SAFE BUDDHISM

CONTEXT

- With workshop attendees dialogue the challenges and effort required for self - transparency and good governance, but also for legal redress.
- Underline the importance of Vinaya and local Regulatory laws in any jurisdiction - and their role as a necessity for Community Trust and Confidence; as a published Code of conduct; and the processes required for any investigation and resolution.
- Encourage Question and Answers as to why certain initiatives fail, and what solutions can assist resolution and new frameworks.
- Gauge genuine interest in future networking and support - with the active voluntary involvement of many Buddhist organisations around the world.
- Share the importance of Restorative justice, and honouring Morality and Ethical standards at all times, and in all circumstances.
- The reasons why it is in the interests of a genuine Monastic that behaviours can be examined and corrections made. This is important for a genuine Monastic in acceptance of their required vows, and meeting the required high levels of Virtue.

TRAINING IN HIGHER VIRTUE

Lay People	Serious Yogis	Novice Monks
1. Killing	1. Killing	1. Killing
2. Stealing	2. Stealing	2. Stealing
3. Sexual Misconduct	3. Celibacy	3. Celibacy
4. Lying	4. Lying	4. Lying
5. Intoxicants	5. Intoxicants	5. Intoxicants
	6. Eating after Noon	6. Eating after Noon
	7a. Entertainment	7. Entertainment
	7b. Beautify & Adornments	8. Beautify & Adornments
	8. High & large beds	9. High & large beds
		10. Using Money

RECAP: MONASTIC VINAYA

- Maintaining the integrity, unity, and spiritual focus of the Buddhist Sangha
- Framework for ethical conduct, providing rules—ranging from moral precepts to community regulations—that protect practitioners and foster a harmonious, disciplined life.
- Safeguards the Dharma, ensures the continuation of the lineage, and acts as a foundation for reaching enlightenment.

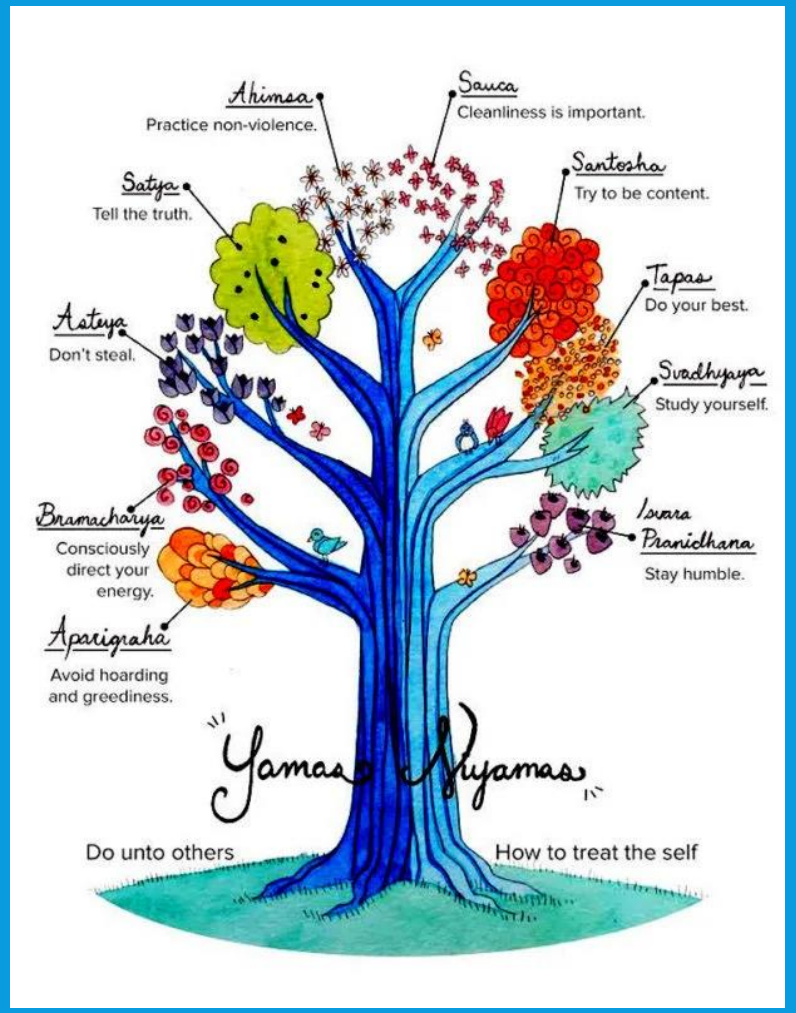
INTER-DEPENDENCE OF VINAYA

- DEFEAT
- SUSPENSION
- DIFFICULT TO CORRECT (S 12)
- ADMONISH (S11)
- CORRUPTER OF FAMILIES and BADLY BEHAVED (S13)
- UNDETERMINED RULES
- LIES IN FULL AWARENESS (P1)
- SPEAKS EVASIVELY OR HARASSES (P12)
- KNOWINGLY CONCEALS ANOTHER MONK"S SERIOUS OFFENCE (P64)

