

SNOWFLOWER SANGHA ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

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SNOWFLOWER SANGHA ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

SnowFlower Sangha is a lay practice community in the spirit of Thich Nhat Hanh. In addition to offering four weekly meetings for meditation and discussion, we endeavor to engage our mindfulness practice as fully as possible throughout our day. By making the effort to bring mindful and respectful attention both to Sangha and to daily activities, we nurture mindfulness in ourselves and support it in each other.

Sangha is currently structured around the hub of the Steering Council (STC) and the committees (spokes) which emanate from it. The individual roles and responsibilities of the STC and its spokes are outlined below.

Community decision-making is the responsibility of the STC. When making major decisions such as changes to the decision-making structure itself, the methods of choosing STC members, large modifications of the budget, or significant alterations to the Articles or Bylaws, the STC will in every instance first make the proposed change known to the members of the Sangha and provide a means to receive feedback. At least 70% of the STC members must be present at a meeting for decisions to be made. Absentee voting is permitted and counts towards quorum. All STC meetings are open to any member of the Sangha; however only STC members may vote.

To allow for input from Sangha members, the STC (as well as any relevant committee) will, at least 48 hours prior to the meeting day, post to the listserv:

- Next meeting date and location
- Agenda for that meeting
- Minutes of the previous meeting.

Any Sangha member who wishes to raise a question or express a concern may do so by contacting a member of the STC or pertinent committee. (See page 2 for list of current members.)

STEERING COUNCIL

Role:

- To address issues and make decisions that have the potential to affect the entire Sangha, including conflict resolution
- To attend to legal and budgetary issues
- To sponsor the Annual Meeting (AM)

Duties include but are not limited to:

- Determining which issues need to be brought to the entire Sangha at the AM
- Deciding issues which require prompt action (i.e. sooner than the next AM) and notifying the Sangha via listserv and website until the next AM
- Planning the agenda for the AM and following up on decisions made there; making the agenda available via the listserv and the website at least 2 weeks prior
- Dealing with legal issues and annual filing responsibilities
- Working with financial and budgetary matters affecting the entire Sangha
- Allocating charitable donations, if any, at a regular Steering Council meeting

- Selecting Sangha officers. Officers are chosen by members of the STC at the first meeting after the AM.
- Resolving conflicts
- Sponsoring the Fall Retreat, the Spring Day of Mindfulness, Summer Monastic Retreat, the Winter Potluck.

Criteria for Membership

- Commitment to the practice
- Commitment to spend sufficient time and be willing to make difficult decisions when necessary
- Ability to attend at least five bi-monthly meetings a year
- Take an active role in one or more of the weekly Sangha meetings
- Demonstrated commitment to SnowFlower for at least two (2) years

Desired Composition

The desired composition is 9-11 members, ideally but not necessarily from all four meetings, with staggered three year terms, plus the Treasurer. Each three-year term shall last until the first STC meeting following the AM. New members will always have three-year terms. A member who is replacing a member who did not complete his or her term remains in office only until the end of the term of the person they are replacing. They may then seek to have a full three-year term in the same manner as other current STC members. A current member is entitled to seek to continue for another term, but only if the continuing members choose that they do so. If an STC member resigns or is removed, the remaining members shall choose a replacement. Sangha members who wish to be considered for membership on the STC must make their interest known to the Sangha via the listserv by the date of the AM or earlier.

Selection of Officers

The STC will choose the President, Vice-President, and Secretary from among the STC members. The Treasurer, however, is chosen by the STC from among the full Sangha. Once chosen, the Treasurer becomes an STC member. At least one week prior to the STC meeting at which officers are selected (the first STC meeting following the AM) any member of the STC who is willing to serve as an officer shall notify the other members of his/her availability. All officers, other than the Treasurer, will serve for one year. The Treasurer shall remain in office until he or she resigns or until they lose the support of the majority of the STC. Any officer may serve for subsequent years, if they state their interest and if the STC votes to have them continue. The President must have served on the STC for at least one full year before being chosen as President.

Officer Responsibilities

President

- Leads and facilitates each STC meeting and the AM
- Forms the Agenda (with input from any Sangha member) and sends it out to the full Sangha in advance of each meeting.

Vice President

- Assumes President's duties in his or her absence

Secretary

- Takes & distributes Minutes for each meeting
- Keeps records of all Minutes
- Keeps corporate documents

Treasurer

- Participates in the Steering Council as a voting member

- Chairs meetings of the Finance Committee
- Prepares, together with the Finance Committee, financial reports and budget proposals for the STC and the AM
- Receives and deposits weekly donations; maintains file of monthly statements; reconciles checking account
- Pays rent
- Makes payments for budgeted and non-budgeted expenditures
- Receives and deposits money from Retreats
- Makes payments related to Retreats
- Trains a successor
- When the role of Treasurer is open, it is made known to the Sangha. Interested parties will submit their names to the STC which will make the selection.

