

## Code of Ethics of the DGfT e.V.

### 1 Preamble

The German Society for Drama Therapy has drawn up these ethical guidelines as binding for all members. They apply to both natural and legal persons who are organized as ordinary or extraordinary members of the DGfT. All members commit themselves to these guidelines and thus contribute to the correct handling and protection of clients, patients, participants in further education and students. The professional ethical guidelines reflect the self-image of the members in the DGfT as qualified providers of drama therapy services.

The aim of the DGfT Code of Ethics is to provide a binding orientation for dramatherapists working in a preventive, therapeutic, supervisory or consulting capacity. Dramatherapy conduct should be transparent and ethically responsible. All drama therapists are therefore encouraged to behave in accordance with the moral standards of the profession. Responsible dramatherapy practice requires a high level of professional competence, which is why it is based on scientifically founded knowledge. For this reason, they are required to continuously educate themselves and expand their knowledge in accordance with current scientific understanding. They only offer therapeutic services for which they are qualified through education or further training. In areas where scientifically recognized standards are not yet available, members of the DGfT are guided by the principle of plausibility and integrity. They regularly review the success of their interventions. At the same time, they take all necessary measures to ensure the protection and well-being of clients or patients in the sense of patient protection.

The code of Ethics is binding for all members of the DGfT - for therapeutic practice, education and training, and research alike.

The bases of the preparation were the following current guidelines:

- Ethical Principles for Art Therapists of the American Art Therapy Association (AATA)

- Codes of Ethics of the British Association of Dramatherapists (BADth)
- Ethikrichtlinien der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Psychologie e.V. (DGP)
- Ethikrichtlinien Berufsverbands Deutscher Psychologinnen und Psychologen e.V. (BDP)
- Ethikrichtlinien des Deutschen Fachverbandes für Kunst- und Gestaltungstherapie e.V. (DFKGT)

### 2 Professional competence and conduct towards the profession

2.1 Members of the DGfT behave with loyalty to the profession of art and creative therapies and maintain a high level of professional competence and integrity.

2.2 Members who work as drama therapists keep up to date with the latest developments in their field through regular continuing education and training, and actively keep abreast of new developments within their field of work and in related disciplines.

2.3 Members who work as drama therapists maintain the quality of their own professional actions through active participation in regular supervision or supervision.

2.4 Members who work as drama therapists become aware of the limits of their own resilience in due time and take up possibilities for relief.

2.5 Wherever possible Members of the DGfT promote the profession of drama therapy in practice, education and research.

### 3 Professional relationship towards colleagues and other professional disciplines

3.1 Professional relationship to colleagues

Members of the DGfT behave towards their professional colleagues in a loyal, respectful and cooperative manner. They refrain from dishonest behavior to force colleagues out of their fields of activity and/or to deprive them of assignments.

### 3.2 Professional relationship towards members of other professional disciplines

Members of the DGfT behave in an open-minded and cooperative manner towards other professional disciplines and are generally willing to engage in interdisciplinary cooperation.

### 3.3 Responsibility towards employees, freelancers and interns

Members of the DGfT ensure in their role as superiors and within the scope of their possibilities that their employees are adequately paid and protected by contract. Members in independent professional practice themselves ensure equally appropriate contracts for their employees. With regard to their later profession students and interns are to be trained professionally, i.e. according to the standards of the profession. As superiors and responsible persons, members of the DGfT are obliged to provide employees and interns with qualified references.

### 3.4 Responsibility towards Further Education Participants, Students and Supervision Participants

Members of the DGfT use scientifically sound and up-to-date study material in their training.

As teachers, trainers and/or supervisors they are obliged to maintain their professional standards and to continuously improve their teaching competence. As a rule, teachers and trainers should not be supervisors of the trainees at the same time.

As teachers, trainers and/or supervisors, they do not carry out any therapeutic treatment on their training participants, students or supervision participants.

They maintain a professional distance in order to preserve their independence and ability to assess further training participants, students and supervision participants. This abstinence requirement applies for twelve months after the end of the collaboration.

The physical contact that is part of the training is to be applied with great care and exclusively for the benefit of the further education participants, students and supervision participants.

