



Global Trauma Institute Code of Ethics - September 2024

All Certified Trauma Care Practitioners certified through the Global Trauma Institute, LLC (henceforth referred to as GTI), must adhere to the following ethical standards.

Code of Ethics:

GTI is committed to maintaining and promoting excellence in trauma care coaching. Therefore, GTI expects all members and credentialed coaches (practitioners, mentors, supervisors, instructors or students), to adhere to the elements and principles of ethical conduct and to be competent and integrate GTI Trauma Care Practice Core Competencies effectively in their work.

In line with the GTI core values and GTI definition of trauma care, the Code of Ethics is designed to provide appropriate guidelines, GTI Members and GTI Credential-holders, who commit to abiding by the following Code of Ethics:

Part One: *Definitions:*

Coaching: Coaching is partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

GTI Certified Trauma Care Practitioner: A GTI Certified Trauma Care Practitioner agrees to practice the GTI Core Competencies and pledges accountability to the GTI Code of Ethics.

Professional Trauma Care Relationship: A professional coaching relationship exists when coaching includes an agreement (including contracts) that defines the responsibilities of each party.

Roles in the Coaching Relationship: In order to clarify roles in the coaching relationship it is often necessary to distinguish between different roles. For purposes of identification, GTI defines these roles as follows:

- a) *Client*: The “Client/Participant” is the person(s) being coached or the organization or group who is receiving training on trauma-informed principles.
- b) *Practitioner*: The practitioner is the person coaching and supporting clients/participants.
- c) *Conflict of Interest*: A situation in which a practitioner has a private or personal interest sufficient to appear to influence the objective of his or her official duties as a practitioner and a professional.
- d) *Advocate*: The person who administers trauma-informed principles in their vocational area.
- e) *Student*: The “student” is someone enrolled in a coach training program or working with a coaching supervisor or coach mentor to learn the coaching process or enhance and develop their coaching skills.

Part Two: The GTI Standards of Ethical Conduct

Section 1: Professional Conduct at Large

As a practitioner, I:

- 1) Conduct myself in accordance with the GTI Code of Ethics in

all interactions, including coach training, coach mentoring and coach, and supervisory activities.

Scope of trauma care practice:

- 2) Commit to taking the appropriate action with the coach, trainer, or coach mentor and/or will contact GTI to address any ethics violation or possible breach as soon as I become aware, whether it involves me or others.
- 3) Communicate and create awareness in others, including organizations, employees, sponsors, coaches, and others, who might need to be informed of the responsibilities established by this code.
- 4) Refrain from unlawful discrimination in occupational activities, including age, race, gender orientation, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, or disability.
- 5) Make verbal and written statements that are true and accurate about what I offer as a coach, the coaching profession or GTI.
- 6) Accurately identify my coaching qualifications, expertise, experience, training, certifications and GTI Credentials.
- 7) Strive at all times to recognize my personal issues that may impair, conflict with or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. I will promptly seek the relevant professional assistance and determine the action to be taken, including whether it is appropriate to suspend or terminate my coaching relationship(s) whenever the facts and circumstances necessitate.
- 8) Recognize that the Code of Ethics applies to my relationship with practice clients, mentees, students, and supervisees.
- 9) Maintain, store and dispose of any records, including electronic files and communications, created during my practice engagements in a manner that promotes confidentiality, security and privacy and complies with any applicable laws and agreements.
- 10) Use GTI Member contact information (email addresses, telephone numbers, and so on) only in the manner and to the extent authorized by GTI.

Section 2: Conflicts of Interest

As a practitioner, I:

- 11) Seek to be conscious of any conflict or potential conflict of interest, openly disclose any such conflict and offer to remove myself when a conflict arises.
- 12) Clarify roles for internal coaches, set boundaries and review with stakeholders, conflicts of interest that may emerge between coaching and other role functions.
- 13) Disclose to my client and the sponsor(s) all anticipated compensation from third parties that I may receive for referrals of clients or pay to receive clients.
- 14) Honor an equitable practitioner/client relationship, regardless of the form of compensation.

Section 3: Professional Conduct with Clients

As a practitioner, I:

- 15) Ethically speak what I know to be true to clients or prospective clients about the potential value of the coaching process or of me as a Practitioner.
- 16) Carefully explain and strive to ensure that, prior to or at the initial meeting, my coaching client understands the nature of coaching, the nature and limits of confidentiality, financial arrangements, and any other terms of the coaching agreement.
- 17) Have a clear coaching service agreement with my clients before beginning the coaching relationship and honor this agreement. The agreement shall include the roles, responsibilities and rights of all parties involved.
- 18) Hold responsibility for being aware of and setting clear, appropriate, and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern interactions, physical or otherwise, I may have with my clients.

- 19) Avoid any sexual or romantic relationship with current clients, students, mentees, or supervisees. Further, I will be alert to the possibility of any potential sexual intimacy among the parties including my support staff and/or assistants and will take the appropriate action to address the issue or cancel the engagement to provide a safe environment overall.
- 20) Respect the participant/client's right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point during the process, subject to the provisions of the agreement. I shall remain alert to indications that there is a shift in the value received from the coaching relationship.
- 21) Encourage the client to make a change if I believe the client would be better served by another coach or by another resource and suggest my client seek the services of other professionals when deemed necessary or appropriate.

