



Revised: 06/12

## **Code of Ethics for Ministers/Spiritual Leaders of Our Unity Worldwide Ministries**

### **Introduction and Intention**

Foundational to Unity's principles and teachings is the belief that we are individualized expressions of God; that our spiritual purpose is to give expression to God. This calls us, as Unity ministers/spiritual leaders to live from our Christ nature in all circumstances—thereby, being a healing presence and a role model for those we serve. Because of this, it is our intention to be accountable to a high level of professional ethics.

Our Code of Ethics articulates a vision of ethical behavior grounded in our beliefs and teachings. Its purpose is to provide guidelines for behavior that is both ethical and authentic, and allows us to give full expression to our Christ nature. This document also serves the purpose of allowing us to hold one another accountable to this standard. When we fall short, the Ethics Review System seeks to provide a compassionate process that calls us back to integrity and wholeness. We seek to restore, to rehabilitate, and to make amends whenever possible.

We also recognize that there are certain violations of our covenant that must be addressed. Some behaviors are explicitly illegal, and such violations may require suspension of membership from Unity Worldwide Ministries. Some behaviors and attitudes are unethical by our standards and compromise our ability to perform and provide ministry. Other behaviors and attitudes harm us and interfere with our ministry and our own efforts toward wholeness. Ministers/spiritual leaders who act in ways that are inconsistent with our Code of Ethics may be subject to review through our Ethics Review System. We seek to address these violations honestly, directly, and in such a manner as to assist one another in living our highest potential.

**Section I and Section II relate to our spiritual principles and self-care. It is recommended that all ministers/spiritual leaders aspire to follow these practices. If a minister/spiritual leader falls short of these practices, an ethical review would not be probable.**

## **I. Dedication to Truth Principles**

- A.** As a Unity minister/spiritual leader [minister/spiritual leader here and throughout the document refers to those individuals who are credentialed and/or recognized as Unity leaders by Unity Worldwide Ministries], I dedicate myself to the principles of Truth as taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ and interpreted by Unity and Unity Worldwide Ministries [UWM], including:
1. God is Absolute good, everywhere present.
  2. Every human being is an expression of the Divine; the Christ spirit, by whatever name, indwells all people. Their very essence is of God, and therefore they are also inherently good.
  3. Human beings create their experience by the activity of their thinking. Everything in the manifest realm has its beginning in thought.
  4. Prayer is creative thinking that heightens the connection with God-Mind and therefore brings forth wisdom, healing, prosperity, and everything good.
  5. Knowing and understanding the laws of life, also called Truth, are not enough. A person must also live the truth that he/she knows.
- B.** I look to the indwelling Christ for inspiration, to guide, govern, and prosper me.
- C.** I will, to the best of my understanding and ability, bring the freeing truth to humankind. This I will do in a spiritually dignified way, being guided by divine wisdom and good judgment.
- D.** I believe in the power of prayer and I am convinced that, as Jesus said, “All things are possible to one who believes.”
- E.** In consecration to God and the work of ministry, I offer myself as a channel for God’s will to be made manifest that I may honor and glorify God.
- F.** I believe that the true minister/spiritual leader is one who has been called to this work by the spirit of Truth within. I desire only to express this Truth, and to teach others to live it.

## **II. The Ministerial Relationship to Self – Self Care**

Recognizing that wholeness is expressed on all levels of my being, I will honor myself in spirit, mind and body.

- A.** Following the example of Jesus, I will take time away from the crowds for conscious contact with God, and will maintain a spiritual practice of prayer and meditation.
- B.** I will respect the need to develop and broaden my intellectual and spiritual capacities through personal reading, and professional continuing education programs that are vital and relevant to my growth.

- C. I will endeavor to maintain a program of emotional and physical fitness that includes vacation time, and time off each week for rest and relaxation.
- D. Knowing that ministry makes great demands upon the ministers/spiritual leader's time, I will endeavor to maintain a proper balance between the life of the ministry and the rights and privileges of my family relationship.

