Chapter 1

History, Underlying Values, and Personal Relevance of the Ethics Code

The Behavior Analysis Certification Board's (BACB) Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts (2020) (hereafter referred to as "the Code") defines standards of ethical conduct across the full range of assessment, treatment, research, and training responsibilities of professional behavior analysts. The content of the Code and its underlying values are the focus of this text. The Code plays an essential role in communicating enforceable and continually refined parameters for responsible conduct to behavior analysts and to stakeholders who may be impacted by the research or practice activities of behavior analysts. Of equal or greater importance, the Code paints a picture of professional integrity and social impact that every

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behavior analyst should aspire to fulfill in new ways for every stage, role, and chapter of their career. Behavior analysts never finish learning to embody the values and standards of the Code because every client, research undertaking, student, and supervisee provides new information and learning opportunities with relevance to ethical decision making. The Code encompasses the minimum standards for a behavior analyst to maintain their credential and avoid professional sanctions as well as the highest aspirations for a behavior analyst to use their knowledge and skills in increasingly equitable, humane, and effective ways. The Code specifies behaviors to avoid because they invite hard and also specifies behaviors that maximize benefits for clients, stakeholders, supervisees, and trainees.

A behavior analyst's degree of adherence to the Code will ultimately depend upon multiple aspects of their personal learning history and their present circumstances, and Chapter 3 more fully explores the role of personal values in ethical decision making. The Code is organized into six sections or areas of ethical responsibility (e.g., Section 4: Responsibility to Supervisees and Trainees) and each section includes up to 19 individual standards (e.g., Standard 4.09: Delegation of Tasks). While the standards in each section are quite comprehensive, the introduction to the Code cautions, "…the absence of a particular behavior or type of conduct from the Code standards does not indicate that such behavior or conduct is ethical or unethical. When interpreting and applying a standard, it is critical to attend to its specific wording and function, as well as the core principles" (BACB, 2020, p. 5). The four principles (i.e., guiding values) include: (a) benefit others; (b) treat others with compassion, dignity, and respect; (c) behave with integrity; and (d) ensure your competence. A full discussion of the four core principles underlying the BACB Code appears at the end of this chapter.

The Code works in concert with additional sources to define the ethical conduct of behavior analysts including, for example, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) legislation, mandated reporting laws, the Health Information Protection and Portability Act (HIPPA), Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) regulations, as well as employer and funder requirements. Thus, the rules laid out in the Code are necessary but insufficient to prescribe the right thing for an individual behavior analyst to do in every possible ethical dilemma.

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The Code and this textbook provide readers with an introduction to ethics; however, a growing number of resources allow behavior analysts

to continue adding breadth and depth to their understanding of ethics throughout their career. For example, some behavior analysts who teach in academia or design systems to support ethical conduct may find it useful to delve into broader philosophical underpinnings of ethics in applied behavior analysis (ABA) (e.g., Broadhead, Cox & Quigley, 2018; Goldiamond, 1974). Individuals who supervise others or serve clients with economic, linguistic, cultural, or social identities that differ from their own must pursue reading and education specific to the topic of culturally responsive care (Sadavoy & Zube, 2021; Conners & Cappell, 2020; American Psychological Association, 1990). Philosophers, academics, and practitioners each bring unique perspectives to the topic of applied ethics. These differing perspectives point to the complexity of the topic matter and the practical need for professionals to proactively develop repertoires for evaluating their behavior and the behavior of others through an ethical lens. The requirement of the BACB for CEs in the areas of ethics during every recertification cycle attests to the importance of constant contact with content related to ethics and constant refinement of ethical repertoires.

