



Hakomi

Mindful Somatic Psychotherapy

Ethical Grievance Process

Statement of Purpose

We, as members of the Hakomi Institute, take behaving with ethical integrity very seriously and desire to hold ourselves accountable in our response when an ethical complaint is brought against a Hakomi Therapist (CHT), Hakomi Practitioner (CHP), Hakomi Student, Trainer, Teacher, or Organizer.

We consider ethical behavior to be the right use of power and influence, and as such, to be a lifelong process of engagement in learning about and taking responsibility for one's impact in all relationships, especially those involving different degrees of power such as teacher/student, or therapist/client. Please refer to the Hakomi Code of Ethics.

The mission of the Hakomi International Ethics Committee (HIEC) is to use a healthy and non-punitive process to review situations of possible unethical behavior. We want to support students, therapists and teachers of Hakomi to come forth with concerns so that complaints can be spoken about honestly and with the intention of accountability, resolution, repair, learning, and self-mastery. Although members of the HIEC are humbly aware that it is impossible to solve all problems that may arise in the course of our teaching, mentoring, or business relationships, we make this ethical review process available in the hope that it can be well-used.

Approved by the Hakomi Faculty and Board of Directors, 8/04; edit 5/10, 9/11, 9/15, 11/17, 10/21

The goals for Hakomi International Ethics Committee (HIEC) are:

1. To maintain integrity in relationships among members of the Hakomi Institute and with the public at large.

2. To enhance the Hakomi Method and the professionalism of our colleagues by encouraging a high standard of ethical behavior among Hakomi practitioners that:
 - A. encourages the bringing of complaints to the HIEC by those who believe there are grounds for such;
 - B. protects the confidentiality of all parties; and
 - C. reports on the results of the process (while preserving confidentiality as to the names of participants) periodically to teachers, therapists, assistants, students, and organizers in the Hakomi network

3. To provide a process for responding to ethical complaints and resolving conflicts.

4. To hold Certified Hakomi Therapists and Practitioners, Students, Trainers, Teachers, and Organizers accountable for their behavior.

5. To do our best to provide education, guidance, advice, and counsel so that unethical behaviors are not repeated.

6. To stay alert to current developments in the field of ethics and pass this information on to members of the Hakomi Institute.

7. To educate therapists and faculty by making recommendations for further training based on the nature of complaints received.

Hakomi International Ethics Committee

There are ethical questions and concerns that arise in relationships with others in the context of therapy, teaching, and business interactions. Our mission is to use a clarifying and non-punitive process to review situations of possible unethical behavior. We want to support clients and students to come forth with concerns. Although we members of the HIEC are humbly aware that it is impossible to solve all problems that may arise in the course of our therapeutic, educational, or business relationships, we make this ethical review process available in the hope that it can be well-used.

The ethical review process is focused on accountability, resolution, repair, and remediation, rather than blame or punishment. The most satisfying results will come from honesty, truthfulness, and openness on the part of both claimant and respondent. The person with greater role power has greater responsibility for the health of the relationship and will be held accountable, but there is an opportunity for learning and growth for both parties.

The vehicle created for the purpose of managing ethical complaints is the Hakomi International Ethics Committee (HIEC). This committee has a minimum of five members, one of whom is not otherwise connected with the Hakomi Institute. The HIEC directs and monitors the grievance and conflict resolution process, and the educational process, in whatever forms these take.

A second branch of the HIEC is available to Hakomi Faculty, Training Assistants and Hakomi Organizers. This is the Care and Repair Team. The intention of this team is to empower those in conflict to resolve and repair conflictual relationships that do not fit the criteria for a grievance review. There is a separate document outlining the specifics of the care and repair process.

The International Ethics Committee of the Hakomi Institute is empowered to respond to ethical conflicts and complaints brought to its attention. Responses focus on compassionate listening, facilitating and supporting a clarifying information exchange between the parties, encouraging resolution through personal discussion and/or mediation, and furthering the ethical education and sensitivity of members of the Hakomi Institute to the right and skillful use of power and influence.

