

# Walking the Boundaries

'Would you ever ... open a pack of *Walking the Boundaries* with colleagues?' We hope so! Because this is the card set for exploring the ambiguities and ethical dilemmas that human service professionals confront every day.

Use this provocative, stimulating set of 80 questions for planning days, supervision sessions, with students and teams, and your own professional development. Here are a few ideas for starters:

## Team building

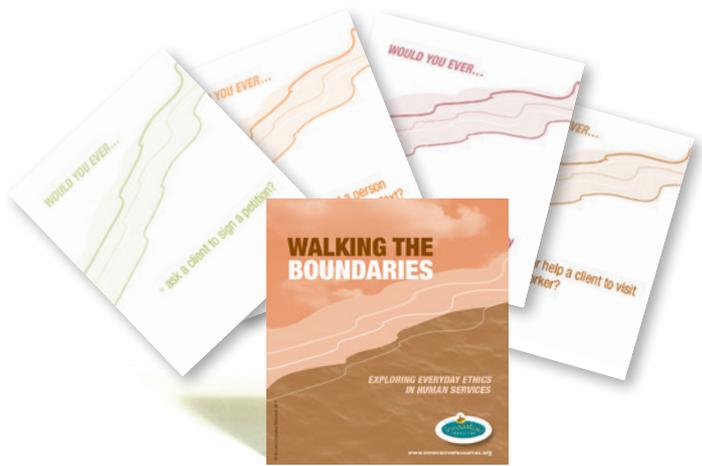
*Walking the Boundaries* is a great team-building and professional development tool, as long as participants feel safe to answer honestly. Introduce them at your next team meeting or planning day and keep an eye on the volume control in the room!

- Which questions do you think your team would agree on?
- Which questions do you think your team would not agree on?
- Can your team agree which 3 cards are likely to be the most important to keep in mind over the next period of time or during the next project?
- Invite each member of the team to pick a card, reflect on it and report on their reflections at your next meeting.
- Invite each member of your team to introduce an activity using the card set.
- What card(s) is missing? Can you think of any more questions you would add to the card set? Invite team members to create their own *Walking the Boundaries* card and introduce it!

## Reflecting on context

Sometimes practitioners might vary their responses to a question or dilemma according to the particular context. Invite participants to choose 3 or more cards, and then discuss such questions as:

- Would your response to these questions always be the same in every situation?
- If not, when might it be different?
- Would it change with different clients—for example, with children, adults, teens or people with various disabilities?
- Would it change according to the community in which you work? For example, would there need to be different responses if you were in a rural, regional or urban setting?
- Would it change according to the type of service offered?
- Would it change according to the organisation you are working for?
- Would it change if you had a different supervisor or worked in a different team?
- Are there questions that you would have answered differently in the past? Why did you change your view?



## Orientation for new staff

*Walking the Boundaries* is ideal for helping welcome and orient new staff to the culture and practice values of the team they are joining. Examining responses to everyday dilemmas can be a good way to unpack the different understandings that new staff members bring with them from their previous experiences as practitioners.

- Pick 1-3 cards and speak about a related experience you have had in your work before joining this organisation. Was it easy to decide what to do, or did it pose a difficult dilemma for you?
- What did you decide to do in the end and how did you make the decision?
- Were the actions you took in line with your past organisation's values or standard practices?
- From what you can tell so far, do you think the actions you took are in accord with the values or standard practice of the organisation you have just joined?
- In your new role, do you know what to do if you have a strong discomfort or disagreement with the work practices of your colleagues, supervisor or the organisation's leadership?

## Looking forward, looking back

*Walking the Boundaries* an excellent classroom resource for trainers and educators to use with tertiary students studying social work and psychology. Invite students to reflect on how standards of good practice have changed over time before discussing ethical challenges in the field today.

- How has practice wisdom in general changed? Which cards do you think would be answered very differently 10, 20, 30, 40 or more years ago?
- Which questions do you think have maintained a standard response over the years?
- Are there any dilemmas you think are more/less prevalent now than in years past?
- Can you select a few cards and, on a scale of one to five, rate them on the level of sureness or certainty you feel about the issue?
- Can you sort the cards into 2 piles marked 'sure' and 'unsure'?
- Pick 3 or more cards at random and discuss different possible actions that a practitioner might take. What would be the likely outcomes of the different actions?

## WALKING THE BOUNDARIES

80 laminated, full-colour cards, 105mm x 120mm, polypropylene box, 44-page booklet  
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