

## A Statement from Steven C. Hayes regarding Vyacheslav Yakolev

Jun 23, 2024

I have been told of the concerns about the behavior of Vyacheslav Yakolev, through an email from Juliia Litvinova sent on June 22, 2024. According to the email he has had multiple ethical complaints filed against him from female students and clients and that “he constantly uses your good name and the fact of personal acquaintance as proof of his qualifications and professional suitability.”

If that latter part of the email is correct, it is a totally false claim as the records will show.

Yakolev emailed me in September 2021 describing an ACT game he had developed and asking for a Zoom meeting to describe it. I met with him and Karina Morozik once by Zoom and they described it.

In October 2021 he emailed me saying he was interested in forming a Russian chapter of ACBS. I referred him to the ACBS staff who handle such matters. To my knowledge nothing came of it.

He sent an additional email soon after about process-based therapy. I told him that Alexander Yartsev had reached out with a similar question and I sent him an article.

For the next two years we had no communication.

In December 2023 Yakolev emailed me saying he'd formed the Association of Trauma Therapists in Russia. He asked me to become an honorary member of the Association, and asked me to speak at a Trauma-Focused Weekend Conference. I did not agree to become an honorary member, and I should not be represented as such. I sent him a 30-minute talk for free. When he received the video, he asked me to do a short Zoom meeting with him to record questions and answers. I did that.

The reason I agreed to do the talk has nothing to do with Yakolev or his professional qualifications. I do not know the man. Rather, I believe that there will likely be significant trauma in the future in Russia flowing from the war in the Ukraine and the content of the conference gave me a small opportunity to speak to professionals who might one day make a difference for the Russian people.

In February of this year Yakolev sent me a condolence on the death of my sister.

That is the sum of my interactions with him.

He is not a friend, nor a trainee, nor a close colleague. As I have described, I have had very limited and sporadic email contact with him – and always at his initiation. I have had two

Zoom meetings with him and I sent him a free video. Such interactions are commonplace professional courtesies and are no grounds to suggest he has an ongoing professional relationship with me relevant to his qualifications. Such limited interactions are not ones that should be used in any way to support his skills, morality, or professional standing. If they are being used that way by Yakolev, I strongly object and would view such a claim as illegitimate or even fraudulent.

As for the charges, I deal with people around the world and these kinds of things have happened before. I have a personal approach and an actual policy that is applied by the company my wife and I own (Contextual Change LLC, which deals with ACT BootCamp, my online courses, the PsychFlex app, and other business matters we involved in).

First, if there are multiple complaints we start with the posture that they must be taken seriously and until they are addressed, we will have no further interactions of a professional nature with the individual.

Second, we will not take it upon ourselves to conduct such an investigation since we cannot know the local situation.

Third, this posture will not change for the individual involved unless or until a legitimate external investigation is conducted, concluded, and reaches a finding and actions are taken that would warrant further professional interactions.

Such is not the case with Yakolev.

Thus, based on the facts presented, I will have no further involvement with him unless or until these requirements are met.

You can certainly share this message with the Russian psychological community. In order to avoid being quoted out of context I would appreciate that the entire pdf is shared.

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