

Distinguishing the Ethical Practice of Buddhist Counsellors

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Buddhist Counselling and Psychotherapy (BCP) is a new approach to the field of Counselling and psychotherapy, and is getting widely spread in the world today. It is defined as the application of Buddhist teachings and techniques in a psychological basis to help the people with problems in their life to resolve them, and to have a healthy worldly life, strive for a better next birth, and further to attain *Nibbāna*, the ultimate realization of the truth of the world. To help the clients to achieve and attain these goals, the Buddhist Counsellor needs to practice Counselling and psychotherapy under highly strict ethical principles. Counselling approaches and associations in the western psychology like ACA, APA and BACP have established code of ethics for their practitioners and they are bound to be controlled over it. That is an important point for the effectiveness of a professional humane service. As the BCP is a current trend and is still developing as a psychological service, there is no commonly agreed code of ethics in practice presently. Therefore, this study was done to analyze the code of ethics of Buddhist Counsellors. The study was mainly based on textual studies and data were analyzed under the content analysis method. Analyzing the facts gathered from the *tipitaka* and the stories of Buddhist Counselling from ancient practice, it was probable to determine ethical principles needed in practicing the BCP. In concluding, the ethical principles of Buddhist Counsellors can be categorized basically under five main sections with sub sections as follows.

1. Competence and Suitability
2. Moral goodness and Trustworthiness
 - 2.1. Refrain from harming
 - 2.2. Refrain from despoiling
 - 2.3. Refrain from misconducted sexual relationships
 - 2.4. Avoid lying and discipline in speech
 - 2.5. Refrain from intoxicants
3. No greed in worldly gains
4. Adequate knowledge, training and skillful practice
5. Confidentiality

Establishing a code of ethics of Buddhist counsellors is a significant point to gain recognition in the scholarly world and for a standardized practice.

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Keywords: Counselling and psychotherapy, Buddhist counsellors, Ethical principles

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