

Code of Ethics for the Beloved Shadhiliyya Sufi Community of Sidi Muhammad al-Jamal

Introduction

Sufism is a path of love. It teaches us to continuously expand our hearts and souls through love and attraction as we journey into the unity with Allah and by extension, into harmony in our connection with others. Walking on this path, we aspire to come closer to Allah in all of our interactions, and to see our brothers and sisters as beloved holy spirits from Allah.

As a community, we take on as part of our walking to Allah to treat each other with love and good conduct (adab) and to protect ourselves and others from conduct that may lead to hurting one another and cause separation between one another and from Allah.

We help each other through mutual consultation and encourage turning only to Allah for ultimate guidance, taking responsibility for our choices and decisions.

This code envisions a Tariqa where every beloved community member, newcomer and guest is treated with love, compassion, mercy, dignity and respect and inspires each other towards the highest conduct (adab) pleasing to Allah.

This is a living document that is meant to inspire excellence in our interactions and to provide safe boundaries for expression and interactions in ways that do not break hearts or create separation. Insha'Allah this document can evolve as we grow in knowledge, practical experience, wisdom and depth as a Tariqa.

We would love to receive feedback from you at any time.

Ethics In the Sufi Way

In the context of spiritual walking in community, all interpersonal interactions, both in-person and online, may involve heightened states of spiritual awareness, sense perception, feelings, emotions, altered thought patterns, and elevated states of consciousness. Therefore, a strong ethical foundation is particularly important for protecting the welfare of community members and guests in the vulnerable process of personal and spiritual development.

In order to maintain a safe refuge in our walking to Allah, we join together in following a code of ethics in our lives together as a community. This begins with our personal adherence to this code and extends to all interpersonal interactions, both in-person and online, including community gatherings,

healing sessions, workshops, and retreats. This code of ethics applies to all beloveds including leadership of all ranks, teachers, healers, staff, volunteers, participants, students and guests.

This document draws on multiple sources, including The Qur'an, the authentic hadith of Prophet Muhammad (sa), and the Sufi teaching of Sidi Muhammad al-Jamal, in harmony with humanitarian wisdom for living together in peace and non-violence. It encodes our intentions and aspirations, provides guidelines for ethical behavior, and clearly prohibits certain actions. As individuals, and as a Shadiliyya Tariqa (Sufi Order), we commit to this code, and we will use the Grievance Procedure to hold ourselves accountable for harm created by ethical violations.

Prophet Muhammad (sa) said, 'I was sent (as a prophet and messenger) to perfect the best of ethics.' He (sa) also said, 'The essence of religion is how you treat people.' Walking in this prophetic way requires developing our connection with Allah through prayers and other practices, leading to a deepening of alignment of one's values, conduct and actions with the Godly qualities, exemplified by the Prophet (sa). This can help us to contemplate our actions more deeply and to respond through compassionate listening to the needs and experiences of others. It is our shared responsibility to develop and maintain a holy way of interacting (adab).

Ethics and Power Dynamics

Through this code of ethics, we also intend to raise awareness of the power dynamics that uniquely emerge within the parameters of our community. In our community, we can find ourselves in different roles which have differing levels of power in respect to each other. Teacher and student, healer and healee, and leader and community member, are a few of the most common roles we may experience at different times.

We also recognize power imbalances that can result in the marginalization of individuals and groups—based on teacher ranks, ability, age, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and other such dividing lines—are directly connected with intentional and unintentional unethical behavior.

When we are experiencing an “up power” role, or “up power status” in relationship to another, there are certain responsibilities and awarenesses that we need to have in order to inhabit that power ethically and well. Similarly, when we are in a “down power” role, or “down power” status in relationships to another, there are certain responsibilities and awarenesses that we need to have as well in order to be in full responsibility for ourselves. It is our hope that this code of ethics can be a guide for understanding and using our power wisely across the many areas we may inhabit in our experiences in this community.

Because of the need to address the ethical concerns inherent in power dynamics, this code is divided into three sections:

Codes of Ethics

- 1) **[A Code of Ethics for Teachers, Leaders, and Healers \(linked here\)](#)**
- 2) **[A Code of Ethics for Students and Community Members \(linked here\)](#)** to support and create safety in their walking
- 3) **[A Code of Ethics and Good Practice for the Shadhiliyya Sufi Community Non-Profit Organization \(linked here\)](#)**

We suggest that every member in our community be familiar with all three ethics codes linked above, and help to refer each other to them as needed. These codes will also be shared with members in specific situations at specific times.

