

Code of Ethics and Conduct

I. Preamble

The Code of Ethics and Conduct describes the level of behavior which *Trager* Practitioners maintain in order to protect Trager International, national associations, the public, and themselves. All Students and Practitioners of the *Trager* approach are expected to follow these principles.

The guidelines for following Code of Ethics and Conduct are taught within the training program. Detailed instruction of the principles of the Code of Ethics and Conduct is included in the Level I and all subsequent levels of training and continuing education. Support materials in this process include the Standards of Practice, The *Trager* Handbook, the Code of Ethics and Conduct itself, all signed agreements, and other printed materials as needed.

Students' and Practitioners' compliance with the principles outlined in the Code is evaluated through trainings, tutorials, feedback from the public and peers, and other programs or communications as needed.

The ongoing process of evaluation is overseen by a combination of Instructors, Tutors, the Board of the National Association and the Council of Trustees (COT).

Matters involving possible violation of the principles of this Code, if not resolved according to the process mentioned above, are brought to the attention of the Board of Directors for action. Principles of basic fairness are followed in all these procedures. Only the authorized distributor of the license has the power to refuse to grant or renew the individual's service mark license and right to use the *Trager* service marks.

II. Precepts

A. Use of the *Trager* name

1. Only authorized *Trager* Students and Practitioners may do the tablework or demonstrate *Mentastics* or *Trager* psychophysical integration and *Mentastics* (the *Trager* approach).
2. Authorization requirements are specified in "The *Trager* Handbook."

B. Instruction.

1. Only Instructors and/or Workshop Leaders designated by Trager International may conduct Trainings —required or elective—in the *Trager* approach.
2. Authorization requirements for these functions are listed on page 8-2 of this handbook.

C. *Trager* Practitioners provide accurate information to the public about the *Trager* approach.

1. The *Trager* approach is described in terms of an educational model rather than a medical one.
2. Practitioners do not diagnose, prescribe, or claim to treat any condition unless otherwise licensed to do so.
3. Within the context of a session or demonstration, any approach other than *Trager* shall not be represented as the *Trager* approach.
4. Practitioners refer clients to colleagues and health professionals with care, stating the reason for referral and their knowledge of the practitioner or methods recommended.

D. *Trager* Practitioners are responsible for complying with the local laws and regulations governing their practice.

III. Professional Integrity

A. *Trager* Practitioners uphold *Trager* International standards for professional practice.

1. References for the standards of practice are including the standards of practice supported by The *Trager* Handbook, the Practice Guides, the Tutor Manual, the Code of Ethics and Conduct, and all signed agreements.
2. Practitioners fulfill all ongoing continuing education requirements.
3. Practitioners abide by the Code of Ethics and Conduct and all signed agreements.

B. Each *Trager* Practitioner is responsible for the quality of her or his work and for the exercise of sound judgment.

1. Practitioners assess their own state, skills and knowledge so as to avoid misleading or harming a client physically, emotionally, mentally, socially, financially, or in any regard and to seek supervision when needed.
2. Practitioners do not work when their ability to do so is impaired by alcohol, drugs, strong attitudes, motivations or emotional states.
3. Practitioners bear in mind that their own actions may reflect on other Practitioners.

C. *Trager* Practitioners respect the rights and dignity of all individuals and protect the welfare of their clients.

1. Practitioners respect the client's authority about his or her own experience.
2. Practitioners hold as confidential all personal information about others learned in a professional capacity.
 - a. Information learned in a professional context is not divulged in any way that lets the client's identity be known, except with the client's permission.
 - b. Confidentiality and anonymity are maintained when discussing professional issues with teachers and colleagues.
 - c. In the event that a client or colleague presents a personal or public danger, Practitioners are encouraged to refer that person to the proper service directly.
3. Practitioners respect the reputation of colleagues. When discussion of problems about colleagues is necessary, it is done in terms of principles, not personalities.
4. When possible, Practitioners communicate directly with the individuals involved to resolve issues; when necessary they use the resources of Tutors and their National Association for assistance.
5. Practitioners do not use the professional relationship to further their own personal or sexual interests or to promote their own political or religious beliefs.
6. Practitioners do not place their own financial interests above the welfare of their clients.
 - a. Fees reflect the customary range for the experience of the Practitioner, the setting, and the region in which the services are provided.
 - b. Practitioners do not conduct or recommend sessions for the sole reason of receiving payment.

D. *Trager* Practitioners maintain clear and honest professional relationships with clients and colleagues.

1. Fees, appointments, length of session, location and other business arrangements are agreed upon between client and practitioner.
2. Practitioners are responsible for keeping professional agreements they make.

E. *Trager* Practitioners show sensible regard for the social codes and moral expectations of the community in which they practice.

Grievance Procedures

If your National Association has developed a specific grievance procedure it will have precedence over what is stated below. (Section NAs)

Any violation of the Code of Ethics published in The *Trager* Handbook could be subject to this procedure.