For centuries, philosophers have debated whether ethical conduct is best defined in terms of certain qualities of an individual's actions (i.e., deontological approach) or whether ethical conduct should be defined in terms of the ultimate impact of those actions on stakeholders (e.g., utilitarian approach). Practically speaking, behavior analysts must learn to conduct themselves in ways that prioritize the wellbeing of the client or other most vulnerable stakeholder(s) and that also satisfy the legal and ethical requirements of their immediate context. Both responsibilities supersede the behavior analyst's personal morality, preferences, and biases to act in one's own self-inter-

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est; thus, proactive ethics rely heavily on a behavior analyst's capacity to engage in reflection, prevention, and continuous learning. In sum, behavior analysts do not have the luxury of choosing to engage or not engage in socially accepted, ethical behaviors or to benefit others through their ethical decision making. Behavior analysts are accountable for their professional actions as well as the foreseen and unforeseen impact of those actions on clients, research participants, colleagues, and society.

Relevant History

Understanding the history behind the field's obligation to articulate and uphold clear ethical boundaries for its members is a useful initial step toward

developing the knowledge and skills necessary to embody the Code. The histories of science, medicine, and behavior analysis include examples of grievous human rights violations that informed the preventive approach of contemporary codes of ethics. Past abuses such as research conducted on Jewish people during the Holocaust resulted in multinational efforts to establish policies and systems for preventing their recurrence (e.g., Belmont Report, Declaration of Helsinki). Chapter 2 delves into human rights violations inflicted in the name of scientific progress along with examples of the potential harms of unregulated research and practice as the broader context for contemporary codes of ethics. Reflecting on formative historical events is especially important for behavior analysts because the field originated with a mission of scientific discovery but rapidly evolved toward a parallel mission of socially important applications.

The Code benefits from more than a century of efforts to identify basic human rights and necessary conditions for their protection. For example, historians suggest the Hippocratic Oath was most likely developed around 400 BC while Hippocrates, the father of western medicine, was alive and developing his methods in Cos, Greece. The basic purpose of the oath was to introduce the notion that a physician's effectiveness depends on their empathy for patients as well as their skilled use of medical rather than spiritual knowledge (Peel, 2005). The ideal of the humanistic physician continued to influence professional ethical codes, including the first code of conduct published by the American Medical Association at the time of its founding in 1847. The first behavior analysts were scientists concerned with identifying the basic processes underlying human and non-human learning. Scholarly origins sometimes predict a slower trajectory toward professionalization and development of initial ethical codes because applied technologies take time to accumulate, as do the number of implementers and documented instances of harm caused by unskilled applications. For behavior analysts, the lag between the founding of the first scientific outlet for behavior analytic research (*Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis* founded in 1968) and publication of the first ethical code for practicing behavior analysis was roughly 30 years (Johnston et al., 2017).

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The American Psychological Association's Code of Ethics, in particular, has relevance to the content and development of the current BACB Code. Like the field of behavior analysis, psychology started with a scientific mission. Applied psychologists were not prevalent in the United States outside New York City until the 1930s when the field benefitted from a burst

in opportunities to conduct mental tests for educational and business purposes based on the perceived benefits of those assessments to the military in World War I (Joyce & Rankin, 2010). Radio psychology gained popularity during this time, with hosts of varying qualifications addressing a societal demand for practical guidance around parenting, critical thinking, activism, and wellbeing in the era of the Great Depression (Behrens, 2009). Mocking and exploitative practices also proliferated in the media and in the community during the 1930s (e.g., practice of phrenology, a radio show in which the host—a physician—diagnosed "what makes you tick" based on participants' answers to a small number of questions, and advertisements for cure-all psychological services despite the relative newness of applied psychology and its underlying science; Joyce & Rankin). Psychological researchers called on national organizations such as the American Psychological Association (APA) to protect the scientific credibility of the field simultaneously with applied psychologists organizing to establish basic training requirements and higher ethical standards for an emerging generation of practitioners. Several states responded by initiating local efforts to license psychologists so that consumers could distinguish between qualified and unqualified providers.