**Sections III through Section VII relate to standards of behaviors all ministers/spiritual leaders are expected to demonstrate. Failure to do so could result in a review through the Ethics Review System.**

### **III. The Ministerial Relationship with Others**

The ministerial relationship pre-supposes certain role expectations; the minister/spiritual leader is expected to make available certain resources, talents, knowledge, and expertise which will serve the best interests of the ministry.

- A. The role of minister/spiritual leader carries with it authority and power. I will fulfill my responsibility and use this power to benefit the people who call upon me for service. I will offer acceptance and support to all people with whom I have contact regardless of age, race, socio-economic status, creed, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation. When people are angry, critical, or unkind, I will respond compassionately.
- B. I will conduct my work, private and public, after the standards and in accord with the teachings and ideals of Unity World Headquarters at Unity Village and Unity Worldwide Ministries without competition and contention, realizing that the more truly I practice the Principles of Unity, the greater will be the good to each and all immediately concerned, and to the community at large.
- C. I will maintain the boundaries of the ministerial relationship, realizing that crossing boundaries is a betrayal of trust. In honor of that trust, I will not exploit nor violate the emotional, spiritual or physical well-being of people who come to me for help or over whom I have any kind of authority. I will not use my authority to defame or manipulate individuals or groups, or foster division within the ministry. I will not create or cultivate dependencies. I will avoid situations and relationships which could impair my professional judgment or compromise the integrity of the ministry. I will not exploit situations or relationships for personal gain.
- D. As a minister/spiritual leader, I shall work within my professional qualifications and limitations. People with needs beyond my expertise shall be referred to a qualified professional.
- E. **Confidentiality:**
  1. I am honor bound to hold sacred all confidences reposed in me, except if a confidence reveals that the person confiding may pose a threat to self or others; I will abide by law mandating or authorizing reporting to agencies. In addition, where law shields from liability voluntary disclosure of suspected possible child abuse, elder abuse, dependent adult abuse, or animal abuse, I will make a good faith report of such abuse to the appropriate agencies whether or not reporting is mandated by law.

2. I will never mention, without permission, either privately or publicly, the name, residence, or locality of any person under treatment in the past or present in illustration or verification of Truth principles.
  3. I will not use privileged information for personal gain.
- F.** I will refrain from sexual contact and/or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, or employee with whom I have a professional and/or pastoral relationship, realizing it is unethical and is deemed clergy misconduct. (Clergy misconduct involving sexual abuse and/or sexualizing a professional relationship is defined as sexual activity or contact, not limited to sexual intercourse.) [Refer to Unity Worldwide Ministries Sexual Conduct Policy.]
- G.** I believe that more is taught by what a minister/spiritual leader is than what s/he says. Therefore, I will seek to keep my morals above reproach. I will exercise good judgment in regard to my social conduct. My relationships will be such as to command only the highest respect. I am conscious of the fact that to be pure in heart is to be pure in conduct also.

#### **IV. Relating to Colleagues**

- A.** I will hold all ministers/spiritual leaders in esteem and respectful regard, and use all rightful means to protect the personal and professional honor of all other ministers/spiritual leaders.
- B.** I will not interfere with the work of another minister/spiritual leader.
1. If I am asked by a member of a Unity ministry in which I am not serving to conduct a special service or provide pastoral care, I will consult the minister/spiritual leader of that ministry before accepting.
  2. I will not accept an overture from a ministry whose minister/spiritual leader has not yet resigned.
  3. I shall provide cooperative assistance to other minister/spiritual leaders as they endeavor to do ministry, including when working as part of a Unity Worldwide Ministries Ministry Team.
- C.** When assuming the leadership of an established ministry, I will avoid criticism of the former minister/spiritual leader or her/his work. In those rare times when an ethical lapse by a prior minister/spiritual leader has occurred, I will be truthful and compassionate while maintaining confidentiality.
- D.** After leaving a ministry:
1. I will modify my relations with members of a congregation which I have previously served in order to support the highest interest of the current Unity minister/spiritual leader and the ministry.
  2. After relinquishing my work to another minister/spiritual leader, I will not participate in that ministry in any way without the approval of the ministry's current minister/spiritual leader.

