

# Ethics Scenario

*The purpose of this activity is to explore possible ethical issues presented by a coaching situation.*

You have a new client and are just starting the coaching relationship.

She is a 43-year-old woman with a high-powered job. She is coming to coaching because she was recently passed over for a promotion and is trying to figure out what's next. She was told she didn't get the promotion because although she is doing a good job at her current level, they didn't think she could handle additional responsibilities.

She's not sure she disagrees with the assessment of her capacity. She's handled things for a long time, but she feels like things are slipping. And she has started sometimes having difficulty finding words to express herself.

Her current role is in middle management. She misses being on the frontlines doing the hands-on product creation work, and she likes the additional influence she gets being in a role higher up in the organization.

She says something like "I'm not satisfied in any of the areas of my life. Not marriage, not my kids. Not my work. That's all there is. There isn't anything else. Objectively, it's all pretty good. And I don't want to explode my life."

She is married to someone who also has a high-powered job and they have two kids. One of the kids (13) is great at something that takes a lot of time and the other kid (15) can't seem to find their thing. The kids both seem very intelligent to their mom. The one who doesn't have their thing doesn't perform well in school and the client is concerned about that. The marriage has become logistics.

You asked her a little more about the family and it came up that the 15-year-old is going through gender questioning.

She doesn't know where she wants to be at the end of the engagement.

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## Reflection questions:

What are the assumptions I am making about myself, my client, and any other people involved?

What are the different things I see from a neurodiversity-informed perspective? What are all the things that suggest any of the people involved might have interesting or unusual brain functioning?

How much of that do I need to hold?

How does what I know of myself as a coach influence how I want to approach this coaching engagement?

What are my responsibilities to my client, to my practice, to my profession, and to society?

What are the potential ethical issues here?

What else needs to be considered?

Do I have moral responsibilities and issues of integrity for myself that go beyond ethical responsibilities?