As detailed by Joyce and Rankin (2010), the APA responded to psychologists' demands for higher ethical standards within the field in several ways. First, in 1940, they charged an ethics committee to review and respond to charges of ethical misconduct. Members of APA could mail in complaints for the committee to investigate and to potentially enforce consequences for egregious violations (e.g., expulsion from the field via public advertisement). Committee members acknowledged inherent challenges of distinguishing ethical from unethical professional behavior without a codified set of conduct standards to guide them, reversing course on their recommendation just three years earlier to wait and issue a code after applications of psychology became more refined and widespread. The APA formally revised its mission to serve the interests of applied psychologists as well as researchers in 1945.

Leaders of the APA responded to a confluence of variables (e.g., difficulty addressing instances of unethical conduct without codified standards or processes; human rights concerns in the wake of World War II) by forming a standards committee to prepare the profession's first code of conduct (e.g., Sinclair, 2020). The committee adopted a critical incident approach that involved surveying 7500 applied psychologists about experiences in which they perceived ethical implications of their professional decisions (APA, 1953). Committee members then used survey results to inductively develop six categories of responsibility for professional psychologists (e.g., psychologist-client relationships, psychologists' role in society). Each sec-

tion of the Code was drafted by an individual committee member, revised by subject matter experts, and published in the American Psychologist for public comment. More than four years of iterative, empirically-grounded work culminated with the 1953 publication of the first set of ethical standards for psychologists. The first APA Code addressed the following areas of ethical responsibility for psychologists: public responsibility; client relationships; teaching; research; writing and publishing; and professional relationships. Each section included principles of conduct as well as illustrations informed by member-nominated critical incidents. Subsequent revisions of the APA Code moved toward brevity with an emphasis on aspirational values rather than comprehensive rules and examples from the field (Joyce & Rankin, 2010). Psychologists' adoption of the initial ethics code and establishment of early credentialing and ethics enforcement systems (e.g., licensing boards) constitute milestones for the protection of consumers and the professional integrity of the field.

Similar to the field of psychology, behavior analysts developed their first ethical codes as part of a larger credentialing effort hastened by rapid growth in demand for ABA services as well as abusive techniques of some self-described behavior modifiers in Florida (e.g., Florida, 1972; Michael, 1972) and proliferation of non-behavioral interventions that were pseudoscientific or inhumane (e.g., psychomotor patterning, electrotherapy; Jacobson, Mulick, & Foxx, 2016). Early applications of behavior analysis involved vulnerable, often institutionalized people (e.g., Ayllon & Michael, 1959; Ferster & DeMyer, 1962); a move toward higher ethical standards for behavior analysts was both strategic and synergistic with the broader disability rights movement (e.g., 1960 founding of the National Association for Retarded Children; 1973 Rehabilitation Act). For example, the advocacy group currently known as the Arc of Florida, Inc. played an essential role in Florida's Division of Retardation establishing the Statewide Peer Review Committee for Behavior Modification which drafted guidelines for use of behavior modification in state facilities in the late 1970s and laid the groundwork for subsequent state-level credentialing efforts by the Florida Association for Behavior Analysts in the 1980s. The state of Minnesota (Thomas, 1979) and members of the Midwest Association for Behavior Analysis (MABA; Peterson, 1978) had also developed methods for screening provider qualifications, but the first professionally prepared certification exam (i.e., based on a task list, piloted and revised prior to formal administration) was administered in Florida in 1983.

Dr. Gerald Shook directed Florida's certification program from 1984 to 1990 before incorporating the Behavior Analysis Certification Board as a nonprofit organization in 1998. Shook and other contributors to Florida's certification efforts secured financial support from the organization that

grew out of the MABA, the Association for Behavior Analysis–International (ABAI), to advance a national credentialing process. An early action of the BACB was to publish disciplinary standards as a legal basis for the board's actions against behavior analysts who committed egregious violations, and the list of enforceable standards grew over multiple updates between 1999 and 2010. Another early milestone in the national-level phase of professionalization was Dr. John Jacobson's development of an ethics code for behavior analysts, at the request of ABAI, based on his study of codes from more established professions including the ethics code of the American Psychological Association. Dr. Jacobson's code was subsequently revised by two senior behavior analysts and adopted by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board in 2001 (Johnston et al., 2017).