MONASTIC VINAYA

- **Foundation for Spiritual Practice**: that Monastics tame their minds and cultivate virtue, which is a prerequisite foundation for meditation and wisdom.
- **Protection of the Sangha and Dharma:** By providing strict guidelines for behaviour and dispute resolution, the Vinaya maintains harmony and discipline.
- **Renunciation and Integrity:** It sets Monastics apart from the mundane world by mandating a life of simplicity, reducing power-seeking and craving. Not clinging to anything in the world
- **Respect and Mentorship**: The Vinaya establishes a structured community where seniors guide juniors, fostering a culture of respect, mentorship, and orderly conduct.
- **Ethical Protection:** It acts as "guard rails " minimizing risks in this life and the next by guiding Monastics away from unwholesome actions by Body, Speech and Mind.

SPIRITUAL CONDUCT



AUSTRALIAN CITIZENSHIP PLEDGE

- "From this time forward, under God,
  I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
  Whose democratic beliefs I share,
  Whose rights and liberties I respect,
  And whose laws I will uphold and obey."

CODE OF CONDUCT – A ROADMAP FOR ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

- **Sets Clear Behavioral Expectations:** It defines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, including communication standards, handling sensitive information, and treating everyone with respect.
- **Promotes Ethical Culture:** It clarifies the organisation's core values and helps participants make morally sound choices, strengthening the intended ethical foundation.
- **Ensures Legal and Regulatory Compliance:** It helps organisations adhere to laws and regulations.
- **Improves Individual Morale and Safety:** By promoting fairness and respect, a code of conduct creates a safe environment.
- **Provides a Framework for Decision-Making:** It assists leadership in navigating complex situations and making ethical decisions.

BUDDHIST CODE OF CONDUCT

- A code of conduct in a Buddhist organization is essential for maintaining ethical integrity, fostering a harmonious environment, and ensuring that the community remains focused on the spiritual goals of compassion and enlightenment. It acts as a set of guardrails to prevent harmful actions, manage power dynamics, and build trust among members.

UPHOLDING ETHICAL STANDARDS AND SAFETY

- **Protection of Vulnerable Members:** Codes of conduct protect students and practitioners from potential abuse of power by teachers or lay supporters.
- **Preventing Harm:** These codes strongly emphasize abstaining from sexual misconduct, dishonesty, divisive speech, and intoxication (alcohol or drugs), which are seen as detrimental to personal and community well-being.
- **Safeguarding against Misconduct:** Codes provide a clear, transparent framework for reporting breaches of conduct and handling grievances.

MAINTAINING HARMONY AND COMMUNITY FOCUS

- **Fostering Sangha Harmony:** Rules of conduct, rooted in the *Vinaya* (monastic discipline), ensure that monks and nuns maintain discipline, which is vital for the harmony of the community. The Vinaya intersects with a stated Code of Conduct for lay supporters.
- **Reducing Distractions:** The code helps create a simplified environment (fewer possessions, regulated speech), which allows practitioners to focus on meditation and mindfulness rather than superficial distractions.
- **Mutual Respect:** It encourages an atmosphere of humility and mutual respect among members, including proper etiquette when interacting with monastics.

