

FOOT ZONE PRACTITIONER PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

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CODE OF ETHICS

Being a professional is much more than having a job. Professionals study and complete regulated courses in a specific field of practice to provide a service. Professionals also adhere to a Code of Ethics.

A **Code of Ethics** is a set of moral principles governed by a person's choice of action. A Foot Zone Practitioner needs to clearly communicate boundaries and business practices to each client they serve and maintain Professional Standards at all times

Professional Standards include: Proper Education; Scope of Practice; City, County, and State Regulations; a Code of Ethics; and Practice Standards.

Healthy relationships with clients are imperative and require an understanding for personal and professional boundaries. Personal boundaries are for one's comfort and safety zone. When one realizes personal boundaries, other boundaries; such as, physical, professional, emotional, and intellectual, can be developed and set for the business environment.

The study of the standards and philosophy of human conduct is known as ethics and is defined by a moral code dealing with the welfare of a client, the public, and the professional's reputation.

Ethics are moral guidelines. These guidelines should always include the following:

1. The foot zone practitioner provides the highest quality foot zone for those seeking his/her services.
2. Do not discriminate or behave in any prejudicial manner of clients or colleagues.
3. Have regular self-evaluations and assessments for training, effectiveness, limitations, and continued education.
4. Respect and adhere to each client's right to privacy and confidentiality.
5. Project a professional image by obeying the laws of the land and conduct activities and business within one's scope of practice.
6. Do no harm to the four bodies of health of one's self or clients.
7. Refuse any gifts or benefits that are intended to influence someone to give a referral, make a decision, or receive treatment purely for self-promotional purposes and not for the good of the client.

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BOUNDARIES

Personal Boundaries define who we are spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually. Personal boundaries differ among individuals. Each client will also have different boundaries. It is important to adhere to both personal and client boundaries and that the client adheres to the practitioner's as well. When a boundary is invaded or violated, one may feel uncomfortable or confused, and this may also be considered abuse or neglect.

Professional Boundaries are predetermined practices to protect the safety of both the client and the practitioner. It is important to honor and respect the client's personal boundaries as well as the client honor and respect the practitioner's. It is also imperative that the practitioner to honor and respect their own boundaries as well. By doing this, clients are unable to take unfair advantage of a practitioner. By presenting to the client outlined policy and procedure statements either through e-mail and/or during the first appointment, the practitioner can establish trust and a framework of boundaries and a safe environment.

Outlined Professional Boundaries:

1. **Foot Zone Session Location:** Regardless of where one chooses to work, he/she needs to be a professional and have a therapeutic setting. The client should feel safe, comfortable, and free from distracting surroundings. There are a variety of settings for a foot zone practitioner that can work nicely, such as the following:
 - Medical Office
 - Marathon Tent
 - Client's Home
 - Home Office
 - Physical Therapist's Office
 - Chiropractic Office
 - Functional Medicine Office
 - Personal Professional Office
 - Acceptable Business Surrounding
2. **Interpersonal Space:** This refers to the actual space maintained between the practitioner and client before, during, and after a foot zone. Creating this type of space helps both the practitioner and client maintain a professional setting.
3. **Appearance:** Professional appearance for the practitioner is very important and includes the following:

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Personal Hygiene:

- One should take a daily shower or bath, wash hair, and apply deodorant. There are several safe and natural deodorants that work, including cold pressed virgin coconut oil, which is also considered a natural antibiotic. If you perspire heavily, take precautions.
- One should also maintain daily oral hygiene and brush teeth often.
- When taking a lunch break, be sure not to eat foods that cause offensive odor.
- Many clients are allergic to perfumes, therefore, they are not recommended.
- Many habits can be good or bad for one's health. If you smoke, do not smoke before a treatment. It is an unhealthy habit and the odor lingers on one's breath, hands, and clothing.
- Keep your face clean and free of blemishes.
- Be sure to make time each day in your schedule to get rest.

Appropriate Clothing:

- It is state law in Utah, and may be the same law in other states, for a foot zone client to be dressed from the knees up. Be sure to let the client know this.
- A foot zone practitioner should also be properly dressed. The attire should be loose enough to allow heat to escape and to allow relaxation while working on a client. Usually scrubs, yoga clothing, a nice sweat outfit, stretch pants, or cotton skirts with a collared t-shirt works well. Women should refrain from wearing low-cut necklines or provocative clothing.
- Jewelry should be minimal. Long chains and chunky or dangling bracelets may get in the way. Wearing a watch changes the energy field of the practitioner so it is recommended to not wear one during a zone. Belts, scarves, and ties may also be problematic.

Professional Communicational Skills:

- It is important to interact with people and to understand your client's needs. When you greet your client, do so with a pleasant voice, manners, and language. Choose to be cheerful.
- Listening to a client is part of your job. They will confide in you. It is important to never betray a client's trust. Even if you do not divulge a client's name in a conversation, it is likely that someone in your circle may know them and connect the dots to your client. If a client is divulging more information than necessary, subtly change the subject.
- Expressions of cheerfulness and a pleasant attitude are very therapeutic and healing for a client.

