

## The Ethical Tightrope (Focus: Ethical Awareness)

### The Concept: Ethical Awareness and the Cost of Integrity

**Ethical Awareness** is more than simply knowing the rules; it is the **active, mindful sensitivity** to the moral implications of your actions *before* you take them. For life coaches, managers, and supervisors, this means consistently choosing the highest good for the client, the team, or the organisation, even when that choice presents a personal inconvenience or sacrifice.

The true test of ethical awareness often lies in the willingness to **sacrifice an immediate, easy gain**—like money, time, popularity, or comfort - to uphold a long-term, foundational principle. Operating on the "Ethical Tightrope" means maintaining balance and integrity even when pressure or temptation tries to pull you off course. Understanding and accepting this "cost of integrity" is essential for long-term professional trust and success.

### Exercise: The Ethical Tightrope

**Purpose:** To encourage participants to recognise and value the cost of integrity by recalling and analysing a specific ethical choice.

#### Discussion Prompt:

Name one situation in your professional career where adhering to your ethical standards (your code of conduct, your values, or organisational ethics) required you to **sacrifice an immediate gain**. This gain might have been:

- **Money:** Turning down a job or client who was a bad fit.
- **Popularity:** Enforcing a policy that was unpopular with a team or client.
- **Time:** Spending extra time ensuring a process was fair and thorough instead of quickly taking a shortcut.
- **Comfort:** Having a difficult, necessary conversation instead of avoiding conflict.

1. **Describe the Situation and the Sacrifice:** What was the immediate gain you gave up?
2. **Identify the Core Principle:** What was the fundamental ethical principle you consciously upheld (e.g., confidentiality, fairness, transparency, professional scope)?

**Reflect on the Outcome:** How did that choice ultimately reinforce your professional authority and integrity?