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LEADERSHIP COACHING

INTERNATIONAL COACH FEDERATION CODE OF ETHICS (UPDATED 2020)

Preamble

ICF is committed to maintaining and promoting excellence in coaching. Therefore, ICF expects all members and credential holders (collectively, "ICF Professionals") to adhere to the elements and principles of ethical conduct, to be competent and integrate ICF Core Competencies effectively in their work.

Part One: Definitions

Client: The person(s) being coached, the coach being mentored or supervised, or the coach or student being trained.

Coaching: Partnering with Clients in a thought provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

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 has a private or personal interest that is sufficient to influence the objective exercise of their official duties.

Part Two: The ICF Standards of Ethical Conduct

Section I: Responsibility to Clients

- 1.Explain and ensure that, prior to or at the initial meeting, my coaching client (and sponsor, if applicable) understands the nature of coaching, the terms of the coaching agreement, and the financial arrangements.
- 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 client and sponsor information unless release is required by law.
- 4.Have a clear understanding of how information is exchanged among all parties involved during all coaching interactions.
- 5.Have a clear understanding with clients and sponsors about how coaching information will be exchanged among all parties.
- 6.Have a clear understanding with clients and sponsors about the conditions under which coaching services may be terminated.
- 7.Respect the client's right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point during the process, subject to the provisions of the agreement.
- 8.Be alert to indications that the client is no longer benefiting from our coaching relationship.
- 9.Encourage the client or sponsor to make a change if I believe the client would be better served by another coach or resource, and suggest my client seek the services of other professionals when deemed necessary or appropriate.

Section II: Responsibility to Practice and Performance

- 1.Adhere to the ICF Code of Ethics and, where applicable, the ICF Pledge of Ethics.
- 2.Engage in ongoing development and training to maintain and enhance my coaching skills.

- 3.Ensure the integrity of my own coaching practice by accurately portraying my coaching skills and capabilities, avoiding exaggerated or false claims, and refraining from any unethical behaviors.
- 4.Strive to be aware of my own biases and to recognize, monitor, and manage the impact of my biases on my work.
- 5.Recognize and honor the effort and contributions of others and only claim ownership of my own work.
- 6.Use ICF Professional Coaching services (i.e., mentor coaching or coaching supervision) to support my coaching practice as needed.
- 7.Recognize my personal limitations or circumstances that may impair, conflict with, or interfere with my coaching performance.
- 8.Seek appropriate support for any issue that may impair my performance or judgment in my coaching engagements.

Section III: Professional Conduct at Large

- 1.Represent myself as an ICF Professional accurately and honestly in all communications and promotions.
- 2.Comply with all applicable laws and regulations and avoid conduct that would reflect adversely on the coaching profession or ICF.
- 3.Communicate and create awareness with those who need to be informed of the ethical responsibilities established by this Code.
- 4.Make referrals only with client or sponsor consent and only if I believe it will be beneficial to the client.
- 5.Make clear distinctions between coaching, consulting, and any other roles that I hold.
- 6.Be responsible for setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern interactions, physical or otherwise.
- 7.Avoid discrimination by maintaining fairness and equality in all activities and operations while respecting local, cultural, and religious customs and practices.
- 8.Recognize and honor the effort and contributions of others and only claim ownership of my own work.
- 9.Use ICF Member contact information (email addresses, phone numbers, etc.) only in the manner and to the extent authorized by ICF.

Section IV: Confidentiality / Privacy

- 1.Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all client and sponsor information unless release is required by law.
- 2.Have a clear agreement with stakeholders regarding the handling and disposal of client records and data.
- 3.Use client contact information only in the manner and to the extent authorized by the client or sponsor.

Pledge of Ethics

As an ICF Professional, I acknowledge and agree to honor my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching clients and sponsors, colleagues, and the public at large. I pledge to comply with the ICF Code of Ethics and to practice these standards with those whom I coach, teach, mentor, or supervise.

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