

Ethical Code and Self-Governing Ethical Standards for Board and Council Members



**Document prepared for the *International Board of
African Priests, Priestesses and Healers. (I.B.A.P.P.H.)***

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Based on the Essay:

Applied African Ethics for Modern African Society Based on African Proverbial Wisdom Teachings

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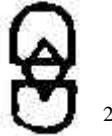
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Ethical Code and Self-Governing Ethical Standards for Board and Council Members



The leadership of the *International Board of African Priests, Priestesses and Healers* (I.B.A.P.P.H.), being modeled on the concept of the African Village Spiritual Council is bound by the duties and responsibilities of their positions.



Since the leaders of a village have special power over the village by virtue of their authoritative positions filling the roles of ethical models, directors, leaders, and in the case of Religious Council members, also wise judges and spiritual/moral guides, they set the tone, ethical boundaries, and inspire confidence, like parents, for the village members.



The leaders of a society, be they in the form of Council leader, King, president, Prime Minister, etc. should come from the ranks of those who were good followers⁴ and should be humble and peaceful⁵ and willing to deal with the rubbish⁶ of the society [negative thoughts, feelings, emotions, actions and abuses of others who act out of ignorance or lack of ethical development] and not just the benefits of leadership. The leaders should be wise but not just intellectually bright⁷ but feeling with their people.⁸ Leaders should also realize that those who take on the burden of responsibility also will have the burden of the responsibility for the outcome if it is not successful.⁹



They require wise counsel that is based on sound African Ethics and not just in political tactic, war strategy or psychological charismatic manipulations;¹¹ The society guided by leaders who have not been educated in ethical wisdom can easily lead a society into

¹ Mframa-dan (wind house). House built to stand windy and treacherous conditions. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

² Mmra krado (seal of the law). Symbolizing supreme authority. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

³ Kuntinkantan (do not boast). There is need for humility and servitude. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁴ *He whose refuses to obey cannot command.* -Kenyan proverb

⁵ *The heart of the wise man lies quiet like limpid water.* -Cameroon proverb

⁶ *A chief is like a rubbish heap; everything comes to him.* - African Proverb

A leader is a donkey for others to ride. - African Proverb

⁷ *A clear thinking leader is a sign of stability and an agent for change in society.* -Sierra Leonean proverb

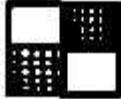
⁸ *To manage yourself, use your head to manage others, use your heart.* - African Proverb

⁹ *A person who carries responsibility also receives blame.* -Kenyan proverb

¹⁰ Ntesie-matemasie (I have heard and kept it). "Nyansa bun mu nne mate masie." Symbol of wisdom and knowledge. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

¹¹ *When a king has good counselors, his reign is peaceful.* - Ashanti, Ghana proverb

conflict, violence and war especially when that society is also uneducated in such matters.¹² It is important to realize that age in and of itself is not a guarantee of wisdom, especially in view of the fact that societies have been disrupted by war, colonialism, secularism, consumerism and other social disruptions that have interrupted and upset the orderly process of social development and education from youth to old age and have tended to favor youth, thus having relegated elder members of the society to marginal positions or at worse discarded them as useless [this is the western model or the model of modern popular culture].¹³ The ideal leaders are knowledgeable in African proverbial wisdom and skilled in problem solving, healing the wounds of the heart and experienced in matters of parenting, and good governance.¹⁴ That confidence inspires the general membership, it demonstrates a higher way of life and provides an example of what is permissible and what is not. Leaders should be good listeners and not egoistic¹⁵ or proud¹⁶ personalities interested only in their own ideas or goals without taking into consideration the needs and concerns of others.¹⁷ Leaders should know how to bring out the best in others without seeking constant praise or accolades for themselves and allow them to develop and become great.¹⁸ This is important for the harmony and peace of the organization but also for the future development of the society, as those in the next generation will one day take over the full leadership role. The leaders should not just talk about ethics and righteousness but must practice and be an example of it for their people.¹⁹ A leader, no matter how honest or righteous or wise, cannot sustain an unrighteous society;²⁰ therefore it is important to promote truth, justice, ethics and education to promote the development of intelligent and responsible members of society who will do their part to uphold order and support the wisdom of the wise.²¹