Preface: The *Trager* approach is an educative process involving meeting the resistance of a body (or situation) and then finding a way to work with it or just underneath it, allowing more ease. It is not about challenging and assertion and insisting upon a "right" way. As we work at the table and with *Mentastics* movements so also can we work with our communication patterns and grievance situations. There is not one right answer. Mutual respect and willingness to give-a-little, get-a-little are required. All parties involved must look to see what thoughts, attitudes and assumptions they bring to the situation. We must each take into account who we are and what we are responsible for.

Objective: The objective of this Grievance Procedure is to protect the high quality and reputation of *Trager* work and Trager International. (This includes protection of the public and the members of the National Associations.)

Aim: The aim of this Procedure is to educate the parties involved using tools of clear and impartial communication. In cases where punitive action is deemed necessary the situation will be referred to the National Association. The complainant must be aware that Trager International through the National Association can only take away the right to use the *Trager* name and logo. It cannot stop someone from practicing bodywork. If that is the desired outcome, the complainant may want to pursue the situation in a court of law.

Purpose of the Grievance Procedure

1. To listen from a neutral stance to complaints from the public or the membership concerning the policies and practices of Trager International and/or its licensees.
2. To encourage clear dialogue between all parties involved in a complaint.
3. To reach satisfactory resolution whenever possible.
4. To suggest referral to the proper authorities when appropriate.
5. To determine the severity of the violation of the Code of Ethics and Conduct and to oversee its resolution. In cases where dismissal or suspension of license membership and privileges for a Student or Practitioner is recommended, such recommendation will be referred to the National Association for action. For the purposes of this document, the designation of Practitioner includes Tutors and Instructors.

Grievance Procedure

1. An individual encounters a situation with a student or practitioner involving possible violation of the "Code of Ethics and Conduct."
2. A written complaint is sent to the designated Receiver of Complaints (the Receiver of Complaints could be any person or group approved by the respective National Association. Every National Association will designate this person or this group.)
3. The Receiver of Complaints decides whether the complaint is legitimate or frivolous.
4. If frivolous or if the complaint does not involve an ethical violation it is officially dismissed and the complainant is notified in writing. If accepted, the Receiver of Complaints refers

- the complaint to the appropriate person or committee for review.
5. The reviewing committee (established by the National Association or a supranational Ethics Committee) communicates with all of the involved parties, gathers information and encourages Those involved to talk to each other. This may lead to resolution of the situation.
 6. The committee may need to intercede in this process to gather more information, to clarify the "Code of Ethics and Conduct", or to suggest appropriate actions which may lead to resolution. For example, referral to a therapist or mediator could be an acceptable action for both parties.
 - a. If resolution occurs, no further action is taken.
 - b. A record of the events is kept confidentially by the Receiver of Complaints.
 7. If no resolution occurs, the committee writes a report with a specific recommendation to the National Association.
 8. The National Association receives the report from the committee, reviews the situation and makes a decision, based on that report. The decision may be for suspension or expulsion from membership of the National Association and privileges, which means the loss of the *Trager* license.
 9. The results of this Procedure may be appealed to the Board of the National Association for review as to whether or not the reviewing committee has acted fairly and neutrally in coming to its conclusion and resultant recommendation. A decision of the Board of the National Association will be final unless the Council of Trustees determines sufficient cause to review the decision.

Basic Principles

1. There is always more than one way of looking at a situation.
2. The fact of a complaint presumes neither guilt nor innocence.
3. An accused person has the right to know what they are accused of, and by whom.
4. To initiate the Grievance Procedure, a complaint must be written and signed by the complainant.
5. Full disclosure is essential. Detailed information concerning the complaint will be provided to the party complained about.
6. All information is kept confidential by all parties involved. This means only those who need to know will know. Records are kept by the reviewing committee.
7. Anonymous complaints will not be processed through the Grievance Procedure. However, should the Receiver of Complaints receive a written, anonymous complaint, a call will be made to the accused party to let them know what has been said, and a record of the correspondence will be kept by the Receiver of Complaints.
8. The person filing the complaint will be listened to courteously, neutrally and completely. Questions will be answered and advice may be given. This is often enough to take care of a problem.
9. To the best of their ability the reviewing committee will follow rules of common courtesy - acknowledging receipt of letters, acknowledging phone calls, returning phone calls as quickly as possible, acting on the matter as quickly as possible (bearing in mind that this is a volunteer committee), etc.
10. The limitations of the committee and the National Associations are as follows:
 - a. The committee always first suggests direct communication.
 - b. The committee can only recommend an action of suspension or expulsion from the organization. The Board of the National Association makes the final decision.
 - c. The decision may result in the loss of the privilege to use the *Trager* name and logo.
 - d. The National Association cannot prevent anyone from doing bodywork but can proscribe their using the word "*Trager*."

