

Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice  
The International SHEN Therapy Association  
revised, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2005

Code of Ethics

We, the members of the International SHEN Therapy Association (ISTA) have come to realize that working with our hands to relieve the emotional pains that trouble our clients' lives is a delicate and sacred trust that demands compassion, respect and the highest ethical considerations. The central role of emotional health in the individual's physical and mental wellness, as well as in the furtherance of peace and harmony among peoples, insists that we define and inspire a high level of competency among ourselves, and to ensure that we conduct our practice at the highest ethical levels. In recognizing and accepting these obligations we set forth our Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

Scope of Practice

As SHEN Practitioners we ply our skills to uncover, lift to the surface, and dissipate the deeply embedded emotional pains that are often associated with and underlie harmful behaviors, physio-emotional conditions and, in general, work against the happiness and best interests of our clients. Our method and approach in SHEN is to work with the bioflux (qi) from our hands to break the contractions that surround and entrap painful emotions and to re-establish the normal movement of qi through our clients' biofields, so as to promote healthy human functioning.

Although recognizing the considerable impact of the emotions on physical and mental health, SHEN Therapy does not involve medical treatment of any physical, biological or mental disorder, nor does SHEN involve psychotherapy or counseling. Except for acknowledging the emotional as an integral part of spiritual growth and conscious development, SHEN does not involve or concern itself with any religious belief or spiritual practice.

Standards of Practice

All professional SHEN practitioners are expected to provide the highest level of compassionate care and to demonstrate skills in practice appropriate to their level of training in the practice of SHEN®. Professional SHEN practitioners are required to comply with all applicable legal requirements; to respect the confidentiality of client information and safeguard all pertinent records; to adhere to ethical boundaries designed to protect the client, the practitioner and the therapeutic relationship; to safeguard the therapeutic value of the relationship; and to practice with honesty, integrity, and lawfulness in the business aspects of SHEN. Failure to abide by the ISTA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice constitutes misconduct and may result in sanctions or other disciplinary actions including, but not limited to, suspension, de-certification (if Certified) or dismissal from the Internship program (if an Intern). These Standards of Practice can be expected to change in keeping with the changing needs and expectations of our clients and ourselves.

## I: Professionalism

The practitioner shall:

- a) treat each client with respect and dignity, and attempt to see through the layers of surface behavior to the client's true inner worth;
- b) conduct him/herself in all settings in a manner meriting the respect of the public, his/her colleagues, and other health care professionals;
- c) provide a safe, clean and comfortable environment for the client which, at least, meets all legal requirements for health and safety;
- d) wear clean and modest clothing;
- c) not practice while under the influence of any substance which impairs his/her emotional state and/or therapeutic performance;
- e) provide a printed fee schedule and make financial arrangements that are clearly understood by the client, before beginning the session(s);
- f) strive for clear and honest communications with clients and colleagues;
- g) strive to recognize any personal limitations s/he may have and practice only within these limits;
- h) refer clients to other more suitable SHEN practitioners when in the best interest of the client or when s/he is unable to engage fully in therapeutic service to the client;
- i) terminate service to the client when the SHEN being provided shows no sign of being effective for the requested purpose in the foreseeable future;
- j) seek professional supervision or consultation when needed or when requested by the client
- k) respect the traditions and practices of other health care professionals, refrain from belittling their reputation and foster collegial relationships with other health care disciplines;
- l) use the initials CSP or SSI only as designators of his/her professional status and competency to practice SHEN;
- m) maintain his/her ISTA registration and abide by ISTA's rules and regulations;
- o) duplicate the ISTA certificate only when required to verify his/her credentials;
- p) immediately return his/her certificate to ISTA if it is revoked or suspended;
- q) notify ISTA's Ethics and Grievance Committee of any concerns about other SHEN practitioners' practice or entitlement to practice;
- r) not advertise, promote or otherwise present SHEN in ways that are misleading and/or are contrary to the best interests and furtherance of the profession;
- s) refer potential SHEN clients only to Certified Practitioners whose Certificate to Practice is current, or to Interns who are currently being actively supervised;
- t) cooperate with and abide by the rulings of the ISTA Ethics and Grievance Committee;
- u) continue to advance his/her skills in SHEN through experiential training and supervision, and to continue his/her emotional growth through SHEN and other methods.