They commit themselves not to abuse the dependence arising from the professional relationship - abuse occurs when your own interests are satisfied e.g. sexual, economic, social or spiritual interests

They commit themselves to respect the physical, personal, cultural, spiritual, religious and political boundaries of the participants, students and supervisors.

As teachers, instructors and/or supervisors, they ensure that participants, students and trainees assess their own abilities appropriately, are not assigned tasks and do not perform beyond their competence.

## 4 Dealing with data, documentation and creative media

### 4.1 Confidentiality

Members of the DGfT are subject to confidentiality obligations. This applies to all information entrusted and made known to them in the course of their professional activity in drama therapy, as well as to the findings and results of consultation and treatment.

They shall only pass on information about the patient/client and about the course of therapy or counseling with explicit written consent. If a case is treated in the context of supervision or intervention, the connection between the person of the patient/client and the course of the therapy must not be traceable. The confidentiality obligation of members of the DGfT also applies to family members, colleagues and superiors of the persons entrusted to them. If several therapists in a team are consulting at the same time, they are released from the duty of confidentiality among themselves, unless the patient/client does not agree to this. The confidentiality obligation also applies to all other external persons. The confidentiality obligation does not apply to employees (e.g. interns) who are entrusted with the preparation or accompaniment of a therapy/counseling session. These employees

must then be informed of their obligation to maintain confidentiality and must declare their consent in writing. The duty of confidentiality also applies in connection with supervision, intervention, training and further education.

#### 4.2 Patient documentation

If members of the DGfT create records and documentation about their patients/clients, the rules of proper patient documentation must be observed. This also applies to the subsequent storage. Members of the DGfT may only collect, store and use data about their patients/clients within the scope of their mandate. In addition, they may only transfer recordings of meetings and treatments to video or audio media and allow a third party to listen to or view these recordings with the prior written consent of their patient(s)/client(s). This also applies to telephone or digitally conducted conversations.

#### 4.3 Copyright

The patient/client is considered the author of the works created in the course of therapy or counseling. Accordingly the creative media, including digital, belong to him/her.

Recordings, documentation and creative media, in particular on data carriers, must be secured against unlawful use and distribution in the interests of data and patient protection.

If the intention is to use the recordings and documentation created in the course of therapeutic and/or counseling sessions or the patient's/client's creative media for the purpose of research and/or teaching or as material for a publication or performance or presentation, the patient's/client's or his legal representative's written declaration of consent with right of revocation must be obtained. In addition, the patient/client must be clearly informed about the purpose for which the material will be used.

It is the duty of members of the DGfT to ensure that the anonymity of the patient/client is preserved in the case of a publication.

Since the patient/client is the author of his/her artistic works, it is advantageous if these end up in the care of the patient/client as soon as possible

after the end of the therapy/counseling. Otherwise, the other person's property must be protected at the workplace and stored and documented in accordance with the legal obligation to keep records.

If recordings, documentation and creative media are used for the purpose of supervision and/or further training, the written patient/client declaration of consent must be obtained in advance. Data protection must be maintained and the authorship must be made unrecognisable.

## 5 Provisions for the protection of patients' rights

### 5.1 General provisions

Members of the DGfT behave towards their patients/clients in accordance with the requirements of comprehensive patient protection.

Members of the DGfT are committed to the well-being of their patients/clients, respect their rights and treat them with appreciation. Discrimination against patients/clients or unequal treatment on the basis of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, skin colour or socio-cultural origin that is not professionally indicated is not permitted.

### 5.2 Therapy agreement or counselling contract

A therapy agreement or counselling contract is concluded between the service provider (therapist or institution) and the patient/client. This is usually done in writing. The agreement contains provisions on the type, duration and goals of the services and, if applicable, also on the services in return. The rights and obligations of the therapist and the patient/client are defined. The contents of the agreement are based on the common rules and practices in the field of psychotherapeutic treatment and counselling and on their legal basis.

### 5.3 Professional competence

Members of the DGfT do not use treatment methods or procedures that are outside their professional competence and the legal requirements associated with their profession. They are responsible for ensuring that the medical and

psychological well-being of their clients is in the hands of a suitably qualified person.

