



## **Equal Opportunities Policy**

### Statement of Intent

This policy aims to ensure that no client, counsellor, supervisor, supervisee, mentor, mentoree, trainer, trainee, employees, contractors, sub-contractors or customer suffers discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, culture, religion, nationality, age, disability, sexuality, class, political affiliation, marital, parental or financial status. No-one should be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified. This Company believes that failure to provide equal opportunities for client, counsellor, supervisor, supervisee, mentor, mentoree, trainer, trainee, employees, contractors, sub-contractors or customer is failing the ethos of the Company. Thus all forms of discrimination are opposed.

### Definition of Terms

**Direct Discrimination:** Refers to treating a person less favourably than others in similar circumstances.

**Indirect Discrimination:** Refers to the application of requirements which intentionally or not, have an adverse effect on one particular group.

**Harassment:** Is any behaviour, deliberate or otherwise, which is unwarranted, unwelcome, found to be offensive, objectionable, upsetting or embarrassing to the recipient.

**Victimisation:** Treating a person less favourably than others because he/she has exercised his/her rights under this policy.

### Responsibilities of the Company

1. To promote equal opportunities for all.
2. To make this policy known to all individuals and groups who work with, for or on behalf of the Company.
3. The language of all the Company's official documents shall be non discriminatory and adhere to all aspects of this stated equal opportunities policy.
4. All policies and practices operated by the Company will recognise and adhere to stated equal opportunities policy.
5. To examine and review this policy on a regular basis. Monitoring to ascertain its effectiveness and to make any necessary changes.

### Responsibilities of all working in or for the Company

1. All working in or for the Company will cooperate fully with this equal opportunities policy.
2. Not to discriminate.
3. Not to attempt to encourage others to discriminate.
4. Not to physically or psychologically harass, abuse or intimidate others.
5. To complain to a Director of the Company about any act of discrimination.

### Advertising

The Company will promote its organisation and services in a wide variety of publications, including electronic forms.

Advertising undertaken by the Company will seek to fulfil all aspects of the equal opportunities policy.

### Recruitment

All perspective counsellors, supervisors, mentors, trainers, employees, contractors, sub-contractors will apply through recognised channels. There will be a standard selection procedure and people will be appointed according to merit, experience and personal qualities. Gender, race, culture, religion, nationality, age, disability, sexuality, class, political affiliation, marital, parental or financial status will not be taken into account.

Counsellors, supervisors, mentors, trainers, employees, contractors, sub-contractors will be made aware of the equal opportunities policy.

### Practical Working Attitudes

All clients and those using our service will be equally accepted regardless of their gender, race, culture, religion, nationality, age, disability, sexuality, class, political affiliation, marital, parental or financial status.

Counsellors, supervisors, mentors, trainers, employees, contractors, sub-contractors should be as aware as possible of cultural differences and not make assumptions about clients, supervisees, trainees and others the Company has dealings with. Stereotypical thinking should be avoided.

Attention should be directed to the language used. The Company wishes to be aware of cultural variables with all those with whom it works.

The Company will not reveal discriminatory information about its Counsellors, Supervisors, Trainers or Mentors to clients – in practice this means that the clients will not be told the race, sexual orientation or any other discriminatory information about the counsellor, supervisees, mentors and trainers. At the same time the Company recognises that there are some circumstances where a client will request a counsellor, supervisor, trainer or mentor of a particular race, gender, sexual orientation or the like. Such requests can be met if the Company feels that there are genuine therapeutic reasons and the request is not based on discrimination.

## Grievances

Any grievances regarding discrimination should be taken to a Director of the Company and the grievance will be discussed at the Company's Management meetings.

All grievances will be treated in strictest confidentiality. After a period of consultation appropriate action will be taken.

All therapeutic work undertaken by the Company is subject to appropriate codes of ethics (normally the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) and this offers an alternative complaint route for those wishing to use it.