Like other ethics codes (e.g., APA Code; Joyce & Rankin, 2010), the standards of conduct for behavior analysts have continued to evolve due to changes in demand for ABA, funding and licensure laws, scientific advancements, and some changes in societal values and norms. One constant across revisions of the code is the leadership of subject matter expert (SME) workgroups representing different areas of practice, experience in the field, and consumer perspectives. The BACB, as a nationally accredited certification program, provides SMEs with the necessary legal, policy, and resource context to ensure changes are enforceable by the BACB. The 2010 version of the ethics code was the first to connect the BACB disciplinary standards to specific elements of the code, thus establishing legally defensible grounds for the BACB to address a widened array of severe or repeated instances of misconduct (Sellers et al., 2020). The 2014 Professional and Ethical Compliance Code combined earlier disciplinary standards and guidelines in one fully enforceable code (BACB, 2020). State licensure laws that incorporate BACB credentialing standards add capacity to sanction behavior analysts for unethical conduct and to enhance consumer protections in a manner consistent with hopes of the earliest advocates for professionalization of behavior analysis

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(Sellers & Lichtenberger, 2020). Also noteworthy, the coursework component under the Fourth Edition Task List credentialing standards ensured that aspiring behavior analysts gained intensive exposure to their ethical responsibilities during graduate school by introducing a freestanding one course (45 hour) ethics requirement. This course requirement continues under 2022 credentialing requirements for Master's-level behavior analyst, and it parallels a 30-hour ethics requirement for bachelor's-level assistant

behavior analysts to receive at least half of their ethics content in one or more dedicated courses.

The 2022 Code resulted from a 16-month revision process facilitated by the BACB (BACB, 2020). This revision process consisted of steps including, for example, review of feedback provided to the BACB since publication of the 2014 PECC, review of survey responses from 4700 stakeholders, systematic reviews of the current ethics codes in other fields, and workgroup activities of 26 subject matter experts who helped prepare the revised draft and seven additional experts who reviewed and proposed final revisions. Finally, the Code was approved by the BACB Board of Directors, a group of 11 individuals who are elected to their unpaid leadership roles by active certificants.

Key changes in the 2022 Code include: (a) increased emphasis on behavior analysts conducting themselves in an equitable and culturally responsive manner, (b) reorganization of the Code into six rather than ten areas of responsibility, and (c) introduction of four core principles described below. In addition, the Code includes standards with a broadened scope that are designed to guide conduct while requiring individual behavior analysts to know and apply context-specific considerations (Carr & Sellers, 2021). For example, the prior version of the code prescribed a list of conditions under which behavior analysts should self-report to the BACB (standards 10.01 and 10.02; BACB Professional and Ethical Compliance Code; BACB, 2014), whereas, the current code places the onus on individual certificants to, "remain knowledgeable and comply with all self-reporting requirements of relevant entities (e.g., BACB, licensure boards, funders)" (p. 10, BACB, 2020). The BACB website provides guidance particular to their current self-reporting requirements rather than including this information in the Code. Parallel to psychology, changes to the BACB Code were accompanied by diversification of consequences for alleged or confirmed unethical behavior (educational v. disciplinary systems) and development of a host of preventive resources (e.g., Hotline, regular publication of common violations, increasing scholarship). History reveals a clear and systematic progression to present day ethical standards and processes to support ethical conduct of professional behavior analysts.