COMMITTEES

The STC shall create and empower as many committees as it feels are useful and beneficial. The STC can at any time modify the structure or purpose of any given committee, or, unless otherwise indicated in the Bylaws, end the functions of a committee. Members of each committee shall be approved by the STC. The STC will always give serious weight to the advice of current committee members about whether to appoint an individual to a given committee. Every member of every committee must be a regular participant in the Sangha. Committees shall keep the STC informed of their activities.

Finance Committee: There shall always be a finance committee.

- Advises the Treasurer on financial matters
- Assists the Treasurer in preparing financial reports and budget proposals.
- Provides guidance on retreat and event budgets

Schedulers Committee : There shall always be a schedulers committee

Role: To plan and schedule Tuesday and Friday meetings. Sunday and Wednesday do their own scheduling. Duties include but are not limited to

- Determining a theme (if desired) for the two month cycle
- Finding people to lead the sit and discussion each week, and sending the schedule to the SnowFlower Sun editors and the webmaster by the agreed-upon deadline
- Supporting, offering guidance, discussing topics with newer leaders
- Providing the leaders during your cycle with the most recent Guidelines for Leaders

Criteria for Membership

- Experienced mindfulness practitioner of at least two years standing
- Willingness to help the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh flow through the Sangha
- Experience with and commitment to SnowFlower Sangha
- Willingness to work with and support leaders, and have led Sangha themselves

Desired Composition – 6 - 12 members with staggered 3-year terms.

Note: Everyone who attends should be mindful of helping with set-up and clean-up. Members are also asked to support new people by greeting them upon arrival and being available to answer questions after closing.

SANGHA SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

Wisconsin Nonstock Corporation Annual Report Submitter

- Maintains Legal Documents
- Fills out the required state form annually

Meetinghouse Liaison

- Works with the Meetinghouse to fulfill SnowFlower space requests or issues

Roles & Responsibilities “Keepers”

- Keep this document up-to-date and posted on the website

Website

- Ensures payment for domain registration and website hosting
- Improves functionality of website
- Makes site accessible to multiple webmasters if more volunteers step forward

Member Address List

- Maintains address / phone/ email list
- Makes changes to addresses, phone-numbers, and e-mails as requested
- Updates list yearly

NURTURING SANGHA

Scholarships

- Coordinates awarding of Scholarships for national, regional or SnowFlower retreats

Materials & Inventory Caretakers

- Keeps the files with handouts up-to-date
- Ensures that all altar supplies are accounted for and maintained
- Sees that the Buddha statue is oiled twice yearly
- Print monthly SnowFlower Sun

Education

- Encourages, supports and implements SnowFlower-sponsored dharma classes, courses, workshops, day-long trainings, and retreats
- Assists in scheduling, publicizing, financing and coordinating such events

Mentoring

- Assists mentees in finding mentors

Coordinator of Kalyana Mitta (Spiritual Friends):

- Coordinates the formation of spiritual friends groups
- Assists people interesting in joining a spiritual friends group in finding a group

Newsletter

- Solicit schedules for Calendar from schedulers.
- Solicit and edit announcements and articles

Retreat Music Coordinator

- Directs Vox Ephemera for special Sangha programs and at retreats
- Makes copies of music for retreats and sits

Librarian

- Maintains library collection & ensures good condition of books
- Solicits book returns, as needed

SnowFlower Senior Practitioners

- Advisory body for SnowFlower practice issues

SANGHA RETREATS, SOCIAL EVENTS, PROJECTS, AFFILIATIONS

Retreats

- Spring Day of Mindfulness
- Residential Weekend Fall Retreat at Bethel Horizons
- Summer Non-residential Weekend with Monastics

Social Events

Include but are not limited to

- Winter Potluck,
- Spring Event at Picnic Point
- Tea Tuesdays at Six
- Susan Pearsall's Open House – 10a.m.-4 p.m. except WednesdayS and SundayS

Prison Project

Promotes and supports engaged Buddhism through projects involving incarcerated and previously incarcerated individuals. Volunteers must complete DOC training.

MOSES

An inter-faith organization of 15-Madison area faith communities working to alleviate suffering through its 11x15 Campaign. The groups seek funding to offer mental health and substance abuse treatment rather than sending people to prison without addressing the underlying problems.