



Marilyn's Mentor Coaching ICF Core Documents

ICF Core Ethics
Core Values
Core Competencies
Minimum Skill Requirements

Marilyn Rose Coaching, LLC

ICF Registered Mentor Coach, PCC

www.marilynrosecoaching.com/mentorcoaching

marilynrosecoaching@gmail.com



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ICF CODE OF ETHICS

The ICF Code of Ethics describes the ICF core values, ethical principles and ethical standards of behavior for all ICF Professionals. ICF implemented the current version of the Code in January 2020.

The Code of Ethics is composed of five (5) main parts:

1. Introduction
2. Key Definitions
3. ICF Core Values and Ethical Principles
4. Ethical Standards
5. Pledge

1. Introduction

The ICF Code of Ethics describes the core values of the International Coaching Federation (ICF Core Values), and ethical principles and ethical standards of behavior for all ICF Professionals (see definitions). Meeting these ICF ethical standards of behavior is the first of the ICF core coaching competencies (ICF Core Competencies). That is “Demonstrates ethical practice: understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards.”

The ICF Code of Ethics serves to uphold the integrity of ICF and the global coaching profession by:

- Setting standards of conduct consistent with ICF core values and ethical principles.
- Guiding ethical reflection, education, and decision-making
- Adjudicating and preserving ICF coach standards through the ICF Ethical Conduct Review (ECR) process
- Providing the basis for ICF ethics training in ICF-accredited programs

The ICF Code of Ethics applies when ICF Professionals represent themselves as such, in any kind of coaching-related interaction. This is regardless of whether a coaching Relationship (see definitions) has been established. This Code articulates the ethical obligations of ICF Professionals who are acting in their different roles as coach, coach supervisor, mentor coach, trainer or student coach-in-training, or serving in an ICF Leadership role, as well as Support Personnel (see definitions).

Although the Ethical Conduct Review (ECR) process is only applicable to ICF Professionals, as is the Pledge, the ICF Staff are also committed to ethical conduct and the Core Values and Ethical Principles that underpin this ICF code of ethics.

The challenge of working ethically means that members will inevitably encounter situations that require responses to unexpected issues, resolution of dilemmas and solutions to problems. This Code of Ethics is intended to assist those persons subject to the Code by directing them to the variety of ethical factors that may need to be taken into consideration and helping to identify alternative ways of approaching ethical behavior.

ICF Professionals who accept the Code of Ethics strive to be ethical, even when doing so involves making difficult decisions or acting courageously.

ICF CODE OF ETHICS

2. Key Definitions

- **“Client”**—the individual or team/group being coached, the coach being mentored or supervised, or the coach or the student coach being trained.
- **“Coaching”**—partnering with Clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.
- **“Coaching Relationship”**—a relationship that is established by the ICF Professional and the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) under an agreement or a contract that defines the responsibilities and expectations of each party.
- **“Code”**—ICF Code of Ethics
- **“Confidentiality”**—protection of any information obtained around the coaching engagement unless consent to release is given.
- **“Conflict of Interest”**—a situation in which an ICF Professional is involved in multiple interests where serving one interest could work against or be in conflict with another. This could be financial, personal or otherwise.
- **“Equality”**—a situation in which all people experience inclusion, access to resources and opportunity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, immigration status, mental or physical disability, and other areas of human difference.
- **“ICF Professional”**—individuals who represent themselves as an ICF Member or ICF Credential-holder, in roles including but not limited to Coach, Coach Supervisor, Mentor Coach, Coach Trainer, and Student of Coaching
- **“ICF Staff”**— the ICF support personnel who are contracted by the managing company that provides professional management and administrative services on behalf of ICF.
- **“Internal Coach”**— an individual who is employed within an organization and coaches either part-time or full-time the employees of that organization.
- **“Sponsor”**—the entity (including its representatives) paying for and/or arranging or defining the coaching services to be provided.
- **“Support Personnel”**—the people who work for ICF Professionals in support of their Clients.
- **“Systemic equality”**—gender equality, race equality and other forms of equality that are institutionalized in the ethics, core values, policies, structures, and cultures of communities, organizations, nations and society.

