

## Witnessing Our Collective Ethics

*Collective Ethics* are those important points of connection that weave us together as therapists and community workers. In most of our work these collective ethics go unnamed, but they are the basis for the solidarity that brought us together and can hold us together. I have found it useful to map out collective ethics within teams of workers to invite a collective commitment to these ethics and create shared meanings. Naming collectively held ethics can invite rich critique, and clearer agreements. As community workers we do not have to create perfect collective ethics, as points of departure and distinctions in our ethical positioning can also offer multiple possibilities that can expand our usefulness.

- What are the ethics that drew you to do this work? What ways of being in this work do you value, hold close, maybe even sacred? What ethics are required for your work, without which you would be unable to work?
- What is the history of your relationship to these values and ethics? Who taught you this? How have these ethics shown up in your life and work?
- What ethics or values do we hold collectively?
- What ethics are alive in our work when we're doing work that clients experience as most useful?
- How do we do this work in ways that are in accord with our collective ethics?
- How can the holding close of our collective ethics foster our sustainability and transformation across time?

*from: Reynolds, V. (2011). Resisting burnout with justice-doing. The international Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work. (4) 27-45. (page 30)*