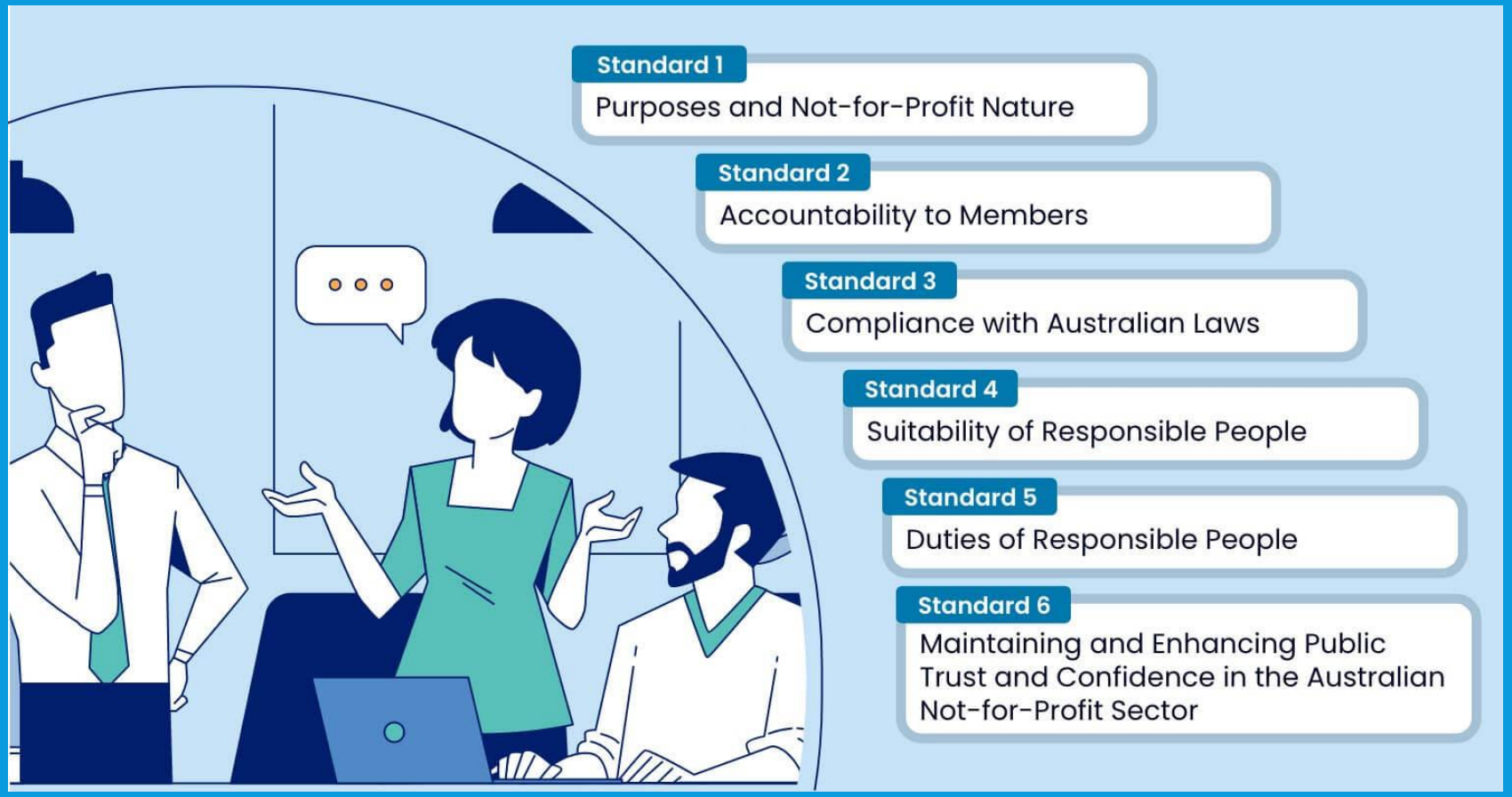
SUPPORTING SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- **Foundation for Wisdom:** In Buddhist practice, ethical conduct (*sila*) is the crucial foundation for developing composure (*samadhi*) and wisdom (*panna*).
- **Cultivating Mindfulness:** By regulating physical and verbal actions, the code helps individuals identify harmful tendencies early, fostering a more mindful life.
- **Accumulating Peace:** Adhering to the Precepts is viewed as leading to a better, more peaceful life and supporting progress towards enlightenment

