



ETHICAL CODE FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS IN TOVANA

Important clarification:

The following code of ethics is **neither** a "book of rules" nor a list of "prohibitions" - but rather an invitation to bring our full attention and sensitivity to certain areas of conduct.

As a Dharma teacher and facilitator, my goal is to serve the practice and personal inquiry of my students, an inquiry aimed at deepening and establishing the practice of Dharma wisdom. In view of supporting this aim, I am committed to practicing the five rules of Sila detailed in this document.

I undertake to teach my students the importance of ethical training and guide them toward skillful means to assimilate these principles.

Recognizing the interrelationships between all living beings, I personally accept:

1. THE PRACTICE OF AVOIDING HARM AND THE TAKING OF LIFE:

I take upon myself the practice of avoiding killing and causing harm, both in my lifestyle and in thought. I will act as much as I can to reduce these actions, on my own part and on the part of others.

I will develop awareness of the ways in which my actions support life or harm it, as well as awareness of states of mind that might lead to harm.

I will cultivate compassion and respect for all life and learn and practice ways to protect the lives and well-being of women, men, animals, and plants.

2. THE PRACTICE OF REFRAINING FROM TAKING WHAT WAS NOT FREELY GIVEN:

I take upon myself the practice of refraining from stealing, taking, or possessing anything that belongs to others, and I will refrain from taking profits that derive from the suffering of others.

I will develop greater awareness of the use of resources* and the ways in which such use might lead to suffering, injustice, and oppression, either directly or indirectly.

I will cultivate an appreciation for existing resources and a recognition of the fact that I share them with others, and I will practice responsible, benevolent, and generous use of them.

As a teacher, I view the financial compensation given to me as Dana by practitioners as an expression of trust and as a partnership in which both teachers and students together contribute to turning the wheel of the Dharma. I commit to making benevolent and responsible use of this exchange in the spirit of the Dharma.



I undertake to offer the teachings of the Dharma without discriminating between students based on their financial abilities or the level of Dana they give me.

*Resources - material, emotional, and spiritual: money, time, energy, action, property, attention, natural resources

3. THE PRACTICE OF AVOIDING HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOR:

I personally accept the practice of refraining from sexual behavior that involves harm, whether in action, speech, or abuse of authority.

Maintaining a safe interpersonal space is vital and necessary for fulfilling my duties as a teacher/facilitator. A necessary condition for maintaining a safe space is avoiding a romantic or sexual relationship of any kind with any of my students. I am committed to developing sensitivity to this issue, avoiding any speech or action that may blur clear and distinct boundaries between me and my students. As a teacher/facilitator, I will not invite, respond to or allow such a relationship to develop with any of my students, even when the student is the initiating party.

If there is an attraction between a teacher/facilitator and a student and a mutual desire to enter a relationship, the couple will discontinue contact for a period of three months, a "cooling off period," and the teacher/facilitator will bring the case to the attention of specific teachers/facilitators (from the teachers/facilitators forum).

Moreover, if, following this period, a committed romantic relationship develops between me as a teacher/facilitator and one of my students, it is my responsibility to clarify that the teacher-student relationship must come to an end.

The teachers/facilitators, for their part, fully invite and welcome comments related to their ethical conduct from the members of the teachers/facilitators forum and invite an open dialogue in which feedback is given and received with compassion and sensitivity.

In the case of a student contacting the ethics committee, I undertake to respond and clarify the complaint.

4. THE PRACTICE OF AVOIDING FALSE SPEECH:

I personally accept the practice of abstaining from lying, harmful or divisive speech, gossip, and idle conversation regarding my duties as a teacher during an activity and between activities.

I commit to cultivating an awareness of the effect of speech - the way that words by their content or the timing in which they are spoken - have the power to cause both happiness and suffering.

I will practice and cultivate truthful speech, speech that creates harmony, that is spoken with kindness, at the right time, and with the aim of bringing benefit.



By virtue of the trust given to me as a teacher, I undertake to maintain the privacy of personal information given to me in confidence. Any consultation or sharing of information regarding students between teachers/facilitators is intended solely to support students and the community of practitioners.

Any information I share with other teachers/facilitators is done with the understanding that it is true, useful, and appropriate to the situation.

5. THE PRACTICE OF AVOIDING SUBSTANCES THAT IMPAIR VIGILANCE AND CAUSE HARM:

I personally accept the practice of avoiding the inappropriate use of alcohol and other intoxicating substances that affect the mind and undermine alertness in a way that may harm me/others, with the intention of preventing harm to myself and others.

I will develop awareness of the way I consume substances and content (food, screen time, etc.), to the degree to which they affect my perceptions, views, and modes of action, while paying attention to the danger of addiction.

I will practice conscious and correct consumption of substances and content, with the intention of cultivating mental clarity and good health - physical and mental - both for myself and those around me.

As part of Tovana's activities, out of the desire to maintain a space dedicated to the in-depth practice of mental clarity and investigation, I will refrain from any use of mind-altering substances.