

## **Ethics, Social Justice and Weight Stigma**

This workshop meets the ethics requirement for Social Workers  
3 hours, can be combined with What's Eating You? for a full day

Increased stigma is an unanticipated consequence of the overwhelming and contradictory information about food, eating, weight and health. Weight stigma affects people of all sizes in ways that are personal, cultural, economic and social. As agents of social change, what is our responsibility to engage with this dynamic? How do we do so?

Participants will be able to:

- Define acceptable and unacceptable discrimination.
- Delineate the differences in prejudice, discrimination and stigma.
- Articulate the risks of focusing on weight loss and the benefits of questioning accepted assumptions.
- Describe responses that incorporate the values of the NASW Code of Ethics.

### **Outline**

- I. Introduction
- II. Code of Ethics
  - A. Preamble
    - i. enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.
    - ii. strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice
    - iii. promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions
    - iv. social justice & dignity and worth of the person
  - B. Principles
    - i. Social workers challenge social injustice.
    - ii. Dignity and Worth of the Person
    - iii. Competence
  - C. Standards
    - i. 1.01 Commitment to Clients
    - ii. 1.02 Self-Determination
    - iii. 1.03 Informed Consent
    - iv. 1.04 Competence
    - v. 1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity
      - a. culture and its function in human behavior and society
      - b. obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression
    - vi. 1.12 Derogatory Language
    - vii. 2.03 Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- viii. 3.02 Education and Training
  - ix. 4.01 Competence
  - x. 4.02 Discrimination -
    - a. Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political belief, religion, or mental or physical disability.
  - xi. 5.01 Integrity of the Profession
    - a. appropriate study and research, active discussion, and responsible criticism of the profession.
    - b. contribute time and professional expertise to activities that promote respect for the value, integrity, and competence of the social work profession
    - c. share with colleagues their knowledge related to practice, research, and ethics.
  - xii. 5.02 Evaluation and Research
    - a. critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge
  - xiii. 6.01 Social Welfare
    - a. promote social, economic, political, and cultural values and institutions that are compatible with the realization of social justice.
  - xiv. 6.02 Public Participation - shaping social policies and institutions.
  - xv. 6.04 Social and Political Action
- III. Weight stigma and social justice
- A. When discrimination is legitimate
    - i. Discrimination vs.
    - ii. prejudice vs.
    - iii. stigma
  - B. Erroneous beliefs about the mutability of weight
  - C. Economic impacts
  - D. Social determinants of health
  - E. "Good bio-citizens" and spoiled identity
- IV. Small group discussion (with handouts)
- A. How this relates to the Code, using sections of the preamble
  - B. How do we change the discrimination from legitimate to illegitimate?
  - C. Possible scenarios
- V. Share ideas
- VI. What are you taking home from this?

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