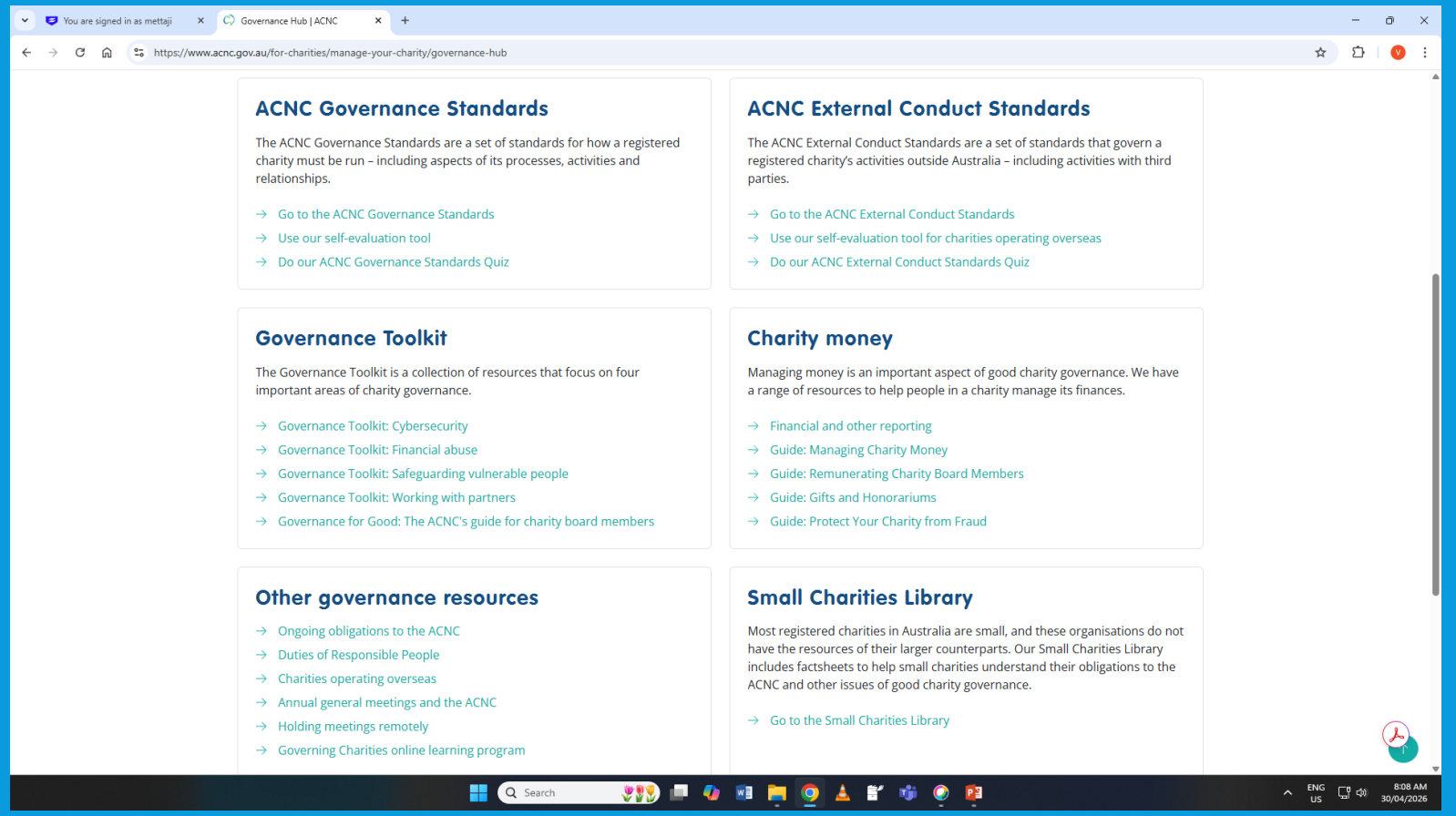
ENSURING ORGANISATIONAL INTEGRITY

- **Trust and Reliability:** A clear code of conduct builds trust between the organisation and members of the public (especially its members), which is a necessity for the ongoing support and reputation of the Buddhist community.
- **Adaptation to Modern Context:** Modern organizations blend traditional monastic ethics with modern governance standards, ensuring transparency and accountability to all parties.
- **Clear Expectations:** It provides a "middle ground" that outlines expected behaviour rather than just strict prohibitions, offering guidelines for both monastics and laypeople.