- E.** When I am disturbed by the activities of another colleague, I will communicate directly with that colleague. When I am disturbed by the activities at another Unity ministry, I will communicate with the appropriate leaders of the ministry.
  1. If necessary, I will consult with other Unity Worldwide Ministries representatives who could include any of the following: my Regional Representative, my Regional Judicatory Representative, and/or Unity Worldwide Ministries staff members.
  2. I will hold the situation in prayer.
  3. If guided, I will file an Ethics Review System complaint.
  
- F.** As assistant or associate minister:
  1. I will give the senior minister/spiritual leader full support and cooperation.
  2. I will not criticize the minister/spiritual leader in any way, or discuss the minister/spiritual leader in a negative way with any ministry member, board member, or person outside the ministry.
  3. If a problem arises, I will discuss it directly with the senior minister/spiritual leader.
  4. In cases of perceived violations of the Code of Ethics, I will seek input and guidance from Unity Worldwide Ministries' representatives which could include my Regional Representative, Regional Judicatory Representative and/or a representative from Unity Worldwide Ministries' staff.
  5. If an Ethics Review System review of the senior minister is initiated, I will cooperate fully with the review process.
  
- G.** I will be ethical and respectful in my conduct and attitude toward other ministries or denominations, organizations and metaphysical groups.
  
- H.** Ethics Review System members and relevant Unity Worldwide Ministries staff must be able to speak frankly about ethical violations in Ethics Review System reviews, in Ethics Review System training, and in evaluations of the Code of Ethics. Performing these activities is not to be construed as a violation of the Code of Ethics; nor is engaging in communications with the Ethics Review Team about a Minister/Spiritual Leader when a review is in process to be construed as a violation of the Code of Ethics.

**V. Relating to Ministries**

- A.** I respect the free will of members to transfer membership away from the Unity ministry I serve and will accept such requests without hesitation or inquiry.
  
- B.** I will keep in mind that the welfare of the congregation is paramount. Should I experience any personal crisis, the consequences of which could affect the ministry, I will confer with my Board of Trustees and a representative of Unity Worldwide Ministries. I may also choose to seek counseling or confer with colleagues.
  
- C.** I will not attempt to draw members or congregants away from any other established ministry or group.
  
- D.** I will not use the ministry for personal gain. Any funds or assets that have been raised in the name of Unity will be registered in the name of Unity and not in the name of an individual. I will take care not to mishandle or appear to mishandle funds.

**VI. Relating to Our Unity Worldwide Ministries**

- A.** I will not attempt to carry on Unity work in any city without first obtaining the full approval of the local Unity Worldwide Ministries for such work and without seeking the cooperation of already active and recognized Unity leaders in that vicinity.
- B.** I work in harmony and accord with Unity Worldwide Ministries in my speaking and teaching programs.
- C.** I will, to the best of my ability, communicate the Unity Worldwide Ministries' values, mission, vision, and goals in service to my ministry.
- D.** I will adhere to the policies and bylaws of Unity Worldwide Ministries.

**VII. My Pledge**

I sincerely devote myself to living in accord with this Code in letter and in spirit. I recognize our Unity Worldwide Ministries and this Code of Ethics as a framework in which I individually agree to function. I recognize that such an agreement augments our mutual and individual effectiveness. If I find myself contemplating or actually functioning outside of this framework, I agree to seek the kind of help described in Section V. (B). Failure to seek such help will mean that, by my own choice, I am functioning outside of the framework of this Code and consequently placing myself outside of Unity Worldwide Ministries.

