

# Guidelines for Behavior

Zen Community of Oregon is primarily a lay Sangha established to provide for the transmission of the teachings and practice of Zen Buddhism. These guidelines are meant to establish reasonable expectations and limitations for behavior and yet respect the need for flexibility in our training. The ground for right conduct is the practice of the five basic Buddhist training precepts:

1. We undertake the precept of refraining from killing.

We agree not to engage in killing or aggressive violence. In undertaking this precept we acknowledge the interconnection of all beings and our respect for all life. We agree to continually refine our understanding of not killing and non-harming in all our actions.

2. We undertake the precept of refraining from stealing.

We agree to not take that which does not belong to us and to respect the property of others. We agree to be honest in our dealings with money and not to misappropriate or misuse money committed to the dharma and sangha. We agree to bring consciousness to the gifts of the earth's resources and to endeavor to use them in a respectful and ecological manner.

3. We undertake the precept of refraining from false speech.

We agree to speak in a way that is honest, beneficial, kind and considerate. We will endeavor to refrain from gossip in our community. We agree to cultivate conscious and clear communication, with the qualities of loving-kindness and compassion as the basis of our speech.

4. We undertake the precept of refraining from sexual misconduct.

We agree to avoid creating harm through sexuality and to avoid sexual exploitation or adultery. Those with vows of celibacy will live according to their vows. Those married will honor their vows and refrain from adultery. All teachers agree not to exploit their authority and position in order to assume a sexual relationship with a student.

5. We undertake the precept of not misusing drugs or alcohol.

It is clear that substance abuse is the cause of tremendous suffering. We agree that there should be no use of intoxicants during retreats or while on retreat premises. We agree not to abuse or misuse intoxicants at any time. We agree that if any teacher or senior resident has a drug or alcohol problem, it should be immediately addressed by the community.



## S a n g h a Harmony

Zen Community of Oregon (ZCO) is a sangha established to provide for the transmission of the teachings and practice of Zen Buddhism. The teachers and Board of Directors of the Zen Community of Oregon support this policy statement of right conduct based on the Five Lay Precepts of Zen Buddhism. Those who are members of the sangha, especially senior members, have a responsibility to maintain and support a healthy environment for the community and the practice of the Buddha Way. To this end, we join with other Buddhist communities and affirm our commitment to right conduct by endorsing the enclosed guidelines for behavior and conflict resolution.

# Conflict Resolution

It is our sincere intention to continually realign our lives in accord with these precepts (listed on the reverse side). Persons who encounter inappropriate conduct from any member of the ZCO Sangha (or themselves practice such conduct) should be aware that these actions violate the spirit and practice of right conduct and seriously undermine the harmony of the Sangha. In the event of a concern arising in the Sangha, either by complaint or perception, the Sangha Harmony Committee (SHC), appointed by the ZCO Board of Directors, recommends the following sequence of actions to be taken.

The purpose of these steps is to facilitate communication and bring the problem to a resolution in as honest, simple and straightforward manner as possible. We acknowledge that there is no perfect solution to any problem between people, but we will endeavor to help all parties arrive at the best possible solution given the situation. If a person in the Sangha has a problem with an individual, teacher, board member, or entity within the Sangha, that person should work to resolve the problem by following these steps in order:

1. Meet with the person one-on-one and discuss the problem. If this does not bring a resolution, or if either person, using his or her individual judgment, does not wish to, or is too uncomfortable to meet one-on-one, that person should;
2. Ask for one mutually acceptable person from the Sangha Harmony Committee to witness and/or mediate the discussion of the problem. If that does not bring about a resolution, either party may;
3. Submit a written statement describing the problem to the Sangha Harmony Committee with a request that the SHC as a whole meet with the parties to assist or mediate the issue. If the problem still persists either party may;
4. Request a formal hearing by submitting in writing a grievance to the Committee. At a hearing, which shall be conducted by the SHC as a whole, either party may present his or her version of the dispute, call witnesses and ask questions of the other party or the witnesses. The members of the SHC may ask questions of either party and of the witnesses. A hearing will result in a formal recommendation by the SHC. Either party of the SHC itself may appeal to the ZCO Board of Directors for assistance;

5. After hearing from all parties and reviewing the recommendation of the SHC, the Board may issue a binding decision or, in its discretion, may contract with an outside mediator, or ask for help from other experts and professionals, including, but not limited to, groups such as the Dharma Rain Zen Center, White Plum Sangha, the Portland Dharma Umbrella, and the American Zen Teachers Association, or the One Drop Zen Centers.