Foundational Principles of the Code

Understanding the historical context and process by which the Code came about may help individual behavior analysts and organizations appreciate why the code, comprehensive as it may be, stops short of exhaustive lists of unethical and ethical behaviors. Ethical behavior is at least partly determined by its function or the immediate and delayed outcomes of behavior

analysts' actions on others. The BACB's 2022 Code names four core principles (i.e., underlying foundational values) that behavior analysts should consider when interpreting the content of the Code and evaluating the ethicality of their actions and outcomes. The Code calls behavior analysts to strive to embody the principles of benefiting others; treating others with compassion, dignity, and respect; behaving with integrity; and ensuring one's professional competence. These principles extend the utility of the Code to especially challenging scenarios in which following guidance under one standard seems to compromise another, relevant parties do not fully agree on the right thing to do, each course of action seems to have significant downsides for one or more parties, or the behavior analyst's personal preferences and beliefs do not align with responsibilities in their current professional context.

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Distinguishing the role of underlying values from closely related concepts can aid one's understanding of the necessity of these values for an enforceable yet aspirational BACB Code. A goal, which may be easily confused with a guiding value, is a specific outcome that a behavior analyst works toward until they fulfill it (e.g., passing the BCBA exam). Principles or values, by contrast, suggest qualities of a behavior analyst's action and the general effects or consequences that should guide those actions (e.g., behaving in ways that have a respectful effect on clients). A personal belief has some similarities with foundational principles of the Code in that beliefs often point to qualities of action and desired effects on oneself or others (e.g., adhering to rules or practices that are shared by one's faith-based community). Personal beliefs, however, influence behavior through different histories and prevailing contingencies compared to foundational principles of the BACB Code. For example, a behavior analyst may believe they have a moral responsibility to show compassion by giving some of their income to charity. However, professional behavior analysts are unlikely to encounter instances in which donating money to a particular client or supervisee will help to fulfill their responsibilities or to resolve an ethical dilemma. Instead, the behavior analyst could create new ethical problems if donations create the impression of favoritism or bribery. In summary, personal beliefs about right and wrong are not sufficient for a professional behavior analyst to demonstrate ethical conduct or contribute to more ethical environments. This final section introduces each of the underlying principles and how individual behavior analysts may begin to

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examine and build their readiness to act on those principles as a founda-
tion of sustained and proactive ethical decision making.

Benefiting others. The BACB defines the core principle of benefiting
others as, "Behavior analysts work to maximize benefits and do no harm
by protecting the rights and welfare of clients above all others, protect-
ing the rights and welfare of others affected by services, and focusing on
short- and long-term consequences of their services" (p. 4, BACB, 2020). In
addition, the document provides several examples of actions that may be
necessary to benefit others and prevent harm, for example, actively identi-
fying and addressing circumstances with potential to adversely affect the
quality of services, present a conflict of interest, interfere with effective col-
laboration in the best interest of the client, or otherwise result in misuse of
the behavior analyst's position and negatively impact others. To illustrate,
a behavior analyst may face a dilemma between disappointing a caregiver
who asks them to test out a prompting strategy that has been helpful at
home and risking the loss of time to pilot a new procedure. The behavior
analyst may arrive at a better solution if they forgo initial reactions (e.g.,
I've never seen a behavior analyst prompt that way; behavior analysts only
use procedures supported by the best available science) and instead assess
the potential for short- and long-term benefit v. harm to the child, to their
collaborative relationship with the caregivers, and finally to the treatment
team including themself.

Treating others well. The BACB Code defines the second principle, treat
others with compassion, dignity, and respect as, "behavior analysts treat
others equitably regardless of factors such as age, disability, ethnicity, gen-
der expression/identity, immigration status, marital/relationships status,
national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or
any other basis proscribed by law" (p. 4, BACB, 2020). Further, behavior
analysts have a responsibility to demonstrate respect for confidentiality
and privacy of those impacted by their professional activities; to respect
and promote clients' self-determination, particularly clients from vulner-
able populations (e.g., children, people with disabilities); and to create
service delivery conditions that support clients and stakeholders making
informed, personally relevant choices about their services.