ICF CODE OF ETHICS

3. ICF Core Values and Ethical Principles

The ICF Code of Ethics is based on the **ICF Core Values** and the actions that flow from them. All values are equally important and support one another. These values are aspirational and should be used as a way to understand and interpret the standards. All ICF Professionals are expected to showcase and propagate these Values in all their interactions.

4. Ethical Standards

Section I—Responsibility to Clients

As an ICF Professional, I:

1. Explain and ensure that, prior to or at the initial meeting, my coaching Client(s) and Sponsor(s) understand the nature and potential value of coaching, the nature and limits of confidentiality, financial arrangements, and any other terms of the coaching agreement.
2. Create an agreement/contract regarding the roles, responsibilities and rights of all parties involved with my Client(s) and Sponsor(s) prior to the commencement of services.
3. Maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all parties as agreed upon. I am aware of and agree to comply with all applicable laws that pertain to personal data and communications.
4. Have a clear understanding about how information is exchanged among all parties involved during all coaching interactions.
5. Have a clear understanding with both Clients and Sponsors or interested parties about the conditions under which information will not be kept confidential (e.g., illegal activity, if required by law, pursuant to valid court order or subpoena; imminent or likely risk of danger to self or to others; etc.). Where I reasonably believe one of the above circumstances is applicable, I may need to inform appropriate authorities.
6. When working as an Internal Coach, manage conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest with my coaching Clients and Sponsor(s) through coaching agreement(s) and ongoing dialogue. This should include addressing organizational roles, responsibilities, relationships, records, confidentiality and other reporting requirements.
7. Maintain, store and dispose of any records, including electronic files and communications, created during my professional interactions in a manner that promotes confidentiality, security and privacy and complies with any applicable laws and agreements. Furthermore, I seek to make proper use of emerging and growing technological developments that are being used in coaching services (technology-assisted coaching services) and be aware how various ethical standards apply to them.
8. Remain alert to indications that there might be a shift in the value received from the coaching relationship. If so, make a change in the relationship or encourage the Client(s)/Sponsor(s) to seek another coach, seek another professional or use a different resource.

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9. Respect all parties' right to terminate the coaching relationship at any point for any reason during the coaching process subject to the provisions of the agreement.
10. Am sensitive to the implications of having multiple contracts and relationships with the same Client(s) and Sponsor(s) at the same time in order to avoid conflict of interest situations.
11. Am aware of and actively manage any power or status difference between the Client and me that may be caused by cultural, relational, psychological or contextual issues.
12. Disclose to my Clients the potential receipt of compensation, and other benefits I may receive for referring my Clients to third parties.
13. Assure consistent quality of coaching regardless of the amount or form of agreed compensation in any relationship.

Section II—Responsibility to Practice and Performance

As an ICF Professional, I:

14. Adhere to the ICF Code of Ethics in all my interactions. When I become aware of a possible breach of the Code by myself or I recognize unethical behavior in another ICF Professional, I respectfully raise the matter with those involved. If this does not resolve the matter, I refer it to a formal authority (e.g., ICF Global) for resolution.
15. Require adherence to the ICF Code of Ethics by all Support Personnel.
16. Commit to excellence through continued personal, professional and ethical development.
17. Recognize my personal limitations or circumstances that may impair, conflict with or interfere with my coaching performance or my professional coaching relationships. I will reach out for support to determine the action to be taken and, if necessary, promptly seek relevant professional guidance. This may include suspending or terminating my coaching relationship(s).
18. Resolve any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest by working through the issue with relevant parties, seeking professional assistance, or suspending temporarily or ending the professional relationship.
19. Maintain the privacy of ICF Members and use the ICF Member contact information (email addresses, telephone numbers, and so on) only as authorized by ICF or the ICF Member.

Section III—Responsibility to Professionalism

As an ICF Professional, I:

20. Identify accurately my coaching qualifications, my level of coaching competency, expertise, experience, training, certifications and ICF Credentials.
21. Make verbal and written statements that are true and accurate about what I offer as an ICF Professional, what is offered by ICF, the coaching profession, and the potential value of coaching.

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22. Communicate and create awareness with those who need to be informed of the ethical responsibilities established by this Code.

23. Hold responsibility for being aware of and setting clear, appropriate and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern interactions, physical or otherwise.

