

**Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom USA**  
**Ethics Policy**  
**Adopted June 9, 2020**

The Buddhist Society for Compassionate Wisdom (BSCW) promotes the belief that each and every human being has Buddha nature and that all beings are endowed with the intrinsic worth of their being. It is our mission to help each other awaken to our Buddha nature and to honor and guard our intrinsic worth. With the Buddhist precepts as our ethical guide, BSCW is committed to providing an environment of spiritual awakening that is free from physical violence, verbal abuse, sexual harassment, disparaging or discriminatory treatment, dishonesty, and substance abuse. These behaviors are incompatible with the goals of our mission.

BSCW sangha members endeavor to promote sixfold harmony within the sangha:

- Harmonize with each other in conduct and actions.
- Harmonize with each other in speech and talk.
- Harmonize with each other in intention and purpose.
- Seek peace and happiness through the cultivation of precepts.
- Seek peace and happiness through diversity of understanding.
- Seek peace and happiness through sharing spiritual and material benefits.

Regarding relationships amongst sangha members, Buddhist practitioners are encouraged to cultivate clear and open relationships with each other that are free of grasping and aversion. Practicing with this awareness is moving toward *"When there is nothing to desire, we follow the way of all Buddhas."* The actions of pursuing another person or trying to attract another person may run counter to the spirit of the Buddhist Precepts when they are habitual, cross a boundary or a previous commitment, or when undesired by the other person. Relationships will naturally grow and develop, and some will become romantic in nature. Practicing openhandedness, established members should allow new members time to establish themselves in the community before approaching them.

Teachers of the BSCW ordain with the ten major Bodhisattva precepts as their ethical and spiritual guide, knowing that maintaining their moral and spiritual integrity as Buddhist teachers requires adherence to these precepts. Graceful manners and good deportment of religious leaders are expected by society in general, and the good behavior and character of well-cultivated and disciplined religious men and women are edification and enlightenment itself.

With the aim of promoting and upholding the Buddhist precepts, the Bodhisattva precepts, and sixfold harmony in thoughts, words, and deeds, the BSCW acknowledges the value of establishing in writing a clear and specific set of minimum standards to which the teachers and leaders of the BSCW seek to be held accountable.

Specifically, the teachers and leaders of the BSCW commit:

- a) To use their authority as teachers and leaders in their mission to help all beings awaken to their Buddha mind, and in serving the interests of the sangha members;
- b) To treat sangha members and each other with honesty and respect, not subjecting them to disparagement, pressure, or undesired attention of any kind;
- c) To practice openness and inclusivity in their relationships with sangha members, allowing personal affinities a natural place but avoiding favoritism;
- d) To refrain from sexual interactions with sangha members except within the parameters of a committed relationship, and to refrain from expressions of sexual or romantic interest after being informed that such interest is unwelcome;
- e) To accept economic support from sangha members only when it is freely given, never in return for instruction or attention;
- f) To practice careful stewardship of the BSCW's resources, not enriching themselves by misappropriating sangha funds or assets.

Grievance Procedure: if a sangha member believes that the ethical guidelines in this policy have been violated, they are invited to do one or more of the following:

- (a) bring their concern directly to the individual(s) involved and attempt to seek resolution, with or without a third party to mediate; or,
- (b) bring the matter to the attention of their local temple priest or leader, who will attempt to mediate or resolve it amongst the involved parties; or
- (c) bring the matter to a member of the BSCW Board of Directors or other senior leader, who will inform the Board of Directors, which will attempt to mediate or resolve the issue amongst the involved parties, perhaps with the assistance of an outside, independent mediator.

These ethical guidelines are a working document, setting forth the intention of BSCW to promote an environment of teaching and training consistent with the Buddhist precepts. These guidelines are subject to careful wisdom that circumstances may require, and may be revised in light of experience.

Board of Directors, BSCW USA  
June 9, 2020