The principle of treating others with compassion, dignity, and respect
may guide a more ethical course of action when, for example, a behavior
analyst is providing services to a family without reliable transportation
which sometimes affects their child's timely arrival for appointments. The
behavior analyst's organization may have a policy to terminate services
after a family arrives more than 15 min late for three sessions; however, the

behavior analyst who takes time to learn the particular circumstances of the family can avoid inaccurate conclusions about their commitment to services and instead engage in collaborative problem solving before the standard timeliness policy takes effect. Behavior analysts position themselves to achieve the ethical outcomes of respectful, inclusive care when they recognize and show compassion for distinguishing aspects of each client's identity or context rather than offering flexibility only to clients they perceive as familiar or a natural fit for ABA.

> **Integrity in Action**
>
> 1. Behave in an honest and trustworthy manner
>
> 2. Represent work accurately
>
> 3. Follow through on obligations
>
> 4. Hold yourself and supervisees accountable
>
> 5. Know and uphold regulatory requirements
>
> 6. Create professional environments that uphold the Code and address misconduct

Behave with integrity. The third principle underlying the Code, behave with integrity, specifies that "behavior analysts fulfill responsibilities to their scientific and professional communities, to society in general, and to the communities they serve" (p. 4, BACB, 2021). The Code offers several examples of integrity in action. For example, behavior analysts should behave in an honest and trustworthy manner in all professional actions. In addition, we exemplify integrity when we accurately representing our work or that of others. Actions such as following through on obligations and holding oneself and one's supervisees accountable for the quality of work are other examples of behaving with integrity. Taking responsibility to know and uphold BACB and other regulatory requirements and actively creating professional environments and relationships that uphold the Code and address instances of misconduct are other great examples of behaving with integrity. The principle of behaving with integrity acts as a compass for decision making when selecting among responses. For example, a behavior analyst finds an error in their graphic display while preparing a manuscript for publication. If the raw data support a different conclusion than the graph, the researcher may be tempted to retain the inaccurate graph or perhaps to save time by addressing the known error but stopping short of a review of the accuracy of additional graphic displays. The principle of integrity, however, guides the researcher to choose the honest, accurate path regardless of the likelihood that the error will come to light by other means or the potential impact of corrected data on publication.

Ensure competence. Finally, the Code calls behavior analysts to strive to embody the principle of ensuring competence by: (a) remaining within the profession's scope of practice; (b) remaining current and increasing one's

knowledge of best practices; (c) remaining knowledgeable about interventions including examples of pseudoscience in one's practice area that may pose a risk to clients; (d) being aware of, working within, and continually evaluating one's boundaries of competence; and (e) continually increasing one's skills and knowledge related to cultural responsiveness and service delivery to diverse groups. One scenario in which a commitment to ensuring competence can make the difference between ethical and unethical conduct occurs when members of an ABA organization (e.g., department of psychology or special education, school-based consultation company) respond to the call for a more culturally responsive approach to their professional activities by hiring an expert trainer to conduct a workshop for their team. While formal training opportunities can play an important role in behavior analysts' readiness to serve individuals whose social-cultural background or identity differs from their own, a one-time training event does not meet the "continual" dimension of evaluating and building competence. The behavior analyst who operates by the book in terms of accruing the minimum schedule and type of continuing education with little attention to corresponding changes in their conduct may spare themselves some effort or vulnerable learning experiences; however, they may also grow little relative to the behavior analyst who takes a principled, outcome-oriented approach to ensuring and expanding their competence.

Underlying principles have utility for navigating complex ethical dilemmas, in part, because they name the reinforcers the behavior analyst can achieve for themself and for others without imposing a recipe-style list of tactics that may or may not fit the current circumstances. Underlying principles support a function-based approach to ethical decision-making by making the "why" of professional ethics explicit. The lens of underlying principles can also help behavior analysts interpret why certain professional behaviors of their own or of their colleagues have a more or less troubling effect (e.g., actions that meet the letter of the Code but seem to benefit the behavior analyst more than they benefit the client; actions that violate the letter of the code but seem to benefit the client without causing harm to anyone). The success of this approach may depend to a large degree on behavior analysts' capacity to understand and recognize contextually relevant examples of actions that do or do not generally produce the reinforcers implied by each underlying principle. For example, behavior analysts may require many years of contingency shaping to develop repertoires that reliably lead to clients or caregivers feeling respected and cared for even in the con-

The lens of underlying principles helps a behavior analyst interpret why a colleague's actions may have a troubling effect. The same lens can be used for the behavior analyst's own actions..

text of disagreeing about recommended changes to client programming or discussing a deeply disappointing therapeutic outcome.