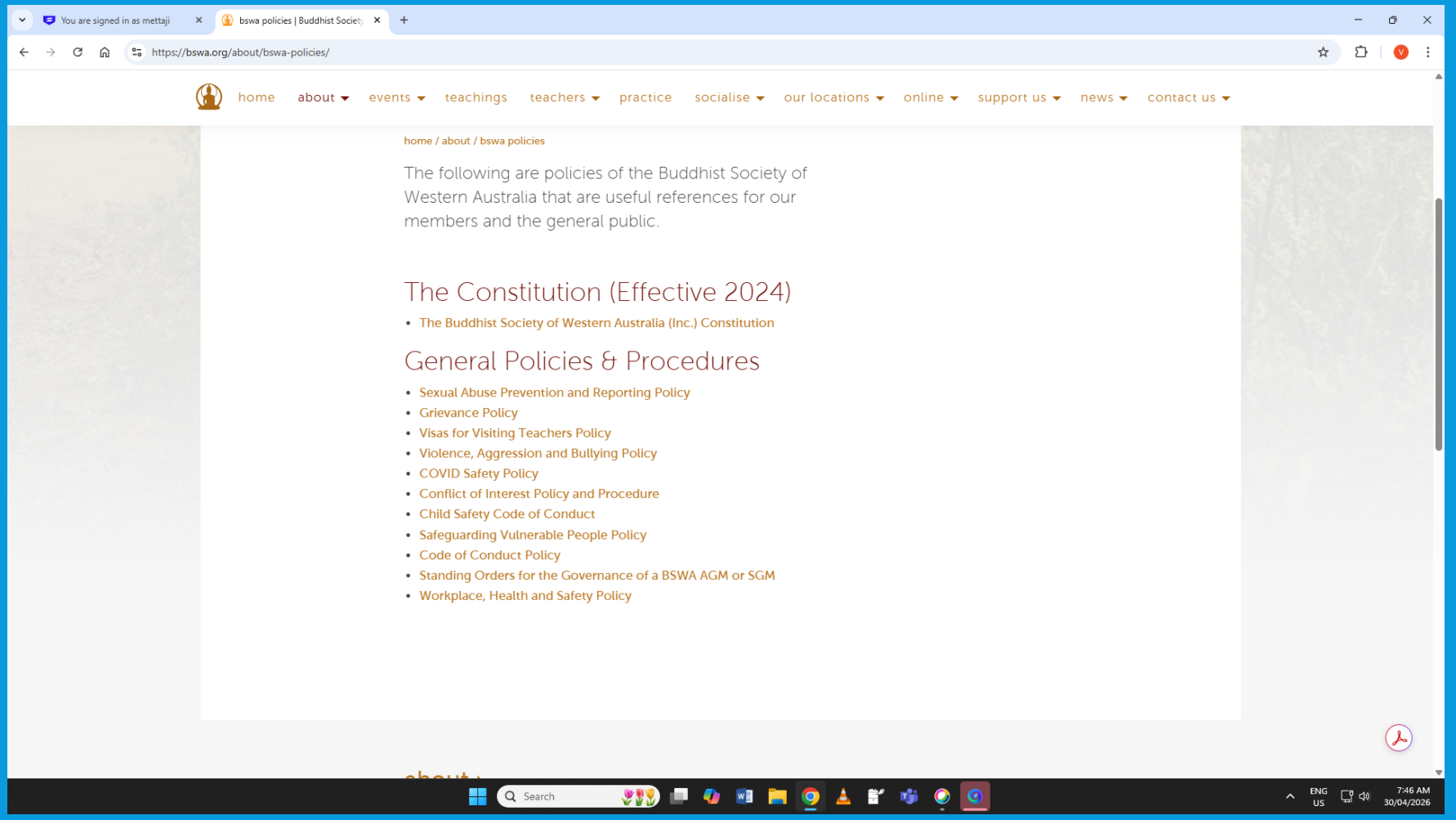
ACNC GOVERNANCE



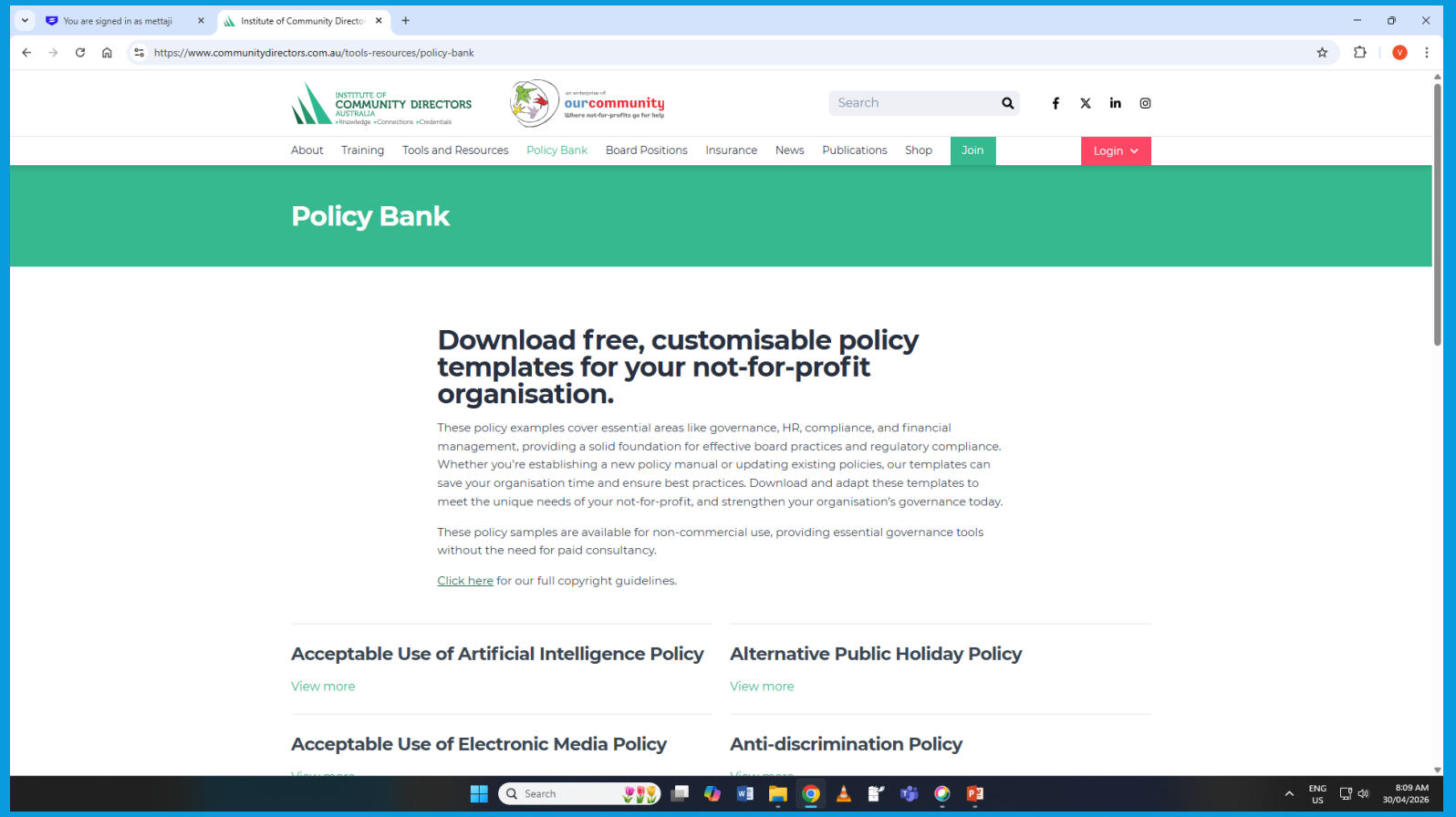
ACNC GOVERNANCE HUB



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



INSTITUTE OF COMMUNITY DIRECTORS POLICY BANK



SATI SANGHA – A GENTLE START

SATI SANGHA

You are signed in as mettaji
Ethical Reflecting – by Sati Sang
ethicalreflecting.org
Ethical Reflecting by Sati Sangha
Home
Modules
Resources
These modules are designed to take you through a process of ethical reflecting; reflecting on your life as a meditation and/or dharma teacher. They are designed to untangle some of the threads inter-woven into your ethical life.
The course is flexible but not DIY. Best used with a few teachers from the same sangha or tradition or ethical concern. Best when done over a three month time period; one module per month meeting with Linda Modaro for orientation, support and guidance.
We will fine tune your internal 'ethical compass' through exploring your own particular patterns and habits, your sangha's particular patterns and habits that put you at risk for ethical misunderstandings.
