows she is Mum’s taxi. That’s life. Running kids to school, to sport, to Sunday school, to youth nights, to their friends’ places, to the occasional party, to school events – Mary is always on the road. And it always seems urgent – a continual pressure on “now.” And then the kids ring her on their mobiles and want to be picked up. Now. Occasionally, when John has a day off, she palms the driving off to him. He does the pick-ups and drop offs.

As law-abiding citizens, they tend to drive with the flow of the traffic, which in their area is usually around seven kilometres faster than the speed limit in their area. They tried sticking to the speed limit for a bit, but found they were flashed with headlights, had the horn blown at them, got the one-fingered salute – and in the end, they just went with the flow.

Discuss: How would you describe John and Mary’s driving habits – are they ethical people? Are they law-abiding? What’s the difference?

Case Study 2 – Pastor Care Full.

Kate Care-Full is one of the most caring gals you could ever meet – that’s why she’s in ministry. She graduated from Bible College, did the mandatory stint as youth pastor for 5 years, and is now pastor at her own church. People love her, and she loves them.

She is concerned with two young people. Holly is a high school student who is sexually involved, and Liam is moving into the drug scene because home life, especially with his stepdad, is just a little bit ordinary. Kate has chatted with both Holly and Liam and has spoken to them about their lives. Kate thinks their parents should know. She has told them so. She has asked them to speak to their parents, but they both said no.

Pastor Kate Care-Full cares. She cares deeply. She is worried. In her opinion Holly’s behaviour is unethical, she believes, and Liam’s behaviour is self-damaging and unlawful. She doesn’t, and won’t, betray their confidence in her, but she is thinking of saying to both sets of parents something like: “You know, it would be a great idea if you had a chat with your daughter/son. There’s stuff happening in their lives that they need your love and help for.” She is still thinking through how best to say it.

How would you describe Pastor Kate’s ethics?

2.4 Ethical Issues

As we have already noticed, ethics are not primarily some vague, abstract concept that can be objectively discussed. In different contexts, you ought to be aware of different issues, different potential ethical dilemmas.

- Below are listed some of the different sorts of people you might coach. You are the coach; he or she is the leader, teacher, chaplain etc. And it *is* about coaching. In coaching, you hear people's deepest fears, their personal journeys, their business opportunities, and the challenges they face.
- What we'd like you to do is try to think through some of the ethical challenges, questions, potential pitfalls, and issues you might face as you are coaching the people listed below.

In the ethics of coaching, it is very important to be clear about your own boundaries before you start coaching. Making up the rules as you go is not a good idea. Ethical challenges in coaching is a reality – it will happen!

Discussion

What sorts of ethical issues might be important for a coach in the following coaching relationships? Record your findings:

1. **Business:** a small business owner, stockbroker, a land developer
 -
2. **Education:** a high school teacher, school principal, school chaplain
 -
3. **Sport:** a body builder, a football team coach, an Olympic cyclist
 -
4. **The workplace:** the CEO, the head of HR, a middle manager
 -
5. **The local church:** the pastor, the youth pastor, the chair of council, children's ministry volunteer
 -

2.5 Ethics and Anger

Exercise

How have you been unethically treated –

In Church?

-

In school?

-

In the workplace?

-

2.6 Ethics and Personality

“It should come as no surprise to anyone that our personal ethics vary. We do not all feel the same way about boat people. We do not all feel the same way about politics, or money, or sex, or refugees, or road rules, or gossip, or alcohol, or baptism, or the role of men and women, or drugs, or work, or even the Bible. If we could all agree that the Bible is God’s authoritative revelation of grace in Jesus Christ which we should believe and obey, it would nonetheless be true that we would each of us understand it in the light of our own experience, tradition, and engagement with that Word. In other words, we’d all be different.

Take a moment to list the things that you adopt a strong ethical stance towards. A strong ethical stance is where you have a very clear view: this is right, that is wrong. It’s black or white, and there’s not too much grey in it. Your own strong and clear conviction is the key here.