Other Values Frameworks. In addition to the foundational principles described by the BACB, other authors have proposed orienting concepts that can supplement the BACB's framework in useful ways. Freeman et al. (2020) describe how behavior analysts may navigate complex ethical dilemmas by asking themselves what is the right thing to do (i.e., identifying available courses of action that are acceptable and advisable in the situation), what is worth doing (i.e., comparing the foreseeable costs and benefits of each course of action), and what does it mean to be a good behavior analyst (i.e., selecting the course of action that best fulfill one's professional responsibility to serve the best interests of the client or supervisee).

LeBlanc, Onofrio, et al. (2020), in their paper describing how organizational leaders can create a system for the prevention and management of ethical dilemmas, name four overarching concepts that differ in name yet are highly compatible with foundational principles of the Code and the codes of ethics from other disciplines. LeBlanc et al. advise behavior analysts to evaluate the ethicality of possible solutions based on their alignment with one or more of the following values: do no harm; take action within professional boundaries; maintain confidentiality; and demonstrate professionalism. These four, plain language standards may be particularly useful when a behavior analyst wishes to communicate the guiding principles in plain language with individuals who are less familiar with the Code. Authors have proposed multiple legitimate ways to interpret and apply the spirit of the Code, and behavior analysts may find it useful to explore various sources as they deepen their knowledge of the Code, its underlying values, and its application.

After gaining familiarity with the historical context and values that influenced the current Code, a useful next step is to examine one's individual understanding of those values including experiences beyond the scope of behavior analysis. Activity 1 provides space to examine your prior knowledge of some guiding values of the discipline by writing down examples of people and practices that either help to illustrate a pillar of professional conduct or to illustrate the violation of that pillar. Some of these examples may come from observations of family members, friends, colleagues, teachers, or even your own past and present behavior. You may notice that some values are easier to define and illustrate from experience than others or that some values are associated with more non-examples than role model behaviors in your experience. We strongly recommend that you revisit, update, and add to Activity 1 as you engage with a variety of mentors and practice or research opportunities over time.

Activity 1:
Exploring Your History with
Underlying Values of the BACB Code

a;sdlkfj;alskjfd;lkjsa;dflkjsa;dkjf;lsajf;lsakdjf;lsajf;lsakjf;lajf;lksajf;lsakj-
d;flsakjfas;dlkf;saljf;lsakjdf;lsakjdf;lsajf;ljds;lfjds;lf;kj;ldskjf;ldskjf;ldsk-
jf;a;slkdfj;aslkj;lskdjf;lsakjdf;laskjf;lkjds;lfkds.

1. Benefiting others and doing no harm
   Examples from my observations and experience:

   Non-examples from my observations and experience:

2. Treating others with compassion, dignity, and respect
   Examples from my observations and experience:

   Non-examples from my observations and experience:

3. Behaving with integrity
   Examples from my observations and experience:

   Non-examples from my observations and experience:

4. Ensuring competence
   Examples from my observations and experience:

   Non-examples from my observations and experience:

5. Demonstrating Professionalism
   Examples from my observations and experience:

   Non-examples from my observations and experience:

6. Acting within professional boundaries
   Examples from my observations and experience:

   Non-examples from my observations and experience:

A proactive approach to ethics requires individual behavior analysts to identify how their personal beliefs and preferences do or do not align with the code so they are prepared to behave ethically even when competing emotional or social variables arise. In Section 2 of this text, each chapter addresses a specific section of the Code and makes mention of the BACB's four core principles, but you must also explore how those principles interact with other personal beliefs and preferences with potential to impact your work. This process will reveal which personal values already align with the BACB Code and its principles as well predict professional scenarios in which you must refrain from acting on a specific belief or feeling (e.g., annoyance on learning about a staff member's political affiliation, or frustration that a client's mother and nanny attend all appointments while the father does not) in order to fulfill your ethical responsibilities.