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# Licensed Unity Teacher Code of Ethics

Name of Licensed Unity Teacher \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print)

- I. I look to the indwelling Christ for inspiration and guidance in all that I do.
- II. I honor myself and others and celebrate our diversity as children of God.
- III. I use prayer as the center of my life and encourage others to do the same.
- IV. I acknowledge the minister as the leader of the ministry that I serve.
- V. I maintain a professional relationship with the minister and ministry that is cooperative, supportive, honorable, and keeps me in integrity. I understand the boundaries and appropriate moral behavior with members of the congregation, staff, ministers and other teachers. I hold all confidences as sacred trusts, except where professional intervention is legally required.
- VI. I undertake activities related to the ministry only with the knowledge and approval of the minister.
- VII. I recognize that all formal outreach study groups must be sponsored by my parent ministry or the Expansion Department of Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- VIII. I will, to the best of my ability, serve with excellence and empower others to live the Truth. When teaching, I will present subjects which are deemed compatible with basic Unity principles and acceptable to my minister.
- IX. If a challenge arises, I acknowledge that direct communication with the person or the minister is essential, in an effort to reach a positive and productive solution. If the challenge is with the minister and solution cannot be reached, I will refrain from critical discussion with members of the congregation, staff, board, other teachers in my ministry, or other ministers. I will first take it into prayer, then contact: 1) my Licensed Teacher Regional Representative; 2) the Licensed Teacher Coordinator at Unity Worldwide Ministries, for direction and support. I understand that to communicate any criticism of my minister—whether written, spoken, or even non-verbal— to any member of the congregation, staff, board, or other teachers, would be a violation of this Code of Ethics.
- X. I, as a Licensed Unity Teacher, dedicate myself to the principles of Truth as taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ, and interpreted by Unity Institute and Unity Worldwide Ministries.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Licensed Unity Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Recommending Minister

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Chair Board of Trustees

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Vice President of Education,  
Leadership and Ministry Development

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President

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Licensed Teacher Coordinator



## Code of Ethics for a Ministry

The ministry provides services, classes of instruction and demonstrates the principles of Truth by using them in the operation of the ministry and adopts other means that in the judgment of the minister will further the principles of practical Christianity among people everywhere.

### I. Dedication to Truth Principles

- A. As a Unity ministry we dedicate ourselves to the principles of Truth as taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ and interpreted by Unity School of Christianity and Unity Worldwide Ministries. We will adhere to the five basic ideas:
- God is Absolute good, everywhere present.
  - Every human being is an expression of the Divine; the Christ spirit, by whatever name, indwells all people. Their very essence is of God, and therefore they are also inherently good.
  - Human beings create their experience by the activity of their thinking. Everything in the manifest realm has its beginning in thought.
  - Prayer is creative thinking that heightens the connection with God-Mind and therefore brings forth wisdom, healing, prosperity, and everything good.
  - Knowing and understanding the laws of life, also called Truth, are not enough. A person must also live the truth that he/she knows.
- B. We look to the indwelling Christ for inspiration, to guide, govern and prosper.
- C. We will, to the best of our understanding and ability, bring the freeing truth to humankind. This we will do in a spiritually dignified way, being guided by divine wisdom and good judgment.
- D. We believe in the power of prayer; and we are convinced that as Jesus said, "All things are possible to him who believes." And we will seek to deepen our prayer life and prayer experiences, for only as we drink from the fountain of truth ourselves can we offer the cup of truth to others.
- E. We consecrate ourselves to God, and in so doing surrender any selfish desires and personal ambition so that the will of God may be expressed through this ministry in service to humankind.

### II. Relating to the People We Serve

- A. We believe that all people are created with sacred worth. Therefore, we recognize the importance of serving all people within the Unity family in spiritually and emotionally caring ways.
- B. We shall work together for the highest good of the ministry, blessed with the privilege of providing activities that assist humankind in becoming aware of its divinity.
- C. We accept the obligation to maintain integrity, and confidentiality when called for, while maintaining open and timely communication, as we work toward the highest good of the ministry and in alignment with the Unity Movement.

- D. We are committed to the well-being of our organization and seek appropriate services, counsel and expertise to further our mission and purpose as a member of Unity Worldwide Ministries.