We will be using the early Buddhist teachings as our dharma anchor.
Laying the Groundwork
The Circle of Conditionality
From Roots to Fruits
Module 1: Developing trust, safety and rapport with a small, intimate group using ethical reflection.
Module 2: Holding the impact experienced in sanghas, from a lack of clarity or policies to ethical transgressions, and the effect on us individually.
Module 3: Continuing reflective exploration and starting a healing process from the impact of systemic ethical misconduct.
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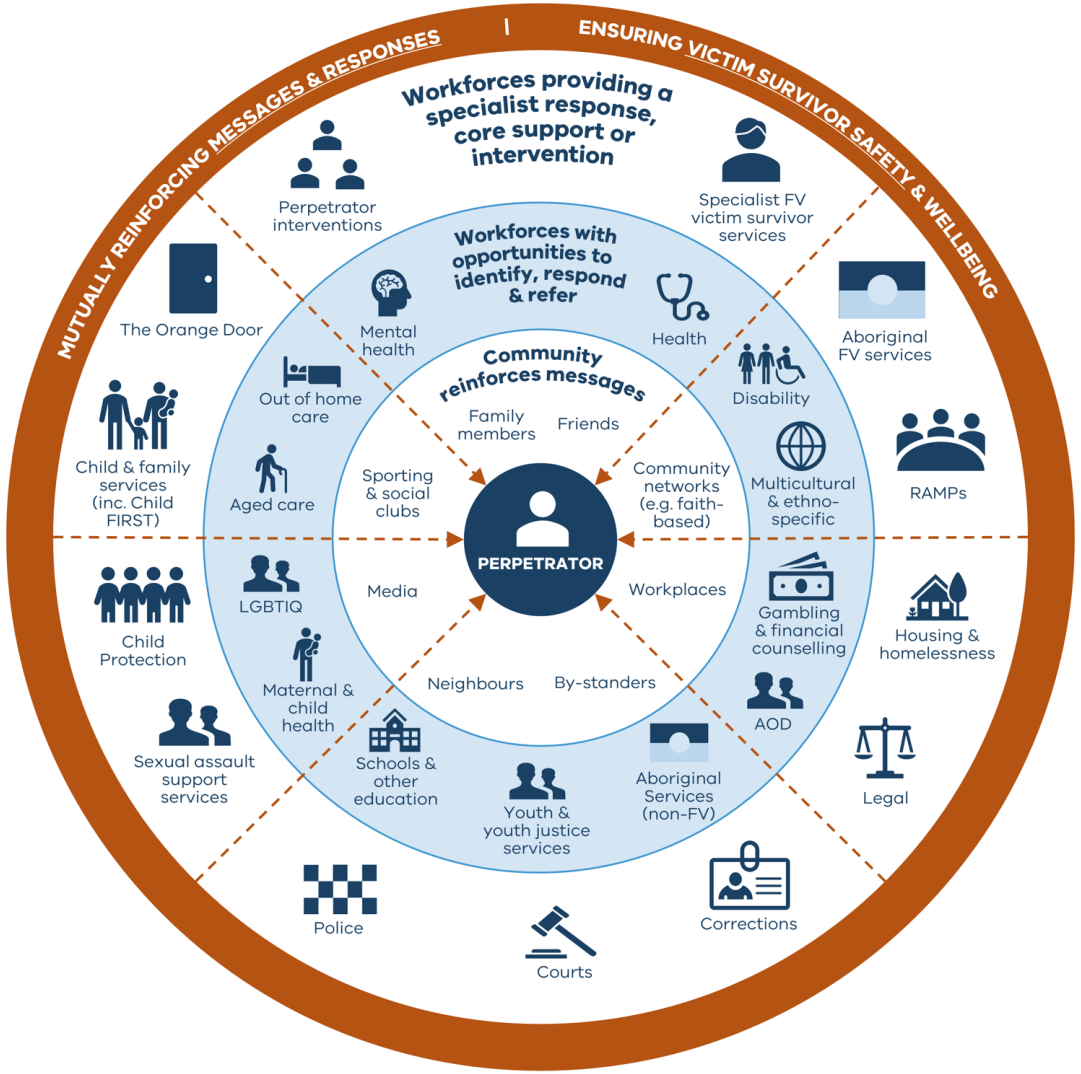
BSV :SUPPORTING BUDDHIST COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO FAMILY VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

- Ethical standard – preventing Family Violence and Violence against Women.
- In Partnership with Faith Communities Supporting Healthy Family Relationships part-funded the Victoria State Government.
- Intent: Family Violence and Violence against Women requires urgent Prevention and Response.
- Clear definitions and evidence of short and long-term impact of Family Violence.
- Role of Buddhist faith leaders and Community to Recognise, Respond and Refer in a suspected situation.

VICTORIA STATE COMMUNITY - WEB OF ACCOUNTABILITY



BSV: SUPPORTING BUDDHIST COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO FAMILY VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

- Adopt a Family Violence policy and procedure for managing Disclosures.
- A comprehensive Checklist of "Do's and Don'ts" when responding to a Family Violence Disclosure.
- A Step-by-Step Flowchart for Community to follow including when to call the Police; and protection of Children.
- Minimum standards to be accepted and followed by all Monks and Nuns (and newly arrived Non-Australian candidates) to ensure compliance with Family Violence law in Victoria.
- In - language resources e.g. Viet, Thai, Sinhalese – to assist clear communication.
- Designated outreach worker.