Resources from the Qur'an, Hadith and Sidi

We have compiled quotes from the Qur'an, hadith and Sidi to share as a resource in support of the code of ethics documents and overall community values of the Shadhiliyya Sufi Community. We hope that they can inspire us in our journey of living together ethically and in the adab as brothers and sisters in the way. [They can be viewed here for those who are interested.](#)

Community Values

In 2021, the community was invited to participate in listening circles where beloveds shared together about the question "What values do you have for how we interact together as brothers and sisters?" [These linked notes](#) were compiled from what was shared in those meetings, and used to inform the creation of our codes of ethics.

Prohibited Conduct

We are committed to cultivating an environment free of harassment, discrimination, oppression and violence and will take steps to prevent such conduct, its recurrence, and harmful effects on any of our beloved members. In addition to the above codes of ethics, this Prohibited Conduct section outlines behaviors that are expressly prohibited, and which may result in remedial actions or legal consequences.

The following behaviors are prohibited and will have consequences, which may include temporary or permanently barring from participation in community activities, restrictions on participation, employment consequences, and/or reporting to relevant law enforcement or oversight authorities:

Physical Harm:

- Intimidation, bullying, and physical violence including assault, battery, and displays of threatening behavior

Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Violence (physical or energetic):

- Sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, and stalking;
- Actions that constitute sexual misconduct by a person of influence, including initiating or allowing a sexual relationship with a person under one's spiritual care, or misusing spiritual teachings or invoking spiritual benefit in order to obtain sexual gratification

Relationship Violence and Abuse:

- Dating violence, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.
- Secret marriages such as when a marriage is intentionally kept hidden from the immediate community or when figures of influence enter into marriage with the intention of divorce

Speech:

- Emotional and psychological abuse, belittling, harassment, and slanderous or discriminatory speech

Drugs and Alcohol:

- Possessing, consuming, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substances on any community property or at any community event, gathering or retreat.

Discrimination or exclusion:

- Discrimination or exclusion based on ability, age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nation of origin, race, immigration status, religion, sexual orientation, and/or socioeconomic status

Retaliation:

- Retaliation against anyone who reports an alleged harm, or files a grievance or complaint

Additional Unlawful Conduct:

- Violations of local, state, or federal law.

Grievance Procedure

Over time, our community will be developing a detailed Grievance Procedure that will outline how we handle different types of grievances in our community, including how they can be reported and how reports of grievances will be acted upon. This will take some time and we hope to have it available as soon as possible.

For the time being, anyone who has experienced what they feel to be an ethical violation to any of the above codes and would like support addressing it, is encouraged to reach out to the Ansar Council (contact information included on the final page). Grievances that are brought forward will be held in confidence unless they involve details that legally must be reported. A member or members of the council will take time to listen to the concern and determine together with the person coming forward, what next steps might be taken.

For conflicts within the community, the Ansar Council will work to encourage communication and reconciliation between parties wherever possible, in collaboration with the work of the Jami' Initiative. If details of the grievance are to be shared with others, this will be done with the permission of the person coming forward. If the person coming forward does not give permission to share details, this can in some instances limit the ability for issues to be resolved.

Sections to Come

The below sections are still being developed and will be added to our ethical work over time, some of this in collaboration with the Jami'a Initiative.

- A detailed Grievance Procedure, outlining how we handle different types of grievances in our community including how they can be reported and how reports of grievances will be acted upon
- Resources explaining mediation in the Sufi way and what is available for beloveds in conflict
- Teachings regarding how to give and receive feedback
- Teachings regarding accountability, forgiveness and making amends
- Ongoing opportunities for walking and teachings around ethical topics

Resources for Beloveds in Conflict

Beloveds who are experiencing conflict and would like support can contact the Jami' Initiative at: **jami-initiative@sscboard.org**

Questions and Feedback

Any questions or feedback about anything in the above documents can be sent to

The Ansar Council: **ansarcouncil99@gmail.com**

Or if you prefer to contact an individual Ansar Council member one-on-one:

Amany Shalaby: **hddnprls@aol.com**

Jamila Faith Killough: **faithkillough@gmail.com**

Mohamed Moosa: **mmoosams@yahoo.com**

Zahra Lee: **cmeilee@comcast.net**

Or the SSC Board: **programs@sscboard.org**