

ZCB Guidelines for Conflict Resolution

May 9, 2015

Dear Members and Friends,

In its annual meeting of May 2014, the White Plum Asanga of Zen teachers took up the topic of grievance and reconciliation. A policy statement was approved and then posted on October 29, 2014: [A Code of Ethical Conduct and a Grievance and Reconciliation Procedure](#). The code is based on principles of trust, integrity, justice, respect and accountability, in order to nurture an atmosphere supportive of the practice of the Dharma. See www.whiteplum.org.

The WPA has encouraged members to adapt its policy statement with follow-on guidance to their own sanghas. In consultation with the WPA and individual Sanghas, we have developed a grievance and reconciliation process for considering complaints of violations of Sangha codes of conduct. On May 9, 2015, the ZCB board of directors approved the following procedure for **Conflict Resolution**.

Conflict is prone to occur in all organizations, including spiritual communities. When conflict arises, we attempt to address it skillfully, rather than avoid or deny it. We seek to respond to conflict in a way that promotes greater individual and collective self-awareness.

Our procedure for resolving conflict includes the following steps:

- (1) examination of one's own role in the situation;
- (2) when appropriate, direct efforts at communication and reconciliation between the parties involved;
- (3) when step #2 is inappropriate or inadequate, recourse to a ZCB/Clare Sangha teacher to seek advice;
- (4) when step #3 is inadequate, recourse to the ZCB/Clare Sangha Executive Committee comprised by elected officers of the board – President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer – which may intervene or facilitate resolution. Any Executive Committee member will recuse her/himself if involved in the conflict.
- (5) when Step #4 is inadequate, recourse to the ZCB/Clare Sangha board of directors (with any board member recusing her/himself if involved in the conflict);
- (6) when Step #5 is inadequate, the Board will seek outside expertise in grievance, reconciliation and conflict resolution.