PART I.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH CONFLICT OR ETHICAL BREACHES IN THE SANGHA

When difficulty, conflict or an ethical breach arises, these guidelines are offered as a

General outline for responding to the situation. They do not preclude using other

methods.

The intention of the Salt Spring Zen Circle is to encourage and facilitate, on a

personal and relational level, the work involved in transforming difficulty or conflict. It is rooted in the precepts (Part II), in our practice of studying the self (Part III), and in a process for effective conflict resolution (Part IV).

For any advice or assistance, please contact Annika Lund: [annika.lund@telus.net](mailto:annika.lund@telus.net) 250-537-8333.

1. Those who are experiencing conflict or difficulty with another sangha member or the teacher are encouraged to take preliminary steps of deepening self study, using the precepts, and what our Zen practice offers to both inform and benefit the process. (See Parts II and III)
2. Next, if appropriate, the person who feels the upset is encouraged to set up a place

and time to discuss the situation with the other person(s) involved. Preparing for this

Discussion by using the information in Parts II and III will foster a mutually beneficial process and deepen our practice of right relationship.

1. If preferred, or if the communication between the two people is very challenging or

impossible, those involved may consider asking a mutually acceptable third party (or parties) from the Sangha to facilitate this discussion. (See Part IV)

The situation could be, and in some cases should be, presented to the teacher, the Salt Spring Zen Circle's Alternative Dispute Resolution Group, or both for consultation.

* 1. If the ethical concern or the conflict cannot be resolved by the parties - alone or with the teacher's help - two or three mutually acceptable Sangha members from the Salt Spring Zen Circle’s Alternative Dispute Resolution group who are free of conflict of interest, will be found to help resolve the issue.
  2. If the two parties are interested, these Sangha members will meet with them first separately and then together. The focus will be on hearing each person’s point of view non-judgmentally, empathically and with compassion. A resolution will be sought that respects fundamental Buddhist precepts and the practice of Soto Zen as understood by the Salt Spring Zen Circle. The resolution should, if possible, be agreed upon by both parties. A record will be kept of steps taken and the outcome by the members of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Group.

1. In the event of suspected ethical breaches by a Sangha member which involve a civil legal dispute or are criminal in nature, see Appendix A.

Appendix A.

1. Reporting child abuse in B.C. : <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse>
2. Although it is not mandatory to report suspected crimes that do not involve children, it may help to avoid further injury and harm. Reporting can also assist professionals in doing their job (gathering evidence etc.).
3. Both intentionally making false complaints, and obstructing police in their investigation of a suspected crime, are criminal offences.
4. Sometimes, after the law has been enforced, there is another opportunity to apply a relational, transformational and forgiving approach.