### **III. Relating to our Minister**

- A. We support and encourage the abilities of the minister(s), assuring that the minister's (s') needs for spiritual, emotional, and financial support are fully met. It is essential that the ministry and the minister(s) function as a team, holding a common vision of the highest good of the ministry.
- B. We recognize and honor that the minister(s) is/are the spiritual leader(s) of the ministry as the professionally trained and qualified administrative head.

### **IV. Relating to our Unity Worldwide Ministries**

- A. We adopt and abide by the recommended bylaws and policies of Unity Worldwide Ministries.
- B. We will, to the best of our ability, work in harmony with Unity Worldwide Ministries in fulfilling its values, mission, vision and goals.
- C. We will keep in mind that the welfare of the congregation is paramount. In the event of a dispute and/or circumstances adversely affecting the well-being of the ministry, we will seek the assistance of Unity Worldwide Ministries.

### **V. Other Churches**

- A. We shall respect the work both public and private of other ministries.
- B. We shall not infringe upon or interfere in the work of another ministry.

### **VI. Pledge**

We sincerely devote ourselves to living in accord with this Code in letter and in spirit, and to seeing it made manifest in all others, thus bringing to ourselves only associations and conditions that harmonize with this Code. We recognize our Unity Worldwide Ministries and this Code of Ethics as a framework in which we agree to function. We recognize that such an agreement is necessary for our mutual and individual effectiveness. If we find ourselves contemplating, or actually functioning outside of this framework, we agree to seek the kind of help described in Section II (D). Failure to seek such help will mean that, by our choice, we are functioning outside of the framework of this Code and consequently placing ourselves outside of Unity Worldwide Ministries.

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Board of Trustees (Name of Church)

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Date

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Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

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President and CEO of Unity Worldwide Ministries



## **Certified Spiritual Educator's Code of Ethics** **For Adults Serving Children and Teens**

1. I, a Unity Spiritual Educator of children and/or teens, dedicate myself to the principles of Truth as taught and exemplified by Jesus Christ, and interpreted by Unity World Headquarters at Unity Village and Unity Worldwide Ministries.
2. I daily dedicate myself to listen to the indwelling Christ for inspiration, to guide, govern, and prosper me.
3. I will emphasize the importance of prayer in every person's life, and especially, I will use prayer to make my life an example of living Truth.
4. I serve in this position in order to support the overall vision, mission, and goals of this church and our spiritual family.
5. I will give my minister my full support and cooperation as the spiritual leader of our church.
6. I will, under Divine Guidance and the best of my understanding and ability, endeavor to teach classes of a quality that will inspire our children and/or teens to live in Truth.
7. I will teach Unity principles and Living Curriculum. In this, I will avoid teaching any subjects which may be deemed incompatible with Unity Principles. I will prepare my lessons well, knowing that the students deserve excellence. My lessons will be presented with integrity in a practical, beautiful and inspiring manner.
8. I will always be mindful of the specific needs for the developmental level of those I am teaching. I will create an experience that meets individual needs and learning styles.
9. I dedicate myself to creating a loving environment in which all children and teens may unfold their Divine Potential.
10. I will be above reproach in my behavior with children, teens and other spiritual educators.  
Specifically:
  - I will not tell jokes or speak words which contain sexual innuendoes.
  - I will not prolong hugs, or return/initiate a kiss.
  - I will not touch anyone in a sexual manner, specifically on any area covered by a bathing suit.
  - I will not be alone with children and teens in any compromising location.
  - I will not allow any child or teen to touch me in a way which makes me uncomfortable.
11. I will come from integrity when I am in disagreement with the direction our church is taking, following the proper procedures and going through proper channels to voice these concerns. I choose to deal with conflict constructively, thus strengthening and building our spiritual community, rather than in a way that could be destructive to the life of our church.
12. I will avoid innuendoes, rumors, blame, and putdowns. I focus my energy on the issue, not the personalities, always open to the expression of unconditional love.

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*Certified Spiritual Educator*

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*Date*

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*Recommending Minister*