4. Policy on Diversity, Inclusivity & Anti-Discrimination

1. Why have a Diversity, Inclusivity and Anti-Discrimination Policy in Shambhala?

Shambhala is an international community and includes people of different cultures, languages, ethnicities, races, genders, gender identities or expressions, sexual orientations, ages, socio-economic statuses, countries of origin, nationalities, citizenship statuses, native languages, sizes, religious beliefs, spiritual practice, political beliefs, and physical, mental, and perceptual abilities.

In recognizing that we cannot avoid bringing dominant group social dynamics from society at large into Shambhala, it is our aspiration that as a community we become more aware of our blind spots and make the personal and organizational advances that create greater access to the teachings.

Each individual has the right to practice, study and work in Shambhala in an environment that is free from discrimination rooted in bias.

2. To whom does the Diversity, Inclusivity and Anti-Discrimination Policy apply?

2.1 Scope and Application. The policy applies to everyone who is present and engages in any activity associated with Shambhala in person or online, regardless of where the activity occurs.

2.2 Effective date. The effective date is Shambhala Day 2021 and it shall apply to events and circumstances occurring on or after the Effective Date.
2.3 Amendments. This policy may be amended at any time by the Board of Directors of Shambhala based upon a review by the Office of Community Care and Conduct.

2.4 Defined Terms

2.4.1 Diversity. A variety of intersecting identities that make individuals unique, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender expression or identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, country of origin, nationality, citizenship status, native language, physical appearance, religious beliefs, political beliefs, level of practice, and physical, mental and perceptual abilities. Diversity recognizes the uniqueness of individuals, populations, groups and their perspectives and experiences. This is not an exhaustive list.

2.4.2 Inclusivity. A conscious and deliberate decision to continuously work towards the creation of accepting and nurturing spaces where similarities and differences are respected, supported, and valued by promoting the active participation of the entire community.

2.4.3 Accessibility. The degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible. The concept focuses on enabling access for people with differing needs, by removing barriers to receiving teachings and practicing as part of Shambhala.

2.4.4 Discrimination. Discrimination is the prejudicial treatment of an individual or group compared to another on the basis of actual or perceived gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, country of origin, nationality, citizenship status, native language, size, physical, mental or perceptual abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or level of practice.

2.5 Exemptions

In some circumstances, Shambhala reserves the right to not admit or to ask a person to leave a program or event, or not register for or enter a program or event for reasons of reasonable prerequisites, participant safety or program disruption.

Additionally, where selection is made for a position, Shambhala reserves the right to reasonably apply criteria which may include physical or mental ability, languages spoken, background check, etc, based on the requirements of the position.

3. The Path of Inclusivity

Every human society has inherited conscious and unconscious patterns of discrimination against certain groups of people, generally based on fear, ignorance or greed. As a community, Shambhala must address culturally embedded positions of power and privilege, and bring awareness to their associated forms of discrimination, so that all people may participate according to their inspiration and ability. The social dynamics of dominant groups can negatively
impact people whose social identities are underrepresented in Shambhala and/or marginalized in society.

3.1 Welcome and treat each individual as unique and deserving of respect.

3.2 Make programs accessible to as many people as possible.

3.3 Unconditionally reject every form of bigotry, discrimination, and actions or words expressing hatred.

3.4 Recognize that people have intersecting identities, which means that individuals experience identity differently, within structures of inequality and/or privilege.

3.5 Explicitly address barriers to open communication, community building, and organizational development caused by views of existing hierarchies.

3.6 Promote active and regular engagement between diverse individuals and groups to explore difference and to develop mutual understanding in a safe and nurturing environment.

3.7 Encourage meaningful participation of diverse individuals in decision-making processes.

3.8 Commit to waking up and shifting social dynamics of dominant groups that negatively impact people who are underrepresented in Shambhala.

3.9 Set clear goals regarding diversity and inclusivity, and allocate efforts and resources to improving accessibility for all (See Shambhala Accessibility Resources)

4. Accessible teachings and environments. In Shambhala, we are committed to:

4.1 Make programs accessible to as many people as possible.

4.2 Set clear goals regarding diversity and inclusivity, and allocate efforts and resources to improving accessibility for all (See Shambhala Accessibility Resources).

5. Misconduct

5.1 Discrimination as defined in Section 2.4.4 is considered misconduct.

5.2 Shambhala encourages anyone who experiences or witnesses discrimination to use one of the options outlined in the document ‘What to do if you have a concern in Shambhala’.

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