

Introduction and Instructions for the ASW Code of Ethics

The ASW Code of Ethics is not a set of rules, directives, or answers, but is a collection of perspectives and ideas that encourage you to thrive and assist you in making decisions. The Code will help you look at situations and decide what your best options for action may be. Using the Code can further your personal development and spiritual evolution. This is hard work and the Code does not provide easy answers or absolutes.

The ASW Code of Ethics is for the members of the ASW. Our Code is designed to help us, both as individuals and as a spiritual community, explore and express our values. Over time, we hope to evolve and grow in wisdom, meaning this code will change as well. The Code is a starting point and our ends are moving targets. The ASW does not expect others to take the ASW Code of Ethics into consideration, but others are free to use it in part or whole if they wish.

Ways to use the Code

The Code is an anchor, a compass, and a shield. When you are being buffeted by turbulence, tides, or the storms of a complex predicament, you need an anchor. When you are questioning things that are happening, an anchor can ground you and keep you in place while you analyze a situation. When you are ready to start the process of addressing a challenge, the Code can keep you on course like a compass, enabling you to check your bearings. The Code is also a shield against reactive thinking and rash action. Contemplating the Code can prevent you from knee jerk reactions to circumstances. Including the Code in your process can shield you against some of your biases and potentially faulty assumptions.

Much is made of the importance of intention in spiritual communities, but outcomes are equally important. The ASW Code of Ethics is an aide to finding both good intentions and good outcomes and locating the path connecting intentions to the best outcomes that can be accomplished. We are very clear that there is no such thing as a perfect solution. We do the best we can for today and for the future that unfolds from each of our choices.

Knowing and acting out of your true will and divine self is one of the Assembly's goals for its members. The mental, emotional, and spiritual labor of using the Code helps you explore and refine your connection with all aspects of your will and higher self. This work in turn leads to the development of your sense of honor, duty, and personal values because the use of the Code creates a context for discernment.