24. Do not participate in any sexual or romantic engagement with Client(s) or Sponsor(s). I will be ever mindful of the level of intimacy appropriate for the relationship. I take the appropriate action to address the issue or cancel the coaching engagement.

Section IV—Responsibility to Society

As an ICF Professional, I:

25. Avoid discrimination by maintaining fairness and equality in all activities and operations, while respecting local rules and cultural practices. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination on the basis of age, race, gender expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability or military status.

26. Recognize and honor the contributions and intellectual property of others, only claiming ownership of my own material. I understand that a breach of this standard may subject me to legal remedy by a third party.

27. Am honest and work within recognized scientific standards, applicable subject guidelines and boundaries of my competence when conducting and reporting research.

28. Am aware of my and my clients' impact on society. I adhere to the philosophy of "doing good," versus "avoiding bad."

5. The Pledge of Ethics of the ICF Professional

As an ICF Professional, in accordance with the Standards of the ICF Code of Ethics, I acknowledge and agree to fulfill my ethical and legal obligations to my coaching Client(s), Sponsor(s), colleagues and to the public at large.

If I breach any part of the ICF Code of Ethics, I agree that the ICF in its sole discretion may hold me accountable for so doing. I further agree that my accountability to the ICF for any breach may include sanctions, such as mandatory additional coach training or other education or loss of my ICF Membership and/or my ICF Credential.

For more information on the Ethical Conduct Review Process including the links to file a complaint, please click the button below.

<https://coachingfederation.org/ethics/code-of-ethics>

ICF CORE VALUES

PROFESSIONALISM

We commit to a coaching mindset and professional quality that encompasses responsibility, respect, integrity, competence and excellence.

COLLABORATION

We commit to develop social connection and community building.

HUMANITY

We commit to being humane, kind, compassionate and respectful toward others.

EQUITY

We commit to use a coaching mindset to explore and understand the needs of others so we can practice equitable processes at all times that create equality for all.

See full ICF Core Values

<https://coachingfederation.org/app/uploads/2022/01/ICF-Core-Values.pdf>

ICF CORE COMPETENCIES

The ICF Core Competencies were developed to support greater understanding about the skills and approaches used within today's coaching profession as defined by ICF. These competencies and the ICF definition of coaching serve as the foundation of the Credential process, including the ICF Credentialing Exam. **ICF defines coaching as partnering with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.**

The ICF Core Competencies are organized into **four domains** based on commonalities and interdependencies between competencies within each domain. There are no domains nor individual competencies that are weighted—they do not represent any kind of hierarchy. Rather, each competency is considered core and critical for any competent coach to demonstrate.

The ICF Core Competencies were originally created in 1998, consisting of 11 Core Competencies. In November 2019, ICF released an updated version of the competencies. The updated Core Competencies were integrated in ICF-Accredited Coach Education Programs curricula beginning in January 2021. As of August 1, 2022, the updated Core Competencies were integrated into the Credentialing Performance Evaluation and written exam requirements.

<https://coachingfederation.org/credentials-and-standards/core-competencies>

A. Foundation

1. Demonstrates Ethical Practice

Definition: Understands and consistently applies coaching ethics and standards of coaching.

1. Demonstrates personal integrity and honesty in interactions with clients, sponsors and relevant stakeholders
2. Is sensitive to clients' identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs
3. Uses language appropriate and respectful to clients, sponsors and relevant stakeholders
4. Abides by the ICF Code of Ethics and upholds the Core Values
5. Maintains confidentiality with client information per stakeholder agreements and pertinent laws
6. Maintains the distinctions between coaching, consulting, psychotherapy and other support professions
7. Refers clients to other support professionals, as appropriate

2. Embodies a Coaching Mindset

Definition: Develops and maintains a mindset that is open, curious, flexible and client-centered.

1. Acknowledges that clients are responsible for their own choices
2. Engages in ongoing learning and development as a coach
3. Develops an ongoing reflective practice to enhance one's coaching
4. Remains aware of and open to the influence of context and culture on self and others
5. Uses awareness of self and one's intuition to benefit clients
6. Develops and maintains the ability to regulate one's emotions
7. Mentally and emotionally prepares for sessions
8. Seeks help from outside sources when necessary

B. Co-Creating the Relationship

3. Establishes and Maintains Agreements

Definition: Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to create clear agreements about the coaching relationship, process, plans and goals. Establishes agreements for the overall coaching engagement as well as those for each coaching session.

