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BCPA Forum Guidelines

The purpose of the BCPA Forum is to promote communication among BCPA members and to build a shared sense of community among them. Thus, messages posted to the Forum should be oriented toward enhancing communication or increasing the knowledge base of psychologists. It is a place where differences of opinion can be aired as long as courtesy and respect for Forum members and others are observed.

Please note that the Forum is not the official mode of communication between the Association, its Board, and/or Staff, and its members. Similarly, the Forum is not a vehicle for Registrants' communication with the College of Psychologists.

Official communications between the BCPA and its members are sent through the newsletter, other direct mailings, and/or through the BCPA website, or at an AGM. Since most members have e-mail addresses, the BCPA office will occasionally send a message to all members. These notices will have a header saying To: ALL BCPA MEMBERS.

Please remember that something written on the BCPA Forum becomes a public document that can be printed, duplicated, or modified by anyone else. Once you have posted an opinion or information, you cannot retract it; it is now in the public domain and you have lost control over it.

If you "Reply" to a posting your reply will go only to the sender (i.e. back-channel). If you want your reply to be sent to all Forum users, click "Reply All". If you use "Reply All", please remove all but the "bcpa_forum@bcpsychologist.org" entry from the address. Some email programs have an option to respond directly to the list. If you do not have a "button" for this, try holding down the Ctrl and Shift buttons and pressing "L".

Forum users are required to follow these Guidelines:

[1] Information and questions posted to the BCPA Forum should be those are of general interest, such as questions about practice issues, ethics, resources (for clients or professional development, for example), and advocacy. If the topic is likely to be of interest to only 2 or 3 others, and you know who those people are, it would be better to "back-channel" – send an email directly to the people concerned – than to use the Forum for it. Do not clutter up the Forum with brief statements of agreement or thanks for another member's post; such messages should go back-channel.

[2] With regard to the above, it is not appropriate to post emails that deal with topics outside the BCPA's general mandate or the practice, ethical, and developmental concerns of

psychologists in BC. Thus, topics that are specific to other organizations, including global causes and organizations (such as Amnesty International, Avaaz, and in many cases even CPA, APA, or CRHSPP) are not appropriate.

[3] It is appropriate to notify Forum members of office space availability, or the availability of surplus tests, books, etc. It is also appropriate to mention helpful books, continuing education opportunities for psychologists, or psycho-educational programs to which Forum members might want to refer their clients. Any such information must be directly relevant to the study or practice of psychology. It is NOT appropriate to promote or otherwise advertise on the Forum a course, book, or other item in which you have a direct financial interest. In these cases, if you wish BCPA members to know about it, contact the BCPA office and make arrangements for a proper advertisement to all BCPA members. If you are in doubt about the appropriateness of an item, either consult with BCPA staff or request contact on the Forum from the Forum Oversight Committee.

[4] Personal attacks, criticism, or "personal reflections" upon other psychologists are prohibited, no matter how serious the differences over policy or philosophy. This includes naming any particular psychologist, group of Psychologists (like, 'all school psychologists', or 'psychologists on the Board of the College', or 'all academic psychologists' etc.). Common courtesy must be observed. Reference to other professions or their members must be similarly respectful, regardless of the degree of difference of opinion. This applies to the College of Psychologists as well - "commentary" on the College, and its board and staff should be avoided.

[5] Use of the forum for illegal purposes, including but not limited to defamation and violation of intellectual property laws or criminal laws is prohibited.

[6] Intentional interference with or disruption of other forum members' computers, network services, or network equipment is prohibited. This includes but is not confined to the following: chain letters, propagation of computer malware, spurious virus warnings, and use of the network to make unauthorized entry into any other machine accessible via the Forum.

How to use the Forum effectively:

[1] Please sign each of your messages.

[2] When you reply to a message, if your email software program repeats the message to which you are responding, please remove any part of the message which is not essential to your reply. This will save considerable space for everyone who receives your message, and make it easier to read what you have to say.

[3] The Forum software is set to reject attachments. If you wish to offer a document to other members you may indicate this in your posting and those desiring it can contact you directly. If it is relatively brief, then posting it as part of your message is also a useful solution. Offering a link to a document or to a web page is another effective solution.

Forum Oversight

BCPA has established a Forum Oversight Committee of three individuals who monitor Forum activity. If a participant does not adhere to the guidelines, the following steps are taken:

[1] If the Forum Oversight Committee agrees by consensus that the guidelines have been violated, a courteous warning will be sent directly to the Forum member, with a reminder of the Guidelines, and an explanation of the violation.

[2] In the case of a second violation, the member will be removed from the Forum, and an explanatory note will be sent. After a member has been suspended from the Forum for six months, that member will be eligible to reapply. Reapplication for Forum privileges must be made to the BCPA Board and the Forum Oversight Committee through the Executive Director. Re-application does not guarantee immediate reinstatement. If not reinstated, the rationale for the decision will be sent to the member.