Section 4: Confidentiality/Privacy

As a practitioner, I:

- 22) Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all client and sponsor information unless release is required by law.
- 23) Have a clear agreement about how coaching information will be exchanged between coach and participant/client.
- 24) Have a clear agreement when acting as a coach, coach mentor, supervisor, or trainer, with client, student, mentee, or supervisee about the conditions under which confidentiality may not be maintained (e.g., illegal activity, pursuant to valid court order or subpoena; imminent or likely risk of danger to self or to others; etc.) and make sure both client, student, mentee, or supervisee voluntarily and knowingly agree in writing to that limit of confidentiality. Where I reasonably believe that because one of the above circumstances is applicable, I may need to inform appropriate authorities.
- 25) Require all those who work with me in support of my clients to adhere to the GTI Code of Ethics, Number 24, Section 4, Confidentiality and Privacy Standards, and any other sections of the Code of Ethics that might be applicable.

Section 5: Continuing Professional Development

As a practitioner, I:

26) Commit to the need for continued and ongoing development of my professional skills.

Part Three: The GTI Pledge of Ethics

As a GTI Trauma Care Practitioner, I acknowledge and agree to honor my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching clients, colleagues, and to the public at large. I pledge to comply with the GTI Code of Ethics and to practice these standards with those whom I coach, teach, mentor, or supervise.

If I breach this Pledge of Ethics or any part of the GTI Code of Ethics, I agree that the IATAV in its sole discretion may hold me accountable for doing so. I further agree that my accountability to the GTI for any breach may include sanctions, such as loss of my GTI Membership and/or my GTI Credentials. For more information on the Ethical Conduct Review Process including links to file a complaint.

GTI Trauma Care Practitioners will not:

- Work with clients who are engaged in behavior that puts their physical safety at risk, such as: active alcohol and drug addiction, active and significant self-harming behavior, active suicidal ideation without having escalated care in place for their client.
- Have sessions with clients who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Coaches must reschedule clients in that situation and address the drug or alcohol issue at a subsequent session.
- Fail to provide trauma-informed services.
- Offer services to clients who require assistance with issues outside of the practitioner's scope of competence.
- Diagnose, assess or treat mental health issues, nor do they give advice about the diagnoses a client has already received or receives during coaching.

- Provide advice about psychotropic medication.
- Establish a power differential in a client/practitioner relationship. This is unethical.
- Refer their clients to services that they have not personally vetted.
- Publicly disparage, denigrate, or professionally impede another member of the coaching profession, unless there is an issue of public protection and concern which should be addressed through a report to the Professional Standards Committee.

GTI Trauma Care Practitioners will:

- Seek professional supervision from a qualified Supervisor when they encounter issues in their practice that they are not fully competent to handle or need resources on how to proceed with a client.
- Work with clients as support and safety.
- Treat their client's time and money, with respect.
- Have clearly formatted policies and procedures that outline services offered within the scope of practice, practitioner's stated refund policy, format of service provision options and mandatory reporting and confidentiality procedures.
- Consider the context of what the client may have inherited regarding these qualities from prior generations via intergenerational patterns of interaction, communication, or trauma exposure.
- Ensure safety of all clients and their appropriateness for coaching. The completion of a safety assessment is **MANDATORY** to work with clients of a GTI Certified Trauma Care Practitioner.
- Consistently consider the context surrounding each client's

trauma encounters. We pursue insight into our client's experiences by asking about aspects that provide context, such as culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. As this is provided, we stand on that perspective in the forefront of our work with them throughout the coaching relationship.

- Conduct themselves in accordance with the ethical guidelines and professional standards that are outlined in this document. There must be no lack of professionalism, acts of immorality, breaking of any federal, state or local laws that will weaken public confidence in GTI, its accredited coaching programs, the process or profession of coaching, nor bring it into disgrace, or negation of professional and personal boundaries.
- Be cognizant of their personal beliefs and biases, regarding race, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age and ability levels, all areas of multidimensionality for a client. With this said, all GTI Trauma Care Practitioners pledge to not bring personal beliefs and biases into their professional coaching work with clients, holding said opinions as superior or required of the client to also hold.

If a GTI Credentialed Trauma Care Practitioner is charged with a crime involving alcohol or drugs, and/or a crime against persons they must report that charge to Dr. Jai Belton, one of the founders of GTI and The Chairperson of the Professional Standards Committee at drjbelton@globaltraumainstitute.com, within 10 days.

The Professional Standards Committee will meet and decide on a course of action if one is necessary. The Practitioner will have an opportunity to discuss the charges with the committee.

Possible consequences could be up to:

- a) A temporary suspension of a credential or deciding to withhold action until the charges are resolved.

- b) If the charges are upheld the Practitioner may have their credential temporarily or permanently revoked, depending upon the nature and severity of the crime.
- c) If a Practitioner does not report charges and the Professional Standards Committee becomes aware of them, the coach will be served with an immediate suspension of their credential and further penalties depending on the nature and severity of the crime.

Withholding Assistance To The Professional Standard Committee Processing Of A Complaint Or Allegation

All members, students, and credentialed Practitioners of the GTI are requested to cooperate with the Professional Standards Committees complaints procedures, to provide the Committee with evidence requested as part of a complaint procedure, and to join and cooperate with complaints or accusatory hearings when necessary.

If any GTI Trauma Care Practitioner chooses not to cooperate, the Committee will process any complaints without the Practitioner's participation.

Consequences of a Breach of Ethics

Should a GTI Trauma Care Practitioner violate these Ethical Standards they are in jeopardy of having their certification revoked temporarily or permanently. If a peer or client wishes to report an ethical violation, they may do so by contacting Dr. Jai Belton, one of the founders of GTI and The chairperson of the GTI's Professional Standards Committee, drjbelton@globaltraumainstitute.com.