1. Explains what coaching is and is not and describes the process to the client and relevant stakeholders
2. Reaches agreement about what is and is not appropriate in the relationship, what is and is not being offered, and the responsibilities of the client and relevant stakeholders
3. Reaches agreement about the guidelines and specific parameters of the coaching relationship such as logistics, fees, scheduling, duration, termination, confidentiality and inclusion of others
4. Partners with the client and relevant stakeholders to establish an overall coaching plan and goals
5. Partners with the client to determine client-coach compatibility
6. Partners with the client to identify or reconfirm what they want to accomplish in the session
7. Partners with the client to define what the client believes they need to address or resolve to achieve what they want to accomplish in the session
8. Partners with the client to define or reconfirm measures of success for what the client wants to accomplish in the coaching engagement or individual session
9. Partners with the client to manage the time and focus of the session
10. Continues coaching in the direction of the client's desired outcome unless the client indicates otherwise
11. Partners with the client to end the coaching relationship in a way that honors the experience

4. Cultivates Trust and Safety

Definition: Partners with the client to create a safe, supportive environment that allows the client to share freely. Maintains a relationship of mutual respect and trust.

1. Seeks to understand the client within their context which may include their identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs
2. Demonstrates respect for the client's identity, perceptions, style and language and adapts one's coaching to the client
3. Acknowledges and respects the client's unique talents, insights and work in the coaching process
4. Shows support, empathy and concern for the client
5. Acknowledges and supports the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs and suggestions
6. Demonstrates openness and transparency as a way to display vulnerability and build trust with the client

5. Maintains Presence

Definition: Is fully conscious and present with the client, employing a style that is open, flexible, grounded and confident

1. Remains focused, observant, empathetic and responsive to the client
2. Demonstrates curiosity during the coaching process
3. Manages one's emotions to stay present with the client
4. Demonstrates confidence in working with strong client emotions during the coaching process
5. Is comfortable working in a space of not knowing
6. Creates or allows space for silence, pause or reflection

C. Communicating Effectively

6. Listens Actively

Definition: Focuses on what the client is and is not saying to fully understand what is being communicated in the context of the client systems and to support client self-expression

1. Considers the client's context, identity, environment, experiences, values and beliefs to enhance understanding of what the client is communicating
2. Reflects or summarizes what the client communicated to ensure clarity and understanding
3. Recognizes and inquires when there is more to what the client is communicating
4. Notices, acknowledges and explores the client's emotions, energy shifts, non-verbal cues or other behaviors
5. Integrates the client's words, tone of voice and body language to determine the full meaning of what is being communicated
6. Notices trends in the client's behaviors and emotions across sessions to discern themes and patterns

7. Evokes Awareness

Definition: Facilitates client insight and learning by using tools and techniques such as powerful questioning, silence, metaphor or analogy

1. Considers client experience when deciding what might be most useful
2. Challenges the client as a way to evoke awareness or insight
3. Asks questions about the client, such as their way of thinking, values, needs, wants and beliefs
4. Asks questions that help the client explore beyond current thinking
5. Invites the client to share more about their experience in the moment
6. Notices what is working to enhance client progress
7. Adjusts the coaching approach in response to the client's needs
8. Helps the client identify factors that influence current and future patterns of behavior, thinking or emotion
9. Invites the client to generate ideas about how they can move forward and what they are willing or able to do
10. Supports the client in reframing perspectives
11. Shares observations, insights and feelings, without attachment, that have the potential to create new learning for the client

D. Cultivating Learning and Growth

8. Facilitates Client Growth

Definition: Partners with the client to transform learning and insight into action. Promotes client autonomy in the coaching process.

