

# **LZS Living Dharma**

## **Sangha Ethics and Practice Commitments**

As members of the Lincroft Zen Sangha, we are a community living and caring for the Dharma. In setting forth these guidelines for conduct and practice within this community, we describe our commitment to act in ways that continually give rise to an awakened community. We recognize both our capacity for self-delusion and our capacity for awakened living. It is our intent to see ourselves clearly---both our deluded and awakened nature, to work together with all circumstances as they arise, and to acknowledge and atone when our actions are not in accord with our aspiration of an awakened life.

As part of her/his own practice, our Guiding Teacher has a responsibility to act and teach in accord with this aspiration (see below). Each member of the Sangha, as part of their own practice, has a responsibility to act in accord with this aspiration, and thus in accord with the Sixteen Bodhisattva Precepts. In this way teachers are students, and students are teachers. Our effort is to maintain the harmony of the Sangha jewel. Our intention is to freely live our diversity as an expression of our Oneness. Our inspiration is our resonance with the reality of non-separation.

### **ETHICAL GUIDELINES**

We are guided by The Three Tenets (below), or The Three Pure Precepts\*:

- Do not commit evil. I will practice not knowing, thereby giving up fixed ideas about ourselves and the universe.
- Do good. I will bear witness to the joy and suffering of the world.
- Do good for others. I will take actions that serve the whole.

To live and carry out these practices, in our dealings with each other, is to make a fundamental commitment to maintaining the Sangha jewel, the living of interdependence.

In Not Knowing, we honor the integrity of our own view, and that of others, by holding our thoughts and feelings with a questioning mind open to all other possibilities.

In Bearing Witness (listening without preconceptions or expectations) we honor the integrity of our own view and remain open to the views of others.

In Liberating Action we honor our own capacity to continually broaden our view of ourselves, of our circumstances, the Sangha, community, and the world by acting in ways that encourage a broadened view in others.

# **The Sixteen Zen Bodhisattva Precepts**

## **THE THREE TREASURES**

- Being Buddha: Embodying Oneness
- Being Dharma: Embodying diversity
- Being Sangha: Embodying interdependence

## **THE THREE PURE PRECEPTS\***

- Ceasing From Evil: Being willing to relinquish knowing and fixed ideas.
- Doing Good: Being willing to experience wholeness directly, without attachment or judgment.
- Doing Good For Others: Being willing to act in the service of the whole.

## **THE TEN GRAVE PRECEPTS**

1. Non-Killing: Recognizing that I am not separate from all that is.
2. Non-Stealing: Giving, asking for, and accepting what is needed.
3. Not Being Greedy: Encountering all creations with respect, dignity and without clinging.
4. Non-Lying: Speaking with integrity, deceiving no one, including myself.
5. Not Being Ignorant: Nurturing the mind that sees clearly and experiences directly.
6. Not Speaking of Others Errors and Faults: Accepting each moment's offering, blaming no one, accepting responsibility.
7. Not Elevating Myself and Blaming Others: Speaking the truth without guilt or blame, accepting my best effort.
8. Not Being Stingy: Using all of the ingredients of my life, withholding nothing.
9. Not Being Angry: Seeing through anger and acting from wisdom.
10. Not Thinking Ill of The Three Treasures: Accepting my life as The Three Treasures.

## **Practices**

Regarding our view of community we commit ourselves:

- To see our self as others and others as our self
- To words and actions that serve the whole
- To words and actions that recognize the community as both the practice and expression of wholeness

Regarding our communication with others we commit ourselves:

- To listen deeply to what is and is not being said
- To ask clarifying questions
- To make every attempt to understand all points of view clearly
- To be willing to speak out when aware of disharmony in the Sangha
- To avoid gossip
- To speak from our own experience
- To speak directly to any person with whom we have issues or concern
- To avoid triangulation and the involvement of other persons unnecessarily
- To display discretion and respect privacy

Regarding our actions with others we commit ourselves:

- To refrain from actions harmful to each other or to the Sangha
- To refrain from violence or threats of violence
- To refrain from misuse of sexuality:
  - a sexual relationship in which the other is used and not respected
  - a sexual relationship pursued when it has been declined
  - a sexual relationship which takes advantage of the other's innocence
  - a sexual relationship with a minor
  - a sexual relationship when there is an imbalance of power

Regarding the Sangha Resources we commit ourselves:

- To safeguard the Sangha's funds and resources
- To refrain misuse of Sangha funds, using them without Sangha approval
- To be transparent in the use of Sangha funds

## **ADDRESSING ISSUES AND CONFLICTS**

Regarding the care of harmony in the Sangha we commit ourselves:

- To work out conflicts and difficulties arising within the Lincroft Zen Sangha
- To bring up divisive issues arising yet not being addressed
- To speak directly to anyone with whom we have an issue or conflict
- To restrict discussion to those who "need to know"
- To use the council format of hearing all view
- To seek a neutral ally or consult the Guiding Teacher if the problem remains
- To call a council of the Sangha if no other solution has been effective
- To see our practice intent as the dissolution of conflict and expression of One

## Teachers Ethical Statement

As a member of the Lincroft Zen Sangha, I take the Sixteen Zen Bodhisattva Precepts as guides for my life. I take the Ethics and Practice Commitments as guides for my conduct within the Sangha. As the Guiding Teacher of the Lincroft Zen Sangha, I recognize that I am the recipient of the Sangha's trust. I take the role of Teacher as a deepening of my own personal practice and as service to the Dharma. I am committed to assisting and supporting the practice and awakening of others through teaching, face-to-face meetings, and through my own practice.

It is my wholehearted intent to hold, maintain and manifest the essential nature of the student-teacher relationship: the ongoing liberating action of not knowing and of seeing clearly, bearing witness to all that arises among and between us. I vow to use all that arises as a means of pointing others towards their own awakened life.

Recognizing the spiritual intimacy of the student-teacher relationship, I vow to be honest, and to maintain clear boundaries between teacher and student. I vow not to abuse my role as teachers by exploiting the trust of students through verbal abuse, sexual misconduct, misuse of the Center's funds, or through psychological manipulation of the imbalance of power inherent in the student-teacher relationship.

We recognize that any sexual relationship between a teacher and student is harmful to the student, the teacher, and the Sangha as a whole, and is therefore never appropriate. I also recognize that within any community, attraction and affection between two people can arise. Mindful of the harm that can come to the Sangha, even under the most sincere consensual circumstances, I vow to be open and transparent in all Sangha relations, to be sensitive to shifts in those relationships, and to end any teacher-student relationship before a personal relationship is begun.

I respect the intimacy and sensitivity of Daisan and of all private meetings with students. I will treat the matters discussed there as private matters shared within the context of practice and training in the Dharma.

I recognize that our practice continues without end. I hold myself accountable to the Sangha, to my own teacher, and to the White Plum lineage.

Anyone feeling unable to dissolve or resolve an issue or complaint with me should consult my teacher, Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao of Zen Center of Los Angeles or an independent and neutral third party among the teachers of the White Plum Lineage.

Composed November 8, 2010. Adopted by the Lincroft Zen Sangha, Lincroft, NJ