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- When a practitioner has self-esteem, it is projected to the client, and the client will respect the practitioner.
- Showing maturity in your business and during a session shows the client you are self-disciplined and reliable. This also gives the client confidence in you as a practitioner.
- Client's need your honesty. If the client's expectation exceeds your abilities or scope of practice or the expectation is unobtainable, then you need to be honest. However, honesty doesn't mean you need to be blunt. Be tactful.
- Tact helps you deal with clients in an understanding manner and personal way. If you are aware a client needs medical attention, express it in a tactful way.
- In natural healing medicine, such as foot zone or massage therapy, many practitioners have the natural ability of insight into the client's four bodies of health. This is called intuition, or being kinesthetic.

4. **Self-disclosure:** Many practitioners may request his/her clients disclose some personal information about health, a phone number, a billing address, or e-mail, etc. When a client discloses personal information during a pre-session interview or during a session, the disclosure information should cover only what is relevant information.

The foot zone practitioner must always remain professional and be aware of his/her appropriate self-disclosure practices. Such disclosure information should pertain to topics such as practitioner policies and procedures, fees, training, experience, and other certifications that can be added to a foot zone session. Disclosing personal information of one's personal life to a client, usually shifts the session from the focus of the client to the practitioner and is considered unprofessional.

5. **Language:** One's choice of words, voice intonation, and communications skills are vital aspects for creating effective boundaries and client/practitioner relationship. Keep your language and body language professional.
6. **Touch:** Touch is powerful and should create a feeling of safety and comfort. Touch during a session isn't the only time a foot zone practitioner should be mindful of how he/she practices touch. Be aware of appropriate touch when meeting or greeting and saying good-bye to a client. A hand on the shoulder or hug should be cautious, mindful, and appropriate. A hand shake is always safe. Many times, the lines of touch that a client will approve of or appreciate may be difficult to comprehend. Use caution!
7. **Time Management:** The way a foot zone practitioner manages session time helps set clear boundaries to the client. Always begin and end sessions on time. Honor your professional and personal boundaries. Be sure to schedule adequate time between sessions. First time clients should have at least 15 more minutes added to their session for a preliminary interview, intake forms, and assessment. It is common practice to schedule 15 minutes of down time between each session to receive payment, reschedule your client, wash your hands, clean your tools and your station, get a drink,

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and/or use the restroom. Also honor your client's time. The client should know how much time is expected for each session.

8. **Money:** As with all therapeutic professions, a service is provided for a person's benefit. In return, all clients should understand a foot zone service requires a set, predetermined fee. Psychologically, this actually adds value to the client's experience. It is unethical to charge different fees to different populations for the same service. Clients will challenge boundaries by not bringing money or a check to pay for a session, etc. Establishing and maintaining practitioner fees creates professionalism and boundaries and attracts honorable clients.

THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP

The therapeutic relationship is a practitioner/client relationship that is centered on the client. All activities should benefit and enhance the client's well-being and maintain or promote individual welfare. The client has therapeutic expectations. The practitioner is responsible for explaining his/her scope of practice, education and expertise, length of the session, and fee before giving a foot zone. It is also the practitioner's responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment and to act in the client's best interests. Confidentiality in the practitioner/client relationship is foundational to the safety, protection, trust, and respect of the client.

Keep all personal information and records regarding the client confidential. In fact, it is required by law. Be sensitive and maintain both personal and professional boundaries to avoid potential ethical and legal issues.

Things to Consider in a Therapeutic Relationship:

1. **Power Differential:** In relationships of any kind, evidence of power differences exists where one person is in a more vulnerable or submissive role than another. With that power comes responsibility. The practitioner/client relationship will always exhibit a power differential. The client seeks out services of the practitioner because of the practitioner's knowledge, skill sets, and authority. The practitioner is in a place of power to provide actions or services to enhance the well-being of the more vulnerable client. The practitioner owns the session. In this relationship, the practitioner holds the advantage in the power differential and has the responsibility to establish and maintain a safe healthy environment. Keep this power safe and confidential, or in other words, do not abuse this power.
2. **Transference:** This situation happens when a client personalizes, either negatively or positively, a therapeutic relationship by unconsciously projecting characteristics of someone else from a former relationship onto a therapist or practitioner.

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3. Counter-transference: This situation happens when a therapist or practitioner personalizes a therapeutic relationship by unconsciously projecting characteristics of someone else from a former relationship onto a client. This is almost always detrimental to a therapeutic relationship. Any strong feelings toward a client can signal counter- transference.