1. Works with the client to integrate new awareness, insight or learning into their worldview and behaviors
2. Partners with the client to design goals, actions and accountability measures that integrate and expand new learning
3. Acknowledges and supports client autonomy in the design of goals, actions and methods of accountability
4. Supports the client in identifying potential results or learning from identified action steps
5. Invites the client to consider how to move forward, including resources, support and potential barriers
6. Partners with the client to summarize learning and insight within or between sessions
7. Celebrates the client's progress and successes
8. Partners with the client to close the session

PCC Minimum Skill Requirements

3. Establishes and Maintains Agreements

3.1: Coach partners with the client to identify or reconfirm what the client wants to accomplish in this session.

3.2: Coach partners with the client to define or reconfirm measure(s) of success for what the client wants to accomplish in this session.

3.3: Coach inquires about or explores what is important or meaningful to the client about what they want to accomplish in this session.

3.4: Coach partners with the client to define what the client believes they need to address to achieve what they want to accomplish in this session.

4. Cultivates Trust and Safety

4.1: Coach acknowledges and respects the client's unique talents, insights and work in the coaching process.

4.2: Coach shows support, empathy or concern for the client.

4.3: Coach acknowledges and supports the client's expression of feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs or suggestions.

4.4: Coach partners with the client by inviting the client to respond in any way to the coach's contributions and accepts the client's response.

PCC Minimum Skill Requirements

5. Maintains Presence

- 5.1: Coach acts in response to the whole person of the client (the who).
- 5.2: Coach acts in response to what the client wants to accomplish throughout this session (the what).
- 5.3: Coach partners with the client by supporting the client to choose what happens in this session.
- 5.4: Coach demonstrates curiosity to learn more about the client.
- 5.5: Coach allows for silence, pause or reflection.

6. Listens Actively

- 6.1: Coach's questions and observations are customized by using what the coach has learned about who the client is or the client's situation.
- 6.2: Coach inquires about or explores the words the client uses.
- 6.3: Coach inquires about or explores the client's emotions.

PCC Minimum Skill Requirements

6.4: Coach explores the client's energy shifts, nonverbal cues or other behaviors.

6.5: Coach inquires about or explores how the client currently perceives themselves or their world.

6.6: Coach allows the client to complete speaking without interrupting unless there is a stated coaching purpose to do so.

6.7: Coach succinctly reflects or summarizes what the client communicated to ensure the client's clarity and understanding.

7. Evokes Awareness

7.1: Coach asks questions about the client, such as their current way of thinking, feeling, values, needs, wants, beliefs or behavior.

7.2: Coach asks questions to help the client explore beyond the client's current thinking or feeling to new or expanded ways of thinking or feeling about themselves (the who).

7.3: Coach asks questions to help the client explore beyond the client's current thinking or feeling to new or expanded ways of thinking or feeling about their situation (the what).

7.4: Coach asks questions to help the client explore beyond current thinking, feeling or behaving toward the outcome the client desires.

PCC Minimum Skill Requirements

7.5: Coach shares—with no attachment—observations, intuitions, comments, thoughts or feelings, and invites the client’s exploration through verbal or tonal invitation.

7.6: Coach asks clear, direct, primarily open-ended questions, one at a time, at a pace that allows for thinking, feeling or reflection by the client.

7.7: Coach uses language that is generally clear and concise.

7.8: Coach allows the client to do most of the talking.

8. Facilitates Client Growth

8.1: Coach invites or allows the client to explore progress toward what the client wanted to accomplish in this session.

8.2: Coach invites the client to state or explore the client’s learning in this session about themselves (the who).

8.3: Coach invites the client to state or explore the client’s learning in this session about their situation (the what).

PCC Minimum Skill Requirements

8.4: Coach invites the client to consider how they will use new learning from this coaching session.

8.5: Coach partners with the client to design post-session thinking, reflection or action.

8.6: Coach partners with the client to consider how to move forward, including resources, support or potential barriers.

8.7: Coach partners with the client to design the best methods of accountability for themself.

8.8: Coach celebrates the client's progress and learning.

8.9: Coach partners with the client on how they want to complete this session.

To access ACC, PCC, and MCC Minimum Skill Requirements

<https://coachingfederation.org/credentials-and-standards/performance-evaluations/minimum-skills-requirements>

To learn more about Mentor Coaching, Upcoming Groups and 1:1 Mentor Coaching visit:

<https://www.marilynrosecoaching.com/mentorcoaching>