Like most small organizations, the Hakomi Institute does not have the staff or financial resources to undertake the kind of formal grievance investigation that is the mandate of state mental health governing bodies. Nothing in the Hakomi Institute complaint resolution process shall prohibit individuals from filing a grievance with their state's mental health grievance body or taking legal action. But since there are conflicting differences in approach between mediation and litigation, we ask that those who use the Hakomi complaint and conflict resolution process, agree to complete this process before filing a state grievance or taking legal action. The time for completion of a review is typically one to six months, during which time all parties, including the ethics committee, agree to respond to each step that is taken within a specified time-frame.

HIEC members will to their fullest ability, advocate for ethical accountability, communication, resolution, and on-going education in ethics within the Hakomi Institute. While the HIEC is not authorized to determine culpability, the HIEC will proscribe appropriate actions for remediation, education, and self-correction as warranted by each individual case. In certain cases, the HIEC may recommend removal of Certification, Faculty, or Organizer status to the Hakomi Board of Directors.



Description of the Grievance Process

If you (referred to hereafter as claimant) feel you have been injured by the unethical behavior of a member of the Hakomi network (therapist, practitioner, student, assistant, teacher, trainer, organizer) and have not been able to resolve the issue directly with the person you believe has caused you harm (referred to as respondent), please follow the procedure outlined here.

Contact the Hakomi International Ethics Committee at hiec@hakomi.org. If you contact a regional Hakomi Office with your complaint, the staff at the regional office will also refer you to the Hakomi International Ethics Committee. When you contact HIEC a member of the committee will reach out to schedule a time to talk with you. In this initial screening phone call, you will learn more about the Ethical Review Process and be given a form to use to initiate your complaint. Your information will be kept confidential within the committee.

1. At this first stage, your complaint or conflict will be heard and taken seriously.

2. Through a personal interview process, the HIEC will make a determination about how to proceed. The committee may decide to:
 - A. Take no action - if the committee feels that everything that the issue is not appropriate for an ethics review.
 - B. Suggest other avenues - if the committee feels that the two parties could be successful by processing more on their own or with the help of a third person.
 - C. Suggest the Hakomi ethical review process - if the committee determines that the complaint is a possible ethical violation.
 - D. Suggest conflict resolution - if the committee determines that the issue is a dispute rather than an ethical violation. The parties will be referred to a mediator or, if they are both Hakomi faculty members or staff they will be referred to the Hakomi Care and Repair Team.

3. In regard to option 4a (above) in which the HIEC decides not to take action:
 - A. Finding that the respondent does not remember the facts in a case when a considerable time has elapsed between the incident and the claim being lodged will not be a valid or sufficient reason for HIEC to decline the case.
 - B. If HIEC determines that they cannot take a case and the claimant disagrees with this decision, the claimant has no further recourse within our organization to resolve their concerns.
 - C. If HIEC receives a complaint alleging sexual misconduct by a non-Hakomi therapist they will include at least one of these follow-up steps:
 - I. Provide a referral to the appropriate regulatory body governing therapist misconduct
 - II. Ask if the individual would like a therapy referral
 - III. Recommend a support group
 - IV. Recommend an advocacy group

4. If the HIEC determines that an ethical review is appropriate and if you wish to enter into the Hakomi ethical review process, we will require that the respondent be informed of the nature and details of your complaint, and thus confidentiality* will include the respondent from this point on. You will sign a release of information form to authorize an exchange of information related to the situation.

**Our intention is to maintain confidentiality, but you will understand that if we perceive a threat from either party, we may need to waive confidentiality or suspend the ethical review process, and may need to disclose information to relevant parties.*

5. Possible outcomes of the Hakomi ethical grievance process for the respondent include authentic apology, supervision, and ethics education. The committee may also recommend mediation. When circumstances warrant, other possible actions that can be taken by the Hakomi Institute include termination of Hakomi certification or temporary or permanent removal of teacher, trainer, organizer or assistant status.

6. At the conclusion of the ethical review process, that can take up to six months, the case is officially closed and all the records of the case are stored in a confidential place.

7. Each situation brought to the HIEC contains valuable insights. To make these lessons available on a wider scale, and to facilitate self-correction, the HIEC reports annually to the Hakomi Faculty, and includes the nature of complaints and conflicts received (without names and/or identifying features) for the purpose of on-going faculty ethics education.