BSV: SUPPORTING BUDDHIST COMMUNITIES TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO FAMILY VIOLENCE TOOLKIT

Extensive detail on preventing Family Violence and Violence against Women:

- What is Gender equality?
- What are Gender Norms in Australia.
- Library of relevant Buddhist teachings to reaffirm Values and Ethics.
- Attend Training on Preventing and Responding to family violence.
- Develop working partnerships with multiple organisations.
- Promote women's leadership.
- Learn how to manage resistance and backlash within the required change process.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA CASE STUDY

- 2018 Review of all Australian Compliance factors especially ACNC: Governance-hub/governance-standards
- Comprehensive re-write of the Constitution (2018).
- 60 Policies and Procedures were deemed necessary - either upgraded or newly established.
- Project team with adequate backgrounds. Initiative - first round - took 2 years; but is still ongoing.

1. Sexual Abuse Prevention and Reporting Policy
2. Grievance Policy

BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA CASE STUDY

3. Violence, Aggression and Bullying Policy
4. Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure
5. Child Safety Code of Conduct
6. Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy
7. Code of Conduct Policy
8. Work Health and Safety

BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA CASE STUDY

- Implemented an integrated Organisational structure with terms of Reference and Responsibilities (TOR) for each facility: Nuns and Monks are assigned roles within each Monastery – which are advised to Government (can form part of their Visa requirements).
- The legal framework for each facility is detailed in each TOR together with Leadership positions; key Operational roles; meeting and reporting responsibilities; and the strict application and recording of donor funds.
- The Monastery House Rules (Korwat) give even more specific detail, beyond Vinaya, on behaviour in the Monastery (and interactions with lay people).
- Process for Disputes; Resolution; Counselling; and Mediation.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA CASE STUDY

- Partner with State and Federal Government – submissions on Multicultural Strategy; LGBTQIA+; proposed Religious Discrimination Bills; Securing protection for Faith facilities; Indigenous affairs (Voice to Parliament);
- Partner with Australian Sangha Association and Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils Litigate against Government BSWA vs. Commissioner of Taxation – when a key element of Charity status was threatened to be withdrawn.
- Strong stance on the ordination of Bhikkhunis, since before 2009. (Onya nuns).
- Negotiating new Terms for Monastic Visas on the basis on upgraded Character requirements.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA CASE STUDY

- An effective set of policies needs diligence and Community Trust (Monastic and Lay).
- Need for regular Induction and Training.
- Liability of "Responsible persons" linked through Law to Government and Regulators. Responsible Persons have to sign for their understanding and compliance.
- Adequacy of internal disputes being resolved: against Vinaya; policies; and law.
- Ability of an individual to be granted external support and advocacy.
- New Compliance introduced on a regular basis.
- Yearly review of Policies; Procedural gaps.
- Admit mistakes and rectify clearly and in reasonable time.

OATH AGAINST HARM IN THE PRACTICE OF THE DHAMMA

- In the practice of the Dharma, I hold the student-teacher relationship to be a sacred connection which prioritises the spiritual development, maturation, and well-being of the student.
- Similarly, I hold that Dharma organisations exist to provide safe environments which allow those who practice the Dharma to thrive in supportive communities, founded on aspirations of good-will for all, and supported by a strong ethical foundation of non-harming.
- I acknowledge that any behaviour which would be categorised as abusive—whether emotionally, physically, financially, psychologically or sexually—or which is exploitative, coercive, or an abuse of power, or which attempts to cover-up such behaviour, is harmful and unnecessary in the practice of the Dharma. It is unacceptable in all circumstances.
- I am aware that harm has been caused by failures to meet these standards in the past, and I declare my commitment to maintaining them for the well-being and benefit of all. May this commitment help the Dharma to flourish, both now and in the future, and may it help to alleviate suffering and create a more compassionate world.

WHAT SHOULD YOUR BUDDHIST ORGANISATION BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR - IN YOUR LOCATION?

- Before we break into Groups let's watch this 5 minute video together:

What is the difference between Ethics, Morality and the Law?

WHY CERTAIN INITIATIVES FAIL – Q & A

INITIATIVES THAT SUCCEED – Q & A

FUTURE NETWORKS AND SUPPORT?

AS A MONASTIC WHAT IS YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF *YOUR* BUDDHIST ORGANISATION?

WHAT CONCERNS DO YOU HAVE (PERHAPS UNEXPRESSED) FOR YOUR BUDDHIST ORGANISATION THAT BROUGHT YOU TO THIS WORKSHOP?

HOW WOULD YOU AND YOUR SUPPORTERS UNDERTAKE A ETHICS, LAW AND MORALITY REVIEW – IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

OATH AGAINST HARM EXERCISE

Oath Against Harm Video

How would you invoke a sustainable Oath in your Organisation.