-
-
-
-
-

Compare your list:

- What do you have in common?
- What is unique to each of you?
- Why might there be differences?
- What is the ethical issue you won’t coach someone on?

How might this impact your coaching?

-

2.7 ICF Code of Ethics

There are many ICF Member benefits, including resources to help you be a better coach and run a better business. ICF Members also benefit from networking, discounts and professional development opportunities. Most importantly, they are there to ensure the entire coaching profession maintains high standards and a stellar reputation.

<https://coachingfederation.org/professional-coaches/benefits>

Ethics

The ICF Code of Ethics describes the core values of the International Coach Federation (ICF Core Values), and ethical principles and ethical standards of behaviour for all ICF Professionals (see definitions). Meeting these ICF ethical standards of behaviour is the first of the ICF core coaching competencies (ICF Core Competencies). That is “Demonstrates ethical practice: understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards”

The ICF Code of Ethics serves to uphold the integrity of ICF and the global coaching profession by:

- Setting standards of conduct consistent with ICF core values and ethical principles.
- Guiding ethical reflection, education, and decision-making
- Adjudicating and preserving ICF coach standards through the ICF Ethical Conduct Review (ECR) process
- Providing the basis for ICF ethics training in ICF-accredited programs

The ICF Code of Ethics applies when ICF Professionals represent themselves as such, in any kind of coaching-related interaction. This is regardless of whether a coaching Relationship (see definitions) has been established. This Code articulates the ethical obligations of ICF Professionals who are acting in their different roles as coach, coach supervisor, mentor coach, trainer or student coach-in-training, or serving in an ICF Leadership role, as well as Support Personnel (see definitions).

The challenge of working ethically means that members will inevitably encounter situations that require responses to unexpected issues, resolution of dilemmas and solutions to problems. This Code of Ethics is intended to assist those persons subject to the Code by directing them to the variety of ethical factors that may need to be taken into consideration and helping to identify alternative ways of approaching ethical behaviour.

ICF Professionals who accept the Code of Ethics strive to be ethical, even when doing so involves making difficult decisions or acting courageously.

Preamble

ICF is committed to maintaining and promoting excellence in coaching. Therefore, ICF expects all members and credentialed coaches (coaches, coach mentors, coaching supervisors, coach trainers or students), to adhere to the elements and principles of ethical conduct: to be competent and integrate ICF Core Competencies effectively in their work.

In line with the ICF core values and ICF definition of coaching, the Code of Ethics is designed to provide appropriate guidelines, accountability and enforceable standards of conduct for all ICF Members and ICF Credential-holders, who commit to abiding by the following ICF Code of Ethics:

Key Definitions

- **Client**—the individual or team/group being coached, the coach being mentored or supervised, or the coach or the student coach being trained.
- **Coaching**—partnering with Clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.
- **Coaching Relationship**—a relationship that is established by the ICF Professional and the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) under an agreement or a contract that defines the responsibilities and expectations of each party.
- **Code**—ICF Code of Ethics
- **Confidentiality**—protection of any information obtained around the coaching engagement unless consent to release is given.
- **Conflict of Interest**—a situation in which an ICF Professional is involved in multiple interests where serving one interest could work against or be in conflict with another. This could be financial, personal or otherwise.
- **Equality**—a situation in which all people experience inclusion, access to resources and opportunity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, colour, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, immigration status, mental or physical disability, and other areas of human difference.
- **ICF Professional**—individuals who represent themselves as an ICF Member or ICF Credential-holder, in roles including but not limited to Coach, Coach Supervisor, Mentor Coach, Coach Trainer, and Student of Coaching
- **ICF Staff**— the ICF support personnel who are contracted by the managing company that provides professional management and administrative services on behalf of ICF.
- **Internal Coach**— an individual who is employed within an organization and coaches either part-time or full-time the employees of that organization.
- **Sponsor**—the entity (including its representatives) paying for and/or arranging or defining the coaching services to be provided.
- **Support Personnel**—the people who work for ICF Professionals in support of their Clients.
- **Systemic equality**—gender equality, race equality and other forms of equality that are institutionalized in the ethics, core values, policies, structures, and cultures of communities, organizations, nations and society.