Within the framework of treatment/counselling, the dramatherapy goals and findings are explicitly defined and the progress documented. Members of the DGfT contribute to the establishment of clinical diagnoses and indications. As far as possible therapies occurring in parallel are considered in their own work, and cooperation with therapists and/or representatives of other professional groups involved is sought within the scope of this therapy. This is done on the basis of patient protection and the ethical and legal provisions that arise from this protection.

#### 5.4 Patient protection

In accordance with the psychotherapeutic abstinence requirement, the provisions and regulations contained in the Criminal Code with regard to, among other things, sexual abuse taking advantage of a counselling, treatment or care relationship are binding for members of the DGfT.

For members of the DGfT, both the provisions under the professional law of the Federal Chamber of Psychotherapists and the provisions on the abstinence requirement in civil law are binding. The abstinence requirement includes, among other things, business, intimate or sexual relationships between therapist and patient/client.

Members of the DGfT are aware of their responsible position towards their patients/clients and do not exploit their dependence and trust. They avoid relationships that restrict their professional independence and judgement towards their patients/clients. This abstinence requirement applies for twelve months after the end of the collaboration.

After the end of the therapeutic relationship, there is still a professional obligation to treat components and information of the therapy process confidentially and not to gain any advantages resulting from the special relationship with former patients/clients.

#### 5.5 Professionalism

In the event of personal or factual conflicts that could negatively influence the course of therapy, members of the DGfT seek the professional support

of third parties. Members do not offer dramatherapy services if their physical or mental health is significantly impaired. This also applies in the case of abuse of alcohol and/or other mind-altering substances. Members of the DGfT reliably maintain the therapeutic relationship. If this is no longer possible, if there is no recovery of the patient/client in sight or if there is even a threat to health, the patient/client must be informed of this in an understandable way. In such cases, adequate alternatives are to be recommended.

## 6 Freelance counselling and pursuit of the profession in own practice

### 6.1 Counselling in free practice

The guidelines for the completion of counselling contracts correspond to the criteria contained in the general provisions for the protection of patients' rights.

Members of the DGfT explicitly point out to their clients that counselling contracts are not therapy contracts.

### 6.2 Conducting dramatherapy in own practice in accordance with the Heilpraktikergesetz (Heilpraktiker Act).

Dramatherapy services provided by members of the DGfT are exclusively for the benefit of the patient. Conditions are treated in accordance with current scientific knowledge and with recognised dramatherapy methods in the name of patient protection. Members of the DGfT carry out their work conscientiously and on their own responsibility. Before the therapy begins Members of the DGfT make procedures and components of the therapy transparent to their patients. This concerns, among other things, the dramatherapy techniques, type, duration and goals of the treatment, the treatment risks and the costs. In cases of doubt, it must be clarified whether medical treatment or accompaniment is necessary.

If members of the DGfT recognise that the continuation of a theatre therapy treatment does not lead to an improvement in the health of the client or to a stagnation of the healing process, further treatment by a colleague is to be recommended if

indicated. If there is a risk to the client's health, the suspension or termination of the treatment must be considered in accordance with the Heilpraktikergesetz. If members want to end the treatment, this should be done according to a regulated procedure agreed upon before the beginning of the treatment. If possible, the client should be made aware of alternative treatments.

Members of the DGfT observe the legal regulations and obligations regarding memberships in insurance companies and professional organisations for themselves and their clients.

### 6.3 Name of practice

The name of the dramatherapy practice may not contain any term or other information that could lead to false assumptions.

When choosing the name of the practice, the valid regulations of the Heilpraktikergesetz must be observed.

Members of the DGfT may use advertising or other information to refer to the establishment and management of their dramatherapy practice.

The advertising measures must not raise unreasonable or misleading expectations with regard to the services offered or the staffing of the practice. The regulations of the Therapeutic Products Advertising Act must be observed.

### 6.4 Guidelines for the design of a practice's own homepage

On the homepage and other information about the practice intended for the public, factual formulations, which make the therapeutic offer transparent for the client are to be used as far as possible. The regulations of the Therapeutic Products Advertising Act must be observed.

## 7 Target group children and young people

Members of the DGfT support and recognise the rights of children in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Dramatherapy work is oriented towards the welfare of children and young people (child welfare).

