



*The Delaware Psychological Association is
pleased to sponsor:*

***Sexual Boundary Violations in
Psychotherapy: Facing Indiscretions,
Transgressions, and Misconduct***

Saturday, November 6, 2021

9:00AM-12:15PM

Zoom Webinar, 3 Ethics CE Credits



Presented by Christine Courtois, Ph.D., ABPP

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & OUTLINE

Have you ever said,

- “I would never do that?”
- “It would never happen to me” “
- That only happens to others in the field, not to me.”

These are common perceptions that most psychotherapists hold that does not account for a wide variety of situational and other circumstances. These will be addressed in this workshop.

The recent #MeToo movement, documenting sexual violations across professional and occupational settings, makes clear that such events are alarmingly common. The psychotherapy setting is no exception. In fact, the nature of therapy and counseling work may contribute to vulnerabilities, given the powerful and intimate emotions engendered. Violations may range from behaviors that are somewhat subtle and uncomfortable to those that are blatant, exploitative, and physically intrusive and range from comments and looks, and increasingly personal disclosures and invasive touching up to and including intercourse and involving rape in some cases. They can be a one-time occurrence or literally last years or decades. In many cases, they involve emotional abuse and coercion (grooming) on the part of the therapist and constitute betrayal trauma.

All major mental health and medical professions prohibit sexual contact between a psychotherapist/practitioner and client/patient as unethical and morally wrong. In most states it is against the law. Despite these prohibitions, sexual boundary violations (SBVs) have not gone away and may even be increasing. Myths including that they are rare, not serious, the result of a patient’s seductive behavior or pathology, and cause little harm will be discussed and challenged. In contrast, SBVs are now recognized as highly damaging with potential for profound and life-changing effects for both members of the dyad and for many third parties (collateral damage). Their occurrence is solely the responsibility of the therapist, regardless of the circumstance.

This workshop will provide an overview of contemporary knowledge on SBVs, based on a recently published book on the topic, co-edited by three psychologists, including the presenter. Special issues to be addressed include a brief historical review, development of ethical prohibitions, prevalence findings, causes and severity, grooming tactics, as effected by racial and cultural contexts and issues of intersectionality, digital forms, aftereffects for victim and therapist, bystander action and inaction, intervention for both parties, and whether rehabilitation and a return to practice are possible. The workshop is intended as a forum for discussion and as a educational effort aimed at understanding and prevention.

PROGRAM AGENDA

9:00AM-12:15PM – Morning Session (one 15-minute break)

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this workshop, attendees will be able to:

1. Explain and discuss the ethics of professional boundaries and why they are important in safeguarding both therapist and client.
2. Assess and communicate features of individuals and institutions that might be “collateral damage” when SBVs occur.
3. Discuss SBV’s as a form of betrayal trauma that has many negative consequences.
4. Describe ways that therapists can work to prevent SBVs in their own therapies and can work with others when risk is evident.

ABOUT THE PRESENTER

Christine A. Courtois, PhD, ABPP, a board-certified counseling psychologist, retired from clinical practice in Washington, DC, is now an author and consultant/trainer on trauma psychology and treatment in Bethany Beach, D where she is a licensed psychologist. She is known for her work on adult survivors of developmental trauma in childhood and complex trauma and its treatment. Her co-edited book, *Sexual Boundary Violations in Psychotherapy*, will be published in May 2021; the revised edition of her co-edited book, *Treating Complex Traumatic Stress Disorders* was published in 2020. In addition to other professional books, she has written a consumer book entitled *It’s Not You, It’s What Happened to You*. Dr. Courtois was Chair of the Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of PTSD in Adults for the American Psychological Association and is past president of APA Division 56 (Trauma Psychology). She co-founded and was Clinical and Training Director of a specialized inpatient and day treatment program, The CENTER: Posttraumatic Disorders Program in Washington, DC. She has received recognition for her work from several state, national, and international professional organizations.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The DPA plans and promotes programs serving the continuing educational needs of psychologists and professionals across a variety of disciplines. Through the provision of high quality programming, the DPA hopes to support psychologists and other mental health professionals in their commitment to provide ethical, culturally sensitive and competent services to our community.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE...

“Sexual Boundary Violations in Psychotherapy: Facing Indiscretions, Transgressions, and Misconduct” is sponsored by the Delaware Psychological Association, has been approved for 3 CE credits. The Delaware Psychological Association is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Delaware Psychological Association maintains responsibility for this program and its contents.

REGISTRATION

Please register at depsych.org. Our website includes discounted rates for full conference attendees. If you have registration questions, please email delpsychology@gmail.com or call us at 302-475-1574.

Registration Fees for Saturday Only:

DPA Members	\$75
Non-DPA Members	\$105
Students	\$30

If you would like to make a \$25 donation to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Psychology Scholarship Fund, you can do so upon registration on our website at depsych.org.

The DPA recognizes the study and practice of psychology exists within a majority culture that does not afford equitable access and opportunity to all and is striving to actively dismantle policies and processes that oppress individuals and groups. In our effort to shift systemic inequalities and foster inclusion and equality, we are starting a fund that will provide yearly grant awards to students and professionals of color at the secondary, undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral levels as well as established professionals and career changers.

Awards may be used for a variety of pursuits, that may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Conference fees and travel.
- Clinical consultation support.
- Research support.
- Dissertation consultation support.
- Professional licensure test fees (EPPP, ABPP).
- Test prep materials (GRE, EPPP).
- Other.

We will begin accepting EDI Scholarship Applications for the Spring of 2022 after October 31, 2021.

Cancellation Policy

Cancellations received by November 3, 2021, will be refunded in full. No refunds will be granted after November 3, 2021.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

THOSE WHO ATTEND THE WORKSHOP AND COMPLETE THE APA EVALUATION FORM WILL RECEIVE THREE CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS. PLEASE NOTE THAT APA CE RULES REQUIRE THAT WE ONLY GIVE CREDIT TO THOSE WHO ATTEND THE ENTIRE WORKSHOP. THOSE SIGNING IN TO THIS WEBINAR MORE THAN 15 MINUTES AFTER THE SCHEDULED START TIME OR SIGNING OFF BEFORE THE WORKSHOP IS COMPLETED WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE CE CREDIT. ADDITIONALLY, WE ARE UNABLE TO ISSUE PARTIAL CE CREDITS. THIS IS AN APA REQUIREMENT AND NON-NEGOTIABLE.



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