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A leader does not dictate to others but works with them to develop understanding through reason and feeling.²³ A council of elders is a forum for the best ideas of society, tempered by wisdom, to be discussed and worked out for the benefit of the society; the council members are not expected to agree on every idea but to come to a consensus²⁴ on the best course of action given the current circumstances and in keeping with the values of the society.²⁵ It is important to remember that in order to promote harmony and peace it is important to develop agreements that are communally discussed and deliberated.²⁶

¹² *If you don't stand for something, you will fall for something.* - African Proverb

¹³ *Leadership does not depend on age.* -Namibian proverb

¹⁴ *A wise man who knows proverbs can reconcile difficulties.* - Niger proverb

¹⁵ *Two noisy waterfalls do not agree.* -Kenyan proverb

¹⁶ *If you are filled with pride, then you will have no room for wisdom.* -Tanzanian proverb

¹⁷ *Arrogance burned the chief's compound.* -Ugandan proverb

¹⁸ *When the moon is not full, the stars shine more brightly.* -Ugandan proverb

¹⁹ *The leader who leads by pointing the way leaves no footprints for his followers.* - African Proverb

²⁰ *A wise man cannot save a decaying country as manure cannot save an eroding land.* - Ethiopian Proverb

In the moment of crisis, the wise build bridges and foolish build dams. - Nigerian proverb

²¹ *Those exercising good habits and truth are leaders.* -Kenyan proverb

²² Kontire ne Akwam (elders of the state). "Tikorommpam." One head does not constitute a council. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

²³ *He who dictates separates himself from others.* -Somali proverb

²⁴ *Consensus does not lead to easy decision making.* -Kenyan proverb

²⁵ *If two wise men always agree, then there is no need for one of them.* -Zambian proverb

When the leaders are wise, so are the people. - Madagascar Proverbs

²⁶ *That which has been mutually agreed upon does not bring about disputes.* -Kenyan proverb

The Board members are held to a higher standard and the willful breach of the ethical standard shall be cause enough for removal from a board position for a period of time and may include lifetime banishment. The Council members, being spiritual leaders have a greater responsibility to maintain an ethical standard. Since they occupy the highest offices in the village, members who have committed a serious enough breach of ethics cannot be allowed to occupy any Council position. This removal will protect the integrity of the Council, which is so important to the ethical framework of the entire organization.



Three Fundamental Concepts of African Socio-spiritual Ethics

There are three Fundamental Concepts of African Socio-spiritual Ethics in traditional African culture that are discernible throughout the African continent and throughout African history going back to Ancient Egyptian social [Maat] order.:

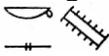
- ❖ **Concept of relationship to family** -The human in relation to the human world.
- ❖ **Concept of relationship to village** - The human in relation to the social world.
- ❖ **Concept of relationship to the Universal Spirit** –[the Spirit that expresses as all nature and transcendental of nature] - The human in relation to the spiritual world.

All Board Members agree to uphold the responsibilities related to individual and institutional relationships of family, village and spirituality.



A human being has three modes of action: thought, word and deed. Actions can be legislated but opinions cannot. Thoughts are formed by a combination of innate spiritual aspects of the personality combined with upbringing. Thoughts may be controlled by proper upbringing and counseling. This means providing a proper environment that is conducive to the ethical development of a human being with proper role models who can teach African ethical wisdom by word {lecture} and by example {deed}. Actions may be controlled by regulation of the socially acceptable speech and the socially acceptable actions.

