Psychology

Name of the Writer

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**Ethical Issues**

Upon analysing the case of Ms Thomas and Tara, it could be clearly said that Ms Thomas did not break any ethical considerations within her role as a counsellor. Furthermore, there are no ethical issues that were in play in this scenario. The primary scenario, according to the ACA code of ethics is of extending counselling boundaries. Under the ACA code of ethics, a counsellor is not supposed to extend the current relationship that she has beyond the scope of the conventional parameters. This is because they understand the risk involved with such actions. This is one of the reasons why the above case is free from any ethical misdoing on the part of Ms Thomas. This is because out of her counselling session she kept her distance from Tara and did not exceed her authority beyond the conventional parameters. This kept the relationship strictly professional and created no sense of attachment between the two individuals.

Furthermore, under the ACA code of ethics guidelines, a counsellor is not supposed to indulge in a non-professional relationship with their client. This is done so that the non-formal interaction between the counsellor client cannot possibly hurt the client in any way. This is another reason why it is thought that there were no ethical issues presented in the above case study. However, the above case study does present the idea that Ms Thomas was completely faithful to the ACA code of ethics. She kept her distance from Tara at all times and even the time they both were unexpectedly within the same beginner’s tennis class. She kept her professional demeanour on at all times during any interaction with Tara. She also kept her distance from Tara and left no stone unturned in order to not form any nonprofessional interaction between the people. May it is at the university, the cafeteria or any other place, Ms Thomas always kept her personal and professional life separate.

Additionally, within the guideline of the ACA Code of ethics, it is mentioned that the counsellor should always respect the privacy of the client and should never intervene in their lives or ask for any personal information until it was absolutely necessary for the counselling session. Keeping this mind, it can be said that there was no ethical issue present in the conduct of Ms Thomas towards tara. Even when she saw her at the cafeteria not eating, she still kept her composure and waited for tara to come to her and tell her the problem herself rather than impose herself in her life.

**Ethical Actions**

The analysis of the case related to Ms Thomas and Tara, it can be clearly said that Ms Thomas did in fact in no way act in an unethical manner. This clearly evident if the case relating to the two is clearly analysed. Furthermore, an analysis done on the basis of ACA Code of ethics also supports the theory that Ms Thomas did not act in any way unethically or inappropriately towards Tara. It can be clearly said that she acted within her professional boundaries and maintained a fine line between their personal and professional relationship.

Under the ACA Code of ethics, Ms Thomas never tried to exceed her professional boundaries. Any counsellor seen to be extending their professional boundaries and tries to form any sort of a personal relationship with their clients can be though to be acting unethically. However, in Ms Thomas’s case, she always kept her distance from Tara outside their sessions. They rarely had any planned interaction other than their counselling sessions and Ms Thomas chose to keep a sort of distance between herself and her client, Tara. This shows that Ms Thomas acted with her ethical duties in mind and kept a strong grasp on them.

Furthermore, it is not befitting of a counsellor to have any sort of a non-professional relationship with their clients. These are mandatory actions under the ACA Code of ethics and were complied with heavily by Ms Thomas towards Tara. She never mingled or had any sort of unprofessional relationship or even a conversation with Tara. Even Tara had to take the first step and come to her office without an appointment in hopes of getting her help with this situation. Ms Thomas had till now kept a strictly professional relationship with her so that she would not have to things such as intervening on Tara’s behalf and getting her a new room.

Lastly, Ms Thomas did not act unethically in other circumstances as well. Even when she knew that her patient Tara was having an eating disorder and was not able to properly transition into her new environment. Ms Thomas did not try to impose herself into Tara’s matters and did not intervene in her privacy. Furthermore, she let Tara decide when was the best time to tell her counsellor regarding her eating problems. Also, as she thought that certain information was not useful for her sessions Ms Thomas tried her best not to indulge herself into Tara’s matters.

**A Model for Ethical Decision-Making**

If I were to have been the counsellor of Tara and was asked to treat and help her, I would definitely do things a little bit differently. I would not have completely cut off my our personal life from each other. A small connection with her in her natural environment would have proven to be much more beneficial for her. Furthermore, my focus would be to get her to focus on the positive point of joining the university and how she could avail them and have the best experience of her life.

**Step 1**

I would have tried my best to fully support my client. I would encourage her to focus on the positive aspects of joining a university. The opportunities, the experiences and how they would be important for her development. Furthermore, I would monitor her growth closely and appreciate her on any improvement made on her part.

**Step 2**

In the case of Tara, she has been diagnosed with an eating disorder and has trouble settling into her new living space and the college experience. This makes the stakeholders within this issue are Tara, her parents and me her counsellor. On the other hand, if we look at the socio/cultural context, it can be said that the study being analysed here works in a climate or a context in which the being professional and living up to the desired code is expected to be far better than really helping anyone.

**Step 3**

The central issue here is that Tara is not eating properly and that she cannot adjust to her surroundings. Also, the complete lack of any help from Ms Thomas other than their assigned sessions is also very alarming.

**Step 4**

Keeping a boundary between professional and personal life is must thing to have when counselling any client. However, I would have still tried to help Tara even outside our assigned sessions. Furthermore, I would never intervene in her life but keep reminding her that there is someone that can help. Her privacy would never be jeopardy and any action word spoken to me would be kept till me**.**

**Step 5**

I would be vary of my assistance, care, truthfulness and honesty while being a counsellor. This is because these things are very important tools for the betterment of the life of my client.

**Step 6**

Privacy of the client needs to be understood and respected at all stages of sessions conducted. Furthermore, giving help to the client outside in the real world is also a solid option and will help increase her confidence.

**Step 7**

If an ethical dilemma does occur during our sessions at any point, I would consult my colleagues, my seniors and my literature for guidance regarding the dilemma.

**Step 8**

Even before moving towards any sort of decision regarding my client I would diligently deliberate the whole situation from each and every angle. By doing so i would have the best possible way to help my client.

**Step 9**

Every decision and step taken during my sessions with my client would be clearly documented in accordance with the legal requirements.

**Step 10**

This experience was very eye-opening for me as I understood the importance of keeping a balance between my personal and professional life. This is because this balance will either make or break my client.

References

Welfel, E.R. (2010). Ethics in Counseling and Psychotherapy –Standards, Research, and Emerging Issues. Sixth Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson