

Statement of ethical practice (1)

18 September 2012

The British Association for Counselling & Psychotherapy (BACP) is dedicated to social diversity, equality and inclusivity of treatment without discrimination of any kind. BACP opposes any psychological treatment such as 'reparative' or 'conversion' therapy which is based upon the assumption that homosexuality is a mental disorder, or based on the premise that the client/patient should change his/her sexuality.

BACP recognises the PAHO/WHO (2012) recent position statement that practices such as conversion or reparative therapies 'have no medical indication and represent a severe threat to the health and human rights of the affected persons'.

BACP recognises that the diversity of human sexualities is compatible with normal mental health and social adjustment (Royal College of Psychiatrists). A recent research review (King, et al 2007) showed that those who do not identify as heterosexual may be misunderstood by some therapists, who see the client/patient's sexuality as the root cause of their presenting issue. The ability to appreciate differences between people, to commit to equality of opportunity, and to avoid discrimination against people or groups contrary to their legitimate personal or social circumstances, is central to ethical and professional practice (BACP 2010, Ethical Framework).

BACP believes that socially inclusive, non-judgemental attitudes to people who identify across the diverse range of human sexualities will have positive consequences for those individuals, as well as for the wider society in which they live. There is no scientific, rational or ethical reason to treat people who identify within a range of human sexualities any differently from those who identify solely as heterosexual.

Pan American Health Organization (Regional Office of World Health Organization):
"Cures" for an illness that does not exist, 17 May 2012.

Royal College of Psychiatrists: <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/rollofhonour/specialinterestgroups/gaylesbian/submissiontothecofe/psychiatryandlgbpeople.aspx>

King, et al (2007): *A systematic review of research on counselling and psychotherapy for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people*. BACP, Lutterworth.

BACP (2010): *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. BACP, Lutterworth.

BACP House
15 St John's Business Park
Lutterworth LE17 4HB
t: 01455 883300
f: 01455 550243
e: bacp@bacp.co.uk
w: www.bacp.co.uk

Company limited by guarantee 2175320
Registered in England & Wales.
Registered Charity 298361