The ICF Standards of Ethical Conduct

Responsibility to Clients

As a coach, I:

1. Explain and ensure that, prior to or at the initial meeting, my coaching Client(s) and Sponsor(s) understand the nature and potential value of coaching, the nature and limits of confidentiality, financial arrangements, and any other terms of the coaching agreement.
2. Create an agreement/contract regarding the roles, responsibilities and rights of all parties involved with my Client(s) and Sponsor(s) prior to the commencement of services.
3. Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all parties as agreed upon. I am aware of and agree to comply with all applicable laws that pertain to personal data and communications.
4. Have a clear understanding about how information is exchanged among all parties involved during all coaching interactions.
5. Have a clear understanding with both Clients and Sponsors or interested parties about the conditions under which information will not be kept confidential (e.g., illegal activity, if required by law, pursuant to valid court order or subpoena; imminent or likely risk of danger to self or to others; etc.). Where I reasonably believe one of the above circumstances is applicable, I may need to inform appropriate authorities.
6. When working as an Internal Coach, manage conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest with my coaching Clients and Sponsor(s) through coaching agreement(s) and ongoing dialogue. This should include addressing organizational roles, responsibilities, relationships, records, confidentiality and other reporting requirements.
7. Maintain, store and dispose of any records, including electronic files and communications, created during my professional interactions in a manner that promotes confidentiality, security and privacy and complies with any applicable laws and agreements. Furthermore, I seek to make proper use of emerging and growing technological developments that are being used in coaching services (technology-assisted coaching services) and be aware how various ethical standards apply to them.
8. Remain alert to indications that there might be a shift in the value received from the coaching relationship. If so, make a change in the relationship or encourage the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) to seek another coach, seek another professional or use a different resource.
9. Respect all parties' right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point for any reason during the coaching process subject to the provisions of the agreement.
10. Am sensitive to the implications of having multiple contracts and relationships with the same Client(s) and Sponsor(s) at the same time in order to avoid conflict of interest situations.

11. Am aware of and actively manage any power or status difference between the Client and me that may be caused by cultural, relational, psychological or contextual issues.
12. Disclose to my Clients the potential receipt of compensation, and other benefits I may receive for referring my Clients to third parties.
13. Assure consistent quality of coaching regardless of the amount or form of agreed compensation in any relationship.

Responsibility to Practice and Performance

As a coach, I:

14. Adhere to the ICF Code of Ethics in all my interactions. When I become aware of a possible breach of the Code by myself or I recognize unethical behaviour in another ICF Professional, I respectfully raise the matter with those involved. If this does not resolve the matter, I refer it to a formal authority (e.g., ICF Global) for resolution.
15. Require adherence to the ICF Code of Ethics by all Support Personnel.
16. Commit to excellence through continued personal, professional and ethical development.
17. Recognize my personal limitations or circumstances that may impair, conflict with or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. I will reach out for support to determine the action to be taken and, if necessary, promptly seek relevant professional guidance. This may include suspending or terminating my coaching relationship(s).
18. Resolve any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest by working through the issue with relevant parties, seeking professional assistance, or suspending temporarily or ending the professional relationship.
19. Maintain the privacy of ICF Members and use the ICF Member contact information (email addresses, telephone numbers, and so on) only as authorized by ICF or the ICF Member.

