**Ethical Decision-Making Guide  
Step 1: Identify the Problem**

1. What’s the ethical issue as you see it?
2. Being as objective and specific as possible, write down the facts connected to this issue.
3. Is this an ethical, legal, professional, or clinical problem – or a combination?
4. Who is connected to this issue? (Counselor, Clinic, Institution, Organization, etc.)
5. Is there a policy or guidelines in place which addresses this situation?
6. Who else knows about this ethical dilemma?
7. Is there a system in place for reporting such ethical issues?
8. What aspects of this ethical dilemma seem unclear to you?
9. Who can you consult with about this ethical dilemma?

**Step 2: Apply the ACA Code of Ethics**

1. Which Code(s) of ethics, if any, are being violated?

**Step 3: What’s the Dilemma?**

1. Which of the 6 ethical principles are being violated?
2. Is there any professional literature which directly addresses this ethical dilemma?

**Summary Form**  
Complete the Following Based on your above answers

I learned on (date) that (#4) is in violation of (#10) code of ethics. I determined that this was an (#3) problem due to the following facts:

I believe that the above is in violation of the following ethical principles (#11)

The following policy, guidelines, and/or system mandates/suggest I do the following (#5, 7).

The following persons are also aware of this dilemma (#6)

The following professional literature (#12) addresses this issue:

1. Choose several of the persons listed in question 9 with whom you can consult. Utilize the above information and consultation guide. What was their advice or guidance?
2. Utilizing the above information that you have compiled and organized, consult with a state or national association, or licensing board, with whom this ethical dilemma would fall under. What was their guidance or recommendation?

**Part 4: Deciding a Course of Action**

1. After utilizing the brainstorming guide and potential consequences guide, does the remaining course(s) of action pass the justice, publicity, and universality tests?
2. Before pursuing this course of action, have you sought legal counsel? If so, what was their advice or guidance?

**Part 5: Implementation**

1. What is your plan of implementation?
2. What is your self-care plan during the implementation process?