4. Dual Relationships: A dual relationship is any situation that combines the therapeutic relationship with a secondary relationship that extends beyond the foot zone session. This type of relationship can span a broad spectrum, such as:

- Spouse or Significant Other
- Parent/Child
- Siblings
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Teacher
- Co-worker
- Business Associate
- Student

Professional boundaries can often be broken with someone in a dual relationship with a practitioner as sometimes these type of clients may feel they are entitled to more of your time, resources, and expertise or disrespect them and your schedule. Make your boundaries clear with these individuals so a symbiotic (mutually beneficial) relationship can be created and continue in all your areas of contact with them.

PRACTITIONER BUSINESS ETHICS

Continuing Education/Complimentary Modalities: Setting business goals and business performances is essential for having a successful business. Always stay informed about new foot zone findings, anatomy and physiology classes, business classes, and complimentary modalities that will assist you with your work. If you do use any complimentary modalities, be sure to advertise and inform your client that they are not part of the foot zone, but complimentary to the foot zone. The practitioner needs to get permission to perform the other modalities during a foot zone, and it should be done in writing on your intake form.

Word of Mouth Advertising: The best form of advertising is through client referrals. If a client is pleased with your services, they usually will refer your name to others. However, the same works in reverse for unsatisfied or angry clients. They will also talk about your work. Therefore, if you are getting several referrals, know that you are most likely doing a great job.

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Keep High Professional Standards: Always give your best services and be truthful in your advertising. Don't over promise your skills and results. Because you are dealing with the health and thriving nature of a client, it is important to be reliable in your work. Having consistent high standards and great services is foundational for your business.

Pricing and Packages: When you start your business, you may want to have some specialty packages. Be sure you advertise the prospective price first, then the price you are gifting to new clients in the packages you create. Do not overprice your services or you may price yourself right out of business. Also, do not underprice yourself or you'll be undercutting yourself in what you merit for the services provided. Check with other professionals of your industry that are close to your location for a pricing standard.

Possibilities if a practitioner overprices their services:

- Clients will expect you to over deliver. If you cannot deliver according to your prices, clients will not return and refer to you as swindling/extorting clients.
- You will not be able to fill your pipeline of clients and may end up going out of business.

Possibilities if a practitioner underprices their services:

- You will be undercutting other professionals and will not be well-received by your industry as well as providing the public with a misunderstanding of the value they receive and should pay for a foot zone.
- You will attract the wrong crowd who may drain your time and energy without any concern for your well-being (parasitic relationship).
- You may become way too busy, underappreciated, and overworked.

Business Name: Your company name is one of the first impressions a client will have. Use, appropriate words that helps establish a great reputation for you. It is nice to have a catchy name; just make sure it is professional and does not elude to something or services that are not part of your business. Your company name and logo will be on signs, doors, cards, websites, etc. Therefore, spend time contemplating your image and what you want to portray before investing in your company name, business cards, and other materials.

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ETHICAL BUSINESS STANDARDS OF PRACTICE FOR CERTIFIED FOOT ZONE PRACTITIONERS TO ADHERE TO

1. Provide the highest quality care within your scope of practice and certification who seek your services.
2. Treat all clients with the same respect and courtesy.
3. Always stay within your scope of practice. Be okay with not knowing an answer, and be willing to refer your client to those who may know the answer.
4. Disclose to your client adequate information regarding your qualifications, your procedures, and your scope of practice.
5. Obtain a signed consent form from each client or a guardian signature for any minor before performing a foot zone.
6. Represent your education, professional affiliations, certifications, and qualifications honestly.
7. Be specific about your scope of practice for each certification. Even though you may provide more than one modality in a session, define each modality as its own.
8. Maintain accurate and truthful client records, and make them available to review with the client.
9. Respect and protect client confidentiality.
10. Refrain from the use of improper language and any form of gossip.
11. Set the example of a professional and conduct yourself as one at all times.
12. Be respectful of the therapeutic relationship by maintaining appropriate boundaries.
13. Be aware of transference, counter-transference, and dual relationships to avoid adverse effects to both you and/or your clients.
14. Do not practice a foot zone session under the influence of any form of chemical or substance that alters your state of being.
15. Retain the right to refuse or terminate services to any client who is inappropriate, abusive, or under the influence of toxic substances.
16. Respect and work with other ethical health care providers to help promote health and wellness.
17. Provide a safe environment and use universal precautions.
18. Charge fair prices for all services and discuss any financial arrangements in advance of the session.
19. Know and obey all laws, rules, and regulations of your city, county, and state pertaining to your work.
20. Eliminate prejudice in the profession and do not discriminate against colleagues or clients.
21. Be organized and make the most of your time.
22. Always strive to maintain and improve your own health and well-being.
23. Dress professionally, modestly, and clean.
24. Continue to learn and develop your skills and to learn about new advancements in your field.
25. Operate all aspects of your business with honesty and integrity
26. Remember people judge others by the first impression. Make a wonderful first impression and maintain professional standards.