In reference to speech, great care to cultivate positive speech is required in order to maintain and promote the harmony of speech since in some cases, the wrong kind of speech (words, ideas, feelings expressed, intent, etc.) can do more harm than physical violence.²⁸ There is an ancient Egyptian word for lie and the hieroglyphic text reveals the deeper implications of how lies and disingenuous speech can bring down a society. The

Kemetic (Ancient Egyptian) term *kz*  - “lie – deceive” contains the hieroglyph  which means wall. When the glyph is placed on its side it signifies a falling wall 

²⁷ Penpamsie (that which will not crush). "Penpamsie see bebirebe ahooden ne koroye." Unity in strength. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

²⁸ A cutting word is worse than a bowstring; a cut may heal, but the cut of the tongue does not. - Mauritania proverb

which means the fall of the protections of a city and thus the downfall of the village itself. So lies are the downfall of society.²⁹

Falsehood leads to lack of trust³⁰ and negative feelings, resentments and negative actions that harm families and society.³¹ The forms of speech that promote most disharmony, disunity, conflict, anger, hatred, greed, etc. begin with falsehood and develop to unrighteous egoistic desires culminating in violations of the ethical code. These are to be discouraged, if not prevented, as these promote ethical decay in individuals and reduced capacity of the village to maintain the truthful pursuit of the fulfillment of the Fundamental Concepts of African Socio-spiritual Ethics, the harmonious and successful attainment and realization of family, village (community), and spirit relationships.³² Seemingly harmless words can produce great unintended negative consequences.³³ Therefore, speech that is characterized by purposeful disingenuousness, falsehood (lies), invention, untruth, slander,³⁴ dishonesty, etc. is to be considered as the highest violation of the ethical code and should be dealt with in a timely manner and decisively.³⁵ Other forms of speech such as error, misunderstanding, etc. are to be treated with understanding and counseling through discussion and revealing facts and assigning the proper action to redress imbalance caused by the error.

In reference to actions, things done with the body, errors or accidents that result in the injury of others are to be treated with counseling as above. Violence can manifest as hurtful words or threats,³⁶ actions that are intended to hurt others or omission of action that could help others. Physical violence is to be considered as the advanced development of false negative thoughts of one's desires as realities that will bring personal happiness even at the expense of others [as opposed to seeing happiness as inner fulfillment and seeking the happiness of others by serving them and making sure they have their needs for life provided for],³⁷ which have led to negative feelings, speech and physical action in violation of the ethical code; so physical violence should be seen as an outcome of a process wherein negative ethic has developed in an individual or a society. Therefore, in this area, society has failed to lead the individual(s) to a harmonious and peaceful, balanced condition and consequently the individual or sub-group is not the only responsible party for the breakdown in the practice of the ethical code. Thus, the society as well as the individual violators of the code need to be mended in order to bring the society to a condition wherein the error that led to the violation is resolved and the issues that arose from the violation are resolved. Nevertheless, physical violence should be dealt with in a timely manner and decisively. Actions with purposeful intent to harm others are discussed below.

²⁹ (41) *Do not speak falsely to a man, The God, abhors it; Do not sever your heart from your tongue, That all your strivings may succeed. You will be weighty before the others, And secure in the hand of The God. God hates the falsifier of words, He greatly abhors the dissembler...* THE INSTRUCTION OF AMENEMOPE –Ancient Egyptian Wisdom Texts

³⁰ *Where trust breaks down, peace breaks down.* -African Proverb

³¹ *Truth keeps the hand cleaner than soap.* –Nigerian proverb

³² *One falsehood spoils a thousand truths.* –Kenya proverb

³³ *Great events may stem from words of no importance.* –Kenya proverb

³⁴ *"Don't repeat slander nor should you even listen to it. It is the spouting of the hot bellied. Just report a thing that has been observed, not something that has been heard secondhand. If it is something negligible, don't even say anything. He who is standing before you will recognize your worth."* –Ancient Egyptian Proverb