United States Trager[®] Association
Addendum to *Trager Handbook*
Code of Ethics and Grievance Procedures
(5/15/01) REVISED 8-18-03

WHEREAS, Article XII, Section 6 of the Bylaws of the United States *Trager* Association calls for the Association to create and publish a Code of Professional Ethics, to uphold this published Code, and to establish a written policy with respect to receiving and reviewing grievances and conducting grievance proceedings; and

WHEREAS, each member in the United States *Trager* Association has agreed to uphold the Code of Ethics of *Trager International* and the United States *Trager* Association; therefore, let it be

RESOLVED, that the United States *Trager* Association hereby adopts as its Code of Professional Ethics, the *Trager International* Code of Ethics now in effect, as set forth in the *Trager Manual*, January 1999 edition, at pages 5-1.1 to 5-1.2; and further

RESOLVED, that the United States *Trager* Association hereby adopts as its Policy concerning Grievance Procedures, the *Trager International* Grievance Procedures now in effect, as set forth in the *Trager Manual*, January 1999 edition, at pages 5-2.1 to 5-2.2, with the following modifications and additions:

- 1) The “Receiver of Complaints” shall be the Ethics Committee of the Regional Association for the region in which the Student or Practitioner is a member, or a member of that Regional Association appointed by the Regional Association’s governing Board or body;
- 2) The “Reviewing Committee” shall be the Ethics Committee of the United States *Trager* Association;
- 3) Upon receipt of a complaint that is not in writing concerning a Regional member, the Receiver of Complaints shall inform the complaining party that all complaints must be in writing in order to be acted upon, and that such written complaints must be shown to the member who is the subject of the complaint. If the complaining party does not wish to put the complaint in writing, or if he or she does not wish to have the complaint shown to the subject of the complaint, the complaining party should be informed that no further action will be taken on the complaint and no record shall be kept of the complaint;
- 4) Upon the receipt of a complaint in writing concerning a Regional member, the Receiver of Complaints shall inform the complaining party that if it is to be acted upon, the complaint must be shown to the member who is the subject of the complaint. If this is agreeable to the complaining party, the Receiver of Complaints should provide the subject of the complaint with a copy of the complaint and ask that he or she respond in writing to the complaint.
- 5) On the basis of the complaint and the response of the member, the Receiver of Complaints shall, in accordance with the Grievance Procedure adopted by *Trager International*, decide whether the complaint is “legitimate” or “frivolous”. A “frivolous” complaint is one that has little or no weight, value or importance, is not worthy of serious attention and has no reasonable grounds or support. A complaint that is not frivolous is “legitimate”.
- 6) If the Receiver of Complaints determines that the complaint is frivolous, he or she should dismiss the complaint, informing the complainant in writing of this action, and that he or she has the option of appealing this decision to the Ethics Committee of the United States *Trager* Association by contacting the Administrative Office of the United States *Trager* Association. At this time, the Receiver of Complaints should forward copies of both the complaint and the response to the Administrative Office of the United States *Trager* Association, where copies of such complaints determined to be frivolous shall be kept in a confidential file.
- 7) If a finding that a Complaint is frivolous is appealed to the Ethics Committee of the United States *Trager* Association, the Committee shall review the complaint and response and either uphold or reverse such determination. The decision of the Committee in this regard shall be final. The complaining party and the Receiver of Complaints shall be notified in writing concerning the decision of the Committee.

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- 8) If the Receiver of Complaints determines that the complaint is legitimate, he or she should inform both the subject of the complaint and the complaining party that the complaint and response is being forwarded to the Ethics Committee of the United States *Trager* Association for consideration, and that they will be contacted by that Committee.
- 9) If the Ethics Committee receives a complaint determined to be legitimate by the Receiver of Complaints, or determines upon appeal that a complaint is legitimate, it shall proceed to investigate the complaint in accordance with procedures adopted by the United States *Trager* Association Board of Directors.
- 10) The U.S.T.A. Ethics Committee is authorized to find that the complaint is without merit and to dismiss the complaint. The decision by the Committee to dismiss a complaint is final, and shall be communicated to the complaining party, the subject of the complaint and the Receiver of Complaints.
- 11) After investigation of the complaint, the U.S.T.A. Ethics Committee is authorized to condition the continuing membership of the subject of the complaint on the fulfilling of reasonable conditions appropriately related to the violation of the Code of Ethics. The imposition of such conditions may be appealed to the Board of Directors, both as the appropriateness of the recommended action and the fairness of the procedures followed.

If after investigating the complaint, the U.S.T.A. Ethics Committee believes that action should be taken that involves either suspension or revocation of membership privileges, it should make such a recommendation to the U.S.T.A. Board of Directors, which will make the final action decision on such action. In such a case, the Board of Directors may review both the appropriateness of the recommended action and the fairness of the procedures followed.