

SSC Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Teachers, Leaders, Healers and Community Mentors in the Shadhiliyya Sufi Community of Sidi Muhammad al-Jamal

In keeping with SSC’s mission to encourage spiritual teachers, leaders, healers and mentors to approach their work in the most competent and ethical manner—and to help safeguard the sacred teacher-student relationship—all members in the above roles are expected to commit to the following principles. Each of these roles in our community play a unique part in supporting the walking of our students and community members in their holy journey to Allah. We commit to holding these roles in a way that protects and honors the people in our care.

This Code of Ethics was adapted from the “Honor Code of Ethics and Good Practices for Individuals” from the Association for Spiritual Integrity, with their permission and encouragement. We plan to continually reassess it and periodically revise. Many of the below guidelines touch upon very complex and nuanced issues. Additional documents and resources may also be created to reflect new insight and analysis. We welcome honest feedback, open discussion, diverse perspectives, and discerning analysis.

In the points below, the word “teachers” represents all the professional capacities in which our members might serve, and the word “students” represents all whom they serve.

As spiritual teachers, we commit to the following:

Section 1

1. Holding ourselves to the highest standards of ethics, right behavior, and professional competency, as commonly recognized by our peers.
2. Performing our roles as teachers in a caring and compassionate manner, in both one-to-one interactions and groups.
3. Respecting the rights, dignity, and safety of all students and fellow practitioners.
4. Fostering autonomy, empowerment, self-sufficiency, and emotional maturity in our students.
5. Treating students’ questions, concerns, doubts, and experiences with respect, and never trivializing or dismissing their enquiries.

Section 2

1. Being self-aware, open, and humble about the limitations of our knowledge and experience.
2. Making only honest, realistic statements regarding the benefits of our teachings, practices, courses, and other offerings.

3. Refraining from giving counsel in matters outside of our areas of training and expertise, and making appropriate referrals as needed.
4. Not seeking or presuming exalted privileges or glorified status because of our role as spiritual teachers.
5. Acknowledging that, regardless of our spiritual attainment, we are human beings with human personalities, limitations, drives, and needs.

Section 3

1. Being honest and transparent regarding our professional business and financial policies.
2. Honoring the sanctity of privacy and maintaining the confidentiality of everything conveyed to us in confidence.
3. Abiding by local laws with respect to the disclosure of information in cases of sexual abuse, child endangerment, and the intention to harm oneself or others.
4. Using only with proper care and caution any techniques that can potentially cause harmful side effects.
5. Not engaging in any speech or communication which denigrates or demeans any sister organizations and their leadership including but not limited to: Dr. Ibrahim Jaffe, Salima Adelstein, Dr. Wadude Laird, Rida Marz Attar, Sh. Ahmad ar Rifa'i, Marifa Foundation, Institute of Spiritual Healing and the University of Sufism, and the Shadhiliyya Sufi Communities Board and Regional Council.

Section 4

1. Never manipulating, exploiting, or deceiving a student to satisfy our personal aspirations, needs, or desires.
2. Establishing and maintaining clear and wholesome professional boundaries with all students, employees, and associates.
3. Never abusing the trust of students to obtain sexual gratification or personal benefits such as money or free labor.
4. Being particularly mindful of sexual boundaries with students—and honoring them at all times.

Section 5

1. Cultivating and practicing honesty, integrity, compassion, humility, and empathy.
2. Engaging in continuous self-reflection, learning, and holistic personal growth.

3. Regularly reviewing our motivations for serving as teachers and monitoring the integrity of our words and actions.
4. Encouraging feedback about our own methods and behavior—and taking that feedback seriously. This includes complaints submitted to the Ansar Council.
5. Addressing promptly any personal issues, concerns, or challenges that might affect our professional competency.
6. Offering support to our colleagues to the extent that we are able and available.
7. Being willing to participate in conflict resolution processes when disputes arise with another staff member, contractor, board member, volunteer, teacher, student or other member of the tariqa.

This code of ethics is a trust and a prayer that we make to Allah, asking that our community be given all that we need to uphold these commitments, along with the kindness and mercy to help each other grow and walk when we err. We know that when we err, it will only be so that we have a chance to go deeper in our walking, and we welcome the opportunity to support each other in this ongoing journey.

Last Revised 9/18/2024