³⁵ *The end of a lie is grief.* –Nigeria proverb

³⁶ *A cutting word is worse than a bowstring; a cut may heal, but the cut of the tongue does not* –Mauritania proverb

³⁷ *Happiness is openness to all people.* –African proverb

The idea of making a distinction between error and purposeful intent recognizes that human action flows from thought to word³⁸ and deed. If the thought arises from ignorant desires, lack of knowledge³⁹ or misunderstanding, though the outcome of the action may be the same the ethical cause is not the same and therefore they should be treated appropriately⁴⁰ instead of trying to assign one solution for all problems. The idea of maintaining an ethical code for society is not to only to mete out punishment for a given violation but also to seek to heal a wound caused the imbalance that led to the infraction in the first place and thereby restore and protect the integrity of the family and community of a healthy, vibrant and strong nation.⁴¹ Punishment except for cause may be thought of as egoistic, for the purpose of exerting power over others or the sadistic pleasure of seeing others suffer, or for the purpose of unrighteous gains such as power and wealth, etc.⁴² If a society lacks in wisdom in the dispensation of resources and justice it will end up in a condition wherein it may have law and order but without justice or fairness and therefore it becomes a tyranny, usually of the dominant minority group with police or military power or it may become the tyranny of the dominant culture, which imposes it's will on the minority who may be of another culture or of other ethnicities.



Responsibilities to Family, Community and Self.

Since there are three fundamental relationships in African Culture there are ethical responsibilities related to each one for the purpose of fomenting the proper development and fulfillment of each relationship.

Childhood, Adulthood and Eldership in African Socio-Ethical tradition.

In African social tradition, the burden of responsibility falls on all members of society but adults have the added responsibility to care for the children and for the elders. When a human being is born he or she is to be cared for by the adults. When he or she grows up they are to take care of their children and their parents, the adults who took care of them and who have now become elders. When they become elders they are to be taken care of by their children who have now become adults, and so on.⁴⁴

³⁸ *When the heart overflows, it comes out through the mouth.* – Ethiopia, *The heart of the wise man lies quiet like limpid water.* - Buganda proverb

³⁹ *He who does not know is forgiven by God* –Swahili proverb

⁴⁰ *A wise man who knows proverbs can reconcile difficulties.* -Niger proverb

⁴¹ *The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people.* -Nigeria proverb

⁴² *"Punish firmly and chastise soundly, then repression of crime becomes an example. But punishment except for crime will turn the complainer into an enemy."* –Ancient Egyptian Proverb

⁴³ Bi-nka-bi. Obi nka obi (bite not one another). Avoid conflicts. Symbol of Unity. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁴⁴ *A community without elders does not prosper.* –Mozambican proverb

Responsibilities related to the Concept of Family



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1. Responsibilities related to the Concept of family -The human in relation to the human world

- 1.1. In reference to the family, a human being has the responsibility to care and provide for the health and development needs of their family.
 - 1.1.1. The main duty of children is to respect and serve⁴⁶ and obey⁴⁷ their elders.
 - 1.1.2. The most responsibility rests with adults who are expected to take care of the children of their immediate family and if necessary the needs of minors in their extended family.⁴⁸
 - 1.1.3. The adults are responsible for teaching their children what they need to know to survive and also what they need to know in order to understand the purpose of life and pursue the meaning of life for themselves and discover fulfillment in life.⁴⁹
 - 1.1.4. Contrary to Western or other modern popular culture formats, the format of the responsibility over raising children does not fall exclusively on the individual parents but rather all parents are responsible to provide a proper environment [village] for all children.⁵⁰
 - 1.1.5. The adults are also responsible for respecting their elders and seeing to the needs of their parents, the elders and accepting their advice when deliberating on issues in life.
 - 1.1.6. The main responsibility of the elders is to provide an example of a successful ethical life as an ideal for the family and society and assist the adults by guiding them with wisdom. So the elders are revered for their wisdom.⁵¹
 - 1.1.6.1. Special high regard is reserved for those members of society who have achieved high ethical standard and service to humanity.⁵²

⁴⁵ Ese ne keterEma (the teeth and tongue). "Wonnwo ba ne se." No child is born with its teeth. We improve and advance. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁴⁶ *It is the duty of children to wait on elders, and not the elders on children.* -Ashanti Ghana proverb

⁴⁷ *It's a bad child who does not take advice.* -Ivory Coast proverb

⁴⁸ *Love is like a baby: it needs to be treated tenderly.* -Ethiopia proverb

⁴⁹ *"Every parent teaches as they act. They will speak to the children so that they will speak to their children. They will set an example and not give offence."* -Ancient Egyptian Proverb,

When you follow in the path of your father, you learn to walk like him.- Ashanti, Ghana proverb

⁵⁰ *It takes a village to raise a child.* -West Africa proverb

⁵¹ *The death of an elderly man is like a burning library* -Ivorian proverb

A wise man who knows proverbs, reconciles difficulties Yoruba proverb

⁵² *A man who pays respect to the great paves the way for his own greatness.* -African Proverb



Responsibilities related to the Concept of village

2. Responsibilities related to the Concept of village - The human in relation to the social world.

- 2.1. Human beings come into the world and cannot survive without relationships; with righteous relationships a human being can develop to the full capacity. Without those relationships the individual is limited.⁵³
- 2.2. A village is composed of the leadership and the group.⁵⁴
- 2.3. The foundation of a community in harmony and prosperity is working towards justice and humility.⁵⁵
- 2.4. A human being may bring certain tendencies into the world with them when they are born and then the socialization process molds them into members of a particular society. This is sometimes referred to as the “nature vs. nurture” question. Since culture is not hereditary, it must be learned, then it follows that a society’s advancements are not automatically passed on from one generation to the next. This therefore means that the leaders of society are responsible for maintaining and preserving and passing on the cultural knowledge to the young. This duty is an ethic of culture. Culture is everything a people do that allows them to relate to the world, survive and understand their place in humanity. The culture of a people involves language, myth, technology, religion, government and even every day things like the kind of cookware, style of cooking, clothing, transportation, traditions, entertainments, etc. that a people create and use.
- 2.5. In reference to the community, a human being has the responsibility to care and provide for the needs of the community and not just for their own desires or the desires or well being of their own family. This is the duty of service to humanity.⁵⁶
- 2.6. In a wider context this means protecting the community resources, promoting sustainable enterprises and other activities that will allow the community to prosper and not run out of resources for its survival.
- 2.7. This also means promoting the conditions that will allow members of the community to find their place⁵⁷ in the community and that their value to the community may be expressed so that they may be able to pursue their personal goals of harmonious relations with family, community and spirit. This is an ideal of progress wherein God has given the raw materials and men and women are to use those to create order and provide for the necessities of life.⁵⁸
- 2.8. members of the society also have the responsibility to be informed and elect qualified leaders to lead them.⁵⁹

⁵³ *Want to go fast travel alone, want to go far travel with others* -African Proverb

⁵⁴ *A village without a leader is destroyed by a single enemy* -African Proverb

⁵⁵ *Equality is difficult but superiority is painful* -African Proverb

⁵⁶ *What you expect others to do for you, do for them also* – Tonga proverb

⁵⁷ *The family is like a forest, if you are outside it is dense, if you are inside you see that each tree has its own position.* - Akhan proverb

⁵⁸ *God made the sea, we make the ship; He made the wind, we make the sail; He made the calm, we make the oars.* – Swahili proverb

⁵⁹ *Bad leaders are elected by poor citizens who do not vote.* -Kenyan proverb

Crookedness does not lead cattle. -Kenyan proverb



Responsibilities related to the Connection to Spirit

3. Responsibilities related to the Concept of connection to the universal divine that expresses as all nature and transcendental of nature - The human in relation to the spiritual world.

