

MAD Ethics Policy Draft

Based on a commitment to ethical and compassionate treatment of all beings as expressed in the Five Precepts, MidAmerica Dharma establishes the following policy regarding the behavior of teachers, staff, volunteers, and retreatants at MAD sponsored events. Participants will:

- Refrain from activity that causes harm to others physically, emotionally, mentally or spiritually and protect the well-being of others.
- Refrain from taking what does not belong to them and respect the property of others.
- Refrain from unwholesome speech and engage in speech that is truthful, useful, timely, and offered in a spirit of loving-kindness.
- Refrain from any kind of sexual activity during the retreat and respect the sexual boundaries of fellow participants.
- Refrain from the use of intoxicants during retreats and cultivate a mind that is awake and heedful.

In addition to teachers and participants in MAD events, the MAD board has an ongoing responsibility to foster ethical behavior by board members and others involved in MAD in the fulfillment of their responsibilities in their official roles. The MAD board hopes to support and include our whole community in continuing refinement and investigation of ethical living. We all jointly hold responsibility to create an environment of integrity. The MAD board invites all students and the dharma community to help create this environment and hopes any concerns can be addressed in a spirit of compassion.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

To address complaints or concerns about misconduct, MAD will establish an ethics committee. At its January meeting each year, the MAD board will elect a Chairperson for the Ethics Committee. The Chairperson will receive questions and concerns about possible ethical issues related to teachers, staff, volunteers, or retreatants at MAD events. Persons participating in MAD events will be encouraged to bring concerns to any board member, retreat manager or other person who will later bring the concern to the attention of the Ethics Committee.

When dealing with ethics complaints, the Chairperson will exercise care and discretion, respecting the confidentiality of all involved to minimize unnecessary damage to their reputations. To investigate the complaint, the Ethics Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee, will decide whether to convene an Ethics Panel separate from the committee in order to minimize conflicts of interest and to maximize fairness, compassion and confidentiality.

The Ethics Panel will consist of the Ethics Chairperson, another board member, a dharma teacher who is not a member of the board, and two members of the general dharma community, all selected by the Chairperson in consultation with the Executive Committee. All members of the Ethics Panel will be persons widely respected for their integrity.

The Ethics Panel will communicate with the teacher, staff member(s), volunteer(s), and the concerned party or parties either together or separately to address and resolve the concern or to decide, if necessary, on any further steps toward resolution. For matters of major concern that might require the suspension of a teacher, staff member, volunteer or retreatant from MAD retreats or events, a representative of the Ethics Panel will consult with the MAD board in jointly setting the best course of action.

Approved: 11/30/2015