Responsibility to Professionalism

As a coach, I:

20. Identify accurately my coaching qualifications, my level of coaching competency, expertise, experience, training, certifications and ICF Credentials.
21. Make verbal and written statements that are true and accurate about what I offer as an ICF Professional, what is offered by ICF, the coaching profession, and the potential value of coaching.
22. Communicate and create awareness with those who need to be informed of the ethical responsibilities established by this Code.
23. Hold responsibility for being aware of and setting clear, appropriate and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern interactions, physical or otherwise.
24. Do not participate in any sexual or romantic engagement with Client(s) or Sponsor(s). I will be ever mindful of the level of intimacy appropriate for the relationship. I take the appropriate action to address the issue or cancel the coaching engagement.

Responsibility to Society

As a coach, I:

25. Avoid discrimination by maintaining fairness and equality in all activities and operations, while respecting local rules and cultural practices. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability or military status.
26. Recognise and honour the contributions and intellectual property of others, only claiming ownership of my own material. I understand that a breach of this standard may subject me to legal remedy by a third party.
27. Am honest and work within recognized scientific standards, applicable subject guidelines and boundaries of my competence when conducting and reporting research.
28. Am aware of mine and my clients' impact on society. I adhere to the philosophy of "doing good," versus "avoiding bad."

The Pledge of Ethics of the ICF Professional

As an ICF Professional, in accordance with the Standards of the ICF Code of Ethics, I acknowledge and agree to fulfill my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching Client(s), Sponsor(s), colleagues and to the public at large.

If I breach any part of the ICF Code of Ethics, I agree that the ICF in its sole discretion may hold me accountable for so doing. I further agree that my accountability to the ICF for any breach may include sanctions, such as mandatory additional coach training or other education or loss of my ICF Membership and/or my ICF Credentials.

(Adopted by the ICF Global Board of Directors September 2019)

2.8 Comparing Ethical Codes

There are many codes of ethics.

- Read the ICF Code of Ethics as a group
- Pick (3) ICF Codes of Ethics
- What is the moral code & where does it support scripture?
- As a Christian what would you add to the ICF codes

What is the ICF code	What is the moral code behind the ICF code	Where does it support scripture
1.		
2.		
3.		

Section 3

3.1 Ethics look like Jesus

Because it's true that God is conforming us to the image of His Son, and that Jesus is the true image of the Father, we rightly expect that ethical behaviour is going to look like Jesus. Ethical behaviour will be just – it will have the kingdom of God and His justice as the cornerstone of our thinking, attitudes and action. How can I act justly in this context, or to that person? It will intentionally seek justice for the other, and for their context.

- What do you notice as you read this passage?

How do you understand grace & truth in...?

- Christian coaching?
- Through the ICF codes?
- How are Christian coaches different to regular coaches?
- Following Jesus's example. As a coach we 'die to self' – What does that look like?

3.2 Ethics and the Holy Spirit

Consider the ways in which the Holy Spirit speaks TO us, and list ways the Holy Spirit speaks THROUGH us.

How does the Holy Spirit speak to us?

-

How does the Holy Spirit speak through us?

-

How does empowering our coachee fit with our understanding of the Holy Spirit?

-

3.3 How the Spirit Works

Reflect on the following options – in your opinion, which are correct?

The Holy Spirit:

- Normally works through our mind and body
- Lives within Christians
- Is concerned about our weight, exercise regime, and overall physical health
- Normally works through the Word of God (the Bible)
- Can reveal things in unexpected ways
- Points us to Jesus
- Is interested in our daily work and occupation
- Is committed to us for our good
- Will sometimes allow unpleasant and unwanted things to happen to us
- Enables us to grow, develop and improve our relationships
- Gives life to all people
- Is our motivation and empowerment for missional ministry
- Leads us to pray

In which of the above statements could you substitute your name (in your role as coach) for the Holy Spirit?

Section 4

4.1 Additional Resources

ICF Ethics CCE Course: <https://coachfederation.org/ethics-cce-course>

ICF Ethics : <https://coachfederation.org/icf-ethics>

Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context (2nd Edition), [David P Gushee](#), [Glen Stassen](#)

Christian Counselling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists and Pastors, by [Randolph K Sanders](#)