If there are indications of a risk to the welfare of a child, members of the DGfT engaged in drama therapy work are guided by the recommendations for action and legal regulations in child protection that are valid at the time. They involve the legal guardians as well as the child or young person in the risk assessment as long as this does not jeopardise the effective protection of the child or young person. Members working in dramatherapy with children and young people are aware of their entitlement to anonymous counselling for the assessment of a risk to the well-being of a child in accordance with §8b, SGB VIII.

## 8 Advertising and the public

### 8.1 References to special qualifications and focal points

The regulations of the Heilmittelwerbegesetz must be observed. Members of the DGfT may refer to the dramatherapy or professional training and certificates they have acquired, to areas of specialisation and target groups as well as to language skills. No more than six terms in total are permissible. Areas of activity and target groups may only be named as focal points of work if a sustained experience has been gained during at least two years.

Advertising which includes the mention of healing successes is not permitted. This applies all the more with regard to scientifically unsubstantiated or insufficiently developed procedures.

### 8.2 References to professional collaboration

Reference may only be made to professional cooperation if this takes place with persons capable of practising as professionals in accordance with the applicable law, for example in a partnership, in a partnership company or in some other way such as freelance work and/or in an employment relationship.

If dramatherapists practise their profession jointly in the legal form of a civil law partnership in accordance with the Heilpraktikergesetz (Heilpraktiker Act), the professional practice of medicine without a medical certificate, this must be indicated with the reference "joint practice". In the case of partnerships or other joint practices, all the

names of the participants shall be listed in full on the letterhead or on the practice sign (and other documents or supports). In the case of professional association with other members of the profession, the respective professional titles shall be indicated.

### 8.3 Direct advertising

Members of the DGfT are subject to the strict regulations and restrictions as contained in the Law on Advertising in the Field of Medicine (HWG) and the Law against Unfair Competition (UWG).

These include, above all, the regulations regarding "misleading" advertising, the making of promises of healing, advertising for "remote treatments" and advertising outside the professional circles described in the law.

For members of the DGfT, the following provisions regulated in the paragraph are binding in their dealings with patients/clients: the prohibition of interfering with the freedom of choice, exploiting business inexperience, fear or predicament of consumers and the prohibition of disparaging or denigrating the services of the competitor.

## 9 Dramatherapy in research and education

### 9.1 General information

Members of the DGfT who are active in research and teaching have an ethical responsibility towards their subjects and students. They refrain from any outside influence and exclude partiality within the framework of their scientific activity. The development of the research questions, the choice of methodological principles, the interpretation of the results and their dissemination take place on their own responsibility. Age, gender, physical and mental limitations, skin colour and ethnic origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation and socio-cultural backgrounds must not play any role in the evaluation of scientific achievements.

Scientific integrity forms the basis for research in all its stages and for the dissemination of results. Research activity is subject to the valid rules of methodological procedure and the principle of verifiability of results. Scientific findings are made

available in full and without conditions, so that their inclusion in the cumulative process of research and teaching is guaranteed. This also applies to research results that contradict one's own theory or hypotheses, or whose publication does not appear opportune for other reasons.

If members of the DGfT learn that aspects of their research have caused harm to subjects, they take appropriate steps to identify, minimise and, if necessary, reverse this harm.

### 9.2 Presentation of research results

Data are collected, presented and interpreted according to the respective standards of the research field or according to the criteria of scientific honesty. If relevant errors are found in one's own published data at a later date, appropriate steps must be taken on one's own initiative to correct these errors. This correction can be made by means of a published correction, by withdrawing the publication or the research results, by adding a list of "errata" or by other appropriate measures.

Data are not published as original data if they have been published previously as parts of a publication. Data may be republished provided that this is done with appropriate labelling.

### 9.3 Plagiarism

The publication of data and research results of other scientists or the use of texts of third parties are always marked according to the standards of scientific usage and citation. Otherwise they will be considered plagiarism.

### 9.4 Indication of the contribution to a research paper in publications

Members of the DGfT only claim authorship or co-authorship of a research paper if they have carried out the work themselves or have been significantly involved in it. If members of the DGfT review documents submitted by others for the purpose of presentations, publications, grants, applications for external funding or comparable objectives, they shall respect the confidentiality of the documentation received and the property rights of the authors of the documents.