## II: Protection of the client

The practitioner shall:

- a) inform the client of all pertinent aspects of SHEN and what might be expected during the course of the client's SHEN sessions and obtain written confirmation that the client's concerns and requests for information have been adequately addressed, prior to initiating SHEN;
- b) obtain signed consent from the guardian or other legally appointed authority before performing SHEN with minors or others who are unable to give legal consent;
- c) conduct an appropriate assessment and develop a plan of action designed to implement the client's wishes, update the plan as needed, take accurate progress notes for all client sessions and keep these records for a minimum of four years;
- d) respect the client's right to refuse or modify, all or any portion of the SHEN session or series of sessions regardless of prior consent given;

- e) solicit only such information as is relevant to the client's therapeutic needs and share that information only when seeking supervision or consultation with other appropriate professionals, or for clearly defined research purposes and, in all cases, only when written permission is granted;
- f) recognize and agree that Client confidentiality is vital. Any and all personal information or revelations of any sort given by the client, either inside or outside the session to the SHEN practitioner as well as details of the sessions must be held in strictest confidence unless there are overriding medical, legal or ethical considerations. This includes conversations with SHEN practitioners, the client's family members or friends, the practitioner's family members and colleagues, as well as practitioners of other healing disciplines and members of the clergy. Even the fact that a Client is coming for SHEN or has come for SHEN is of itself confidential. This confidentiality continues after the client's death. Confidentiality may be waived only if the Client agrees and signs a proper form to that effect. (Example: the release form allowing an Intern to communicate with their Mentor about the Client and the Client's progress.) Consultations with other SHEN practitioners, Instructors or Mentors about how to work with a particular client's issues must be carried out in a manner which fully protects the client's identity.
- g) release pertinent information about the client to appropriate third parties only when and as required by law to protect the client or others from impending or possible harm;
- h) must refrain from stating any opinions about his or her Client's progress or ability to receive and/or benefit from SHEN to anyone other than the Client.
- i) store and dispose of client files in a secure manner

### III: Roles and Boundaries

The SHEN practitioner shall:

- a) stay within the scope of practice as established by ISTA
- b) offer SHEN only as a non-medical health care practice and refuse to offer SHEN for medical reasons unless medically licensed to do so;
- c) refrain from analysis, counseling and other advice-giving unless otherwise trained and legally entitled to do so;
- d) recognize the limits and contra-indications of SHEN and refer clients to professionals in other health care disciplines when in the client's best interest;
- e) recognize his/her client's dependency and not abuse or foster it;
- f) recognize his/her influential position with the client and not exploit the relationship for commercial gain or other reasons;
- g) avoid overlapping relationships or alliances outside of SHEN that could impair his/her professional judgment;
- h) refrain from any behavior during or around the session or at other times, that sexualizes, or appears to sexualize, the client/practitioner relationship in any way;
- i) seek consultation or refer client to another practitioner when the client's overt behavior is unacceptable and does not change after discussion;
- j) recognize that the intimacy of the therapeutic relationship may activate previously unrecognized practitioner and/or client emotional or sexual needs or desires and that these needs and desires will blur the roles of the therapeutic relationship and weaken objectivity. The practitioner must withdraw when the situation appears unmanageable or in any way unwise and refer the client to his/her Mentor (if an Intern), to another Certified practitioner (if Certified) and advise the Mentor or other practitioner as to the circumstances leading to the referral;
- k) not dissolve the boundaries of the client/practitioner relationship by indulging in social and/or professional gossip, the sharing of opinions about other clients or practitioners, or by political or religious discussions with the client;
- l) terminate service to a client who becomes abusive during the session and only resume service when and if appropriate agreements and safeguards are in place;
- m) refuse service to a client who is under the influence of any substance which significantly alters the client's emotional state or when there is other just and reasonable cause.
- n) not let the necessary client/practitioner boundaries stop him/herself from accepting his/her clients as equals in life and in our hearts.

## IV: Business Practices

The practitioner shall:

- a) maintain adequate and customary liability insurance when available;
- b) accurately and truthfully inform the public of his/her qualifications, professional affiliations and services provided;
- c) avoid potential and actual conflicts of interest;
- d) advertise and promote his/her business in a manner that is honest, dignified, and does not mislead as to the services that can be delivered;
- e) file all applicable municipal, state, national and federal taxes;
- f) maintain accurate financial and other business records for the minimum period required by law;
- g) use the SHEN® service mark on business cards, brochures, advertisements, and stationery only within guidelines established by the SHEN Therapy Institute;
- h) when practicing SHEN as a part of a holistic health-care practice, ensure that SHEN is not presented as endorsing or requiring the use of any health-care practice, supplement, or product;
- i) when making public or private pronouncements or when publishing or supplying articles to be published in any media, exercise due caution that any and all opinions, endorsements and/or recommendations are clearly identified as being personal and not official SHEN positions unless the pronouncements and/or articles have been publicly published by, or have been cleared with the ISTA office or with the SHEN Therapy Institute
- j) ensure that principle title of the home page of a personal website clearly identifies the owner of the site so that it cannot be misidentified as being an official SHEN website, ensure that the content and links on the website are identified as the website owner's personal recommendations and do not imply official SHEN endorsement, and that the website complies with all website guidelines as further developed and defined by the SHEN Therapy Institute.

## V: Legal Requirements

The practitioner shall:

- a) obey all applicable local, state, and national laws;
- b) refrain from illegal, discriminatory, or unethical behavior;
- c) accept responsibility for his/her actions and seek to redress any wrongs s/he may have caused
- d) report to the SHEN Therapy Institute upon learning of anyone offering to practice, or advertising that they practice SHEN professionally who is not qualified or entitled to do so.