A second activity focuses on self-reflection regarding personal beliefs and preferences that may be highly relevant to your life outside of work although they should not interfere with the execution of your responsibilities as a professional behavior analyst. For example, outside of work you may choose a diet of healthy, unprocessed foods for yourself and your children. You may also believe that people who allow their children to consume unlimited high-sodium, high-fat foods are negatively impacting the current and future health of their children. Although data from nutritional science may support your views, it would be ethically inappropriate to require that families receiving services from your clinic refrain from

packing processed foods for their child's lunch. It is possible to provide high-quality ABA services to a family regardless of their dietary practices, thus, your personal preference to avoid exposing children to unhealthy foods must not influence how you work with families that do versus do not share your knowledge, preferences, or access to specific foods. In addition to personally meaningful rules, behavior analysts experience different social, cultural, and economic circumstances that influence their behavior at home and at work. These different experiences—when left unchecked—can lead behavior analysts to behave in unhelpful, inequitable ways.

List two examples of a personal "golden rule" that has limited relevance to your ability to fulfill your professional responsibilities as a behavior analyst (e.g., always look on the bright side; early is on time and on time is late). List at least one standard from the BACB Code that you can choose to fulfill regardless of whether the behavior of your client, research participant, or colleague aligns with your personal golden rule.

Activity 2:

a;sdlkfj;alskjfd;lkjsa;dflkjsa;dkjf;lsajf;lsakdjf;lsajf;lsakjf;lajf;lksajf;lsakjd;flsakjfas;dlkf;saljf;lsakjdf;lsakjdf;lsajf;ljds;lfjds;lf;kj;ldskjf;ldskjf;ldskjf;a;slkdfj;aslkj;lskdjf;lsakjdf;laskjf;lkjds;lfkds.

1. List two examples of a personal "golden rule" that has limited relevance to your ability to fulfill your professional responsibilities as a behavior analyst (e.g., always look on the bright side; early is on time and on time is late). List at least one standard from the BACB Code that you can choose to fulfill regardless of whether the behavior of your client, research participant, or colleague aligns with your personal golden rule.

2. List two examples of a personal blind spot (e.g., area of limited prior exposure or training) or bias (e.g., area in which you have negative experiences or associations) that could compromise your ability to fulfill your professional responsibilities as a behavior analyst. Keep these blind spots or biases in mind as you read the information and complete activities in Chapter 3.

In summary, the Code and its four underlying principles are the product of decades of collective knowledge and advocacy that originated within and outside the field of behavior analysis. The Code describes an enforceable set of standards for ethical conduct in the most common scenarios that today's behavior analyst encounters, and it articulates four aspirational values that can help individual behavior analysts choose professional responsibility over personal beliefs and preferences when novel, personally challenging dilemmas arise.

Key Events in the History of Professional Ethics for Behavior Analysts

1980s	First state-level certification exams and ethics codes for behavior analysts.
1990s	First national certification exams and ethics code for behavior analysts.
1999	First disciplinary standards.
2001	First Guidelines for Responsible Conduct.
2007	Ethics CE Requirement introduced.
2010	Update of the Disciplinary Standards and Guidelines for Responsible Conduct.
2014	Integration of the Disciplinary Standards and Guidelines for Responsible Conduct into a single Professional and Ethical Compliance Code for Behavior Analysts.
2018	RBT Ethics Code is published.
2022	Revised codes are published: RBT Ethics Code 2.0 and The Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts.