

**Law and Ethic Update 2017**  
**Facing the Challenge of Liability in Psychotherapy:**  
**Practicing Defensively**

**Course Description:**

Psychotherapy necessarily involve establishing a working relationship with the client over an extended period of time. But the history of such therapeutic relationships demonstrates the perils and pitfalls of this type of intimacy. How can issues of multiple roles, interpersonal boundaries, and real personal involvements around such things as gift-giving, disclosures, bartering, field trips, and telephone or E-mail contacts be considered in the most professional manner possible?

The escalation of lawsuits and complaints is placing practicing psychologists in increasing jeopardy. This class, while covering most basic issues in Law and Ethics, does so *specifically from the standpoint of therapists engaging in long-term psychotherapy with the underlying danger of the emergence of symbiotic (borderline) and/or organizing (psychotic) transferences* that pose specific dangers for therapists and clients. How to identify problem areas, seek adequate consultation, document effectively, and safely work through the many transference, resistance, and countertransference dilemmas encountered in the trust relationship of long-term dynamic psychotherapy so that one is practicing defensively is the central focus. This course is **intermediate to advanced** level.

**Learning Objectives: At the conclusion of this course participants will be able to:**

- Identify areas of high risk in advance and to take appropriate preventative measures
- Update forms for patient information, informed consent, releases, referrals, consultations, and terminations
- State the legal principles involved in the duty to protect
- Limit liability with supervisees, students, and colleagues as well as clients; and, most importantly
- Cultivate an attitude of mindfulness regarding accountability and risk management in psychodynamic psychotherapy.

The Listening Perspectives Study Center is approved to provide Continuing Education Credits for Psychologists, Marriage and Family Therapists, Social Workers, and Nurses. The exact number of credits awarded is equal to the number of contact hours for each event and is specified on the Syllabus.

The Listening Perspective Study Center is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Listening Perspectives Study Center maintains responsibility for the program and its content.

The California Board of Behavior Science recognizes Continuing Education Credits awarded by providers approved by the American Psychological Association to Marriage & Family Therapists and Licensed Clinical Social Workers

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