



## **Ethics for professionals who work with trauma and/or victimization**

*“The first step in the evolution of ethics is a sense of solidarity with other human beings”*  
-Albert Schweitzer

As responders to trauma and/or crime victimization, we have the great privilege to serve people who have just had some of the worst, if not the very worst, moments of their lives. They are often feeling a great deal of heartache and pain which can lead to all kinds of complicated feelings and behaviors. This space is incredibly difficult to navigate in a healthy way on several different levels- it truly requires a compass rooted in ethics.

Ethics are the values and principles *that guide* the parameters of service delivery through our decisions, actions, and frame of mind. They help us to have a positive, rather than negative, impact on the vulnerable people that we serve. We have to strive to ensure a daily ethical practice in order to achieve a standard of care that is rooted in compassion, dignity, and respect for all. Further, we have to work towards creating systems, organizations, and relationships with partners and community members that are fueled by ethical standards. Finally, we have to recognize that ethics play an important role not only in our professional lives, but in how we are able to maintain a sense of holistic health and wellbeing in our personal lives.

This presentation will explore common ethical conflicts and/or dilemmas and how to apply ethical standards to decision making in order to resolve them. We will explore implicit bias, personal feelings that fuel case management, boundaries and limitations, confidentiality and privacy, client autonomy and empowerment, and working ethically with limited access to resources.

This presentation will also explore our relationships to the systems that we work within. It can be difficult to maintain an ethical compass if the organization is traumatized or toxic. It is also difficult when there are gaps of service in the system.

### **Objectives:**

- To articulate the relationship between trauma, behavior, service delivery and ethics.
- To explore how one’s perspectives, attitudes and beliefs influence service delivery
- To explore how to use decision making that is rooted in an ethical foundation
- To illustrate that the trauma informed paradigm is dependent upon a strong foundation of ethics
- To articulate various ethical standards of practice
- To explore organizational trauma and toxic workspaces as barriers to ethical service delivery
- To articulate the need to transform systems