- 3.1. there is an innate desire in a person of wise development to discover the transcendental aspects of existence, to go beyond ordinary human existence in order to satisfy the spiritual need of life, which cannot be fulfilled by worldly actions or attainments.⁶⁶
- 3.2. African religion recognizes that God is everywhere and thus involved with all affairs of nature and human existence.⁶⁷
- 3.3. African spirituality recognizes that God is imperceptible to the gross senses but can be discovered by inner development.⁶⁸
- 3.4. In reference to the spirit, a human being has the responsibility to promote the spiritual development in life. This is the need for discovering the fundamental questions of life, “who am I?”, “Why am I here?”, “What is my purpose?”, etc.⁶⁹ Suffering in life is a way in which the world causes human beings to turn to spiritual matters and not become arrogant and egoistic.⁷⁰

⁶⁰ **HYE ANHYE - UNBURNABLE** Symbol of the **IMPERISHABILITY OF THE SELF, PERMANENCY OF THE HUMAN SOUL and TOUGHNESS** - This represents the idea that GOD, the SPIRIT, never dies, or GOD lives forever. The Akan belief is that the human soul, an image of God, the Spirit, lives in perpetuity. Thus, there is life after the death of the physical part of the human being. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁶¹ Nyame nwu na mawu. If Nyame (God) dies, then I may die. Perpetual existence. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁶² Biribi wo soro. "Nyame biribi wo soro na ma embeka mensa (God there is something in the heavens, let it reach me.)" A symbol of hope. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁶³ **KERAPA - SANCTITY** - Symbol of **SANCTITY OF SELF, SPIRITUAL STRENGTH, GOOD SPIRIT, GOOD LUCK, and GOOD FORTUNE** - Literal translation: Sanctity is part particle of the good; it is like a cat, it abhors filth; and it clears filth like the vulture does; that is why it is used to drive away evil and diseases. This symbol was woven into the bedside mat on which the king would step three times for good luck before going to bed. Every year, a cleaning ritual (*mmusuyidee*) was performed in the past. During the ceremony all streets of the townships were swept clean each morning and evening to remove mystical danger and to prevent disease or death from entering the township. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁶⁴ Nsoroma (a child of the heavens). "Obu Nyankon soroma te Nyame na onte neho so (A child of the Supreme Being I do not depend on myself. My illumination is only a reflection of His.)" [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁶⁵ **GYE NYAME - EXCEPT GOD** Symbol of the **OMNIPOTENCE and the OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD** [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁶⁶ *The wise aim at boundaries beyond the present; they transcend the parameters of their origins.* –African Proverb

⁶⁷ *If you want to send a message to God, tell it to the wind* -Ga proverb

⁶⁸ *God conceals himself from the mind of man, but reveals himself to his heart.* –African Proverb

⁶⁹ *To deny God's existence is like jumping with your eyes closed.* –Malagasy proverb

⁷⁰ *When one is in trouble one remembers God.* –Nigerian proverb

To suffer, is a necessity entailed upon your nature, would you prefer that miracles should protect you from its lessons or shalt you repine, because it happened unto you, when lo it happened unto all? Suffering is the golden cross upon which the rose of the Soul unfolds. –Ancient Egyptian proverb

- 3.5. The answers to these questions is a journey that begins with the teachings given by the elders. It is nurtured by a life of ethical conduct that purifies the heart and mind and opens up deeper realms of inner feeling and psycho-spiritual insight.
- 3.6. This responsibility involves learning about spirit, making rituals to appease {make peace with} spirit and finally to discover spirit. This is the purpose of African Religions and in this context we may refer to African Religion in the singular, reflecting the commonality of concept and purpose throughout African Religions.



General Code of Conduct for African Clergy and African Healers

1. Confidentiality

- 1.1. Information disclosed to a Clergy member during the course of counseling, advising, or spiritual direction shall be held in the strictest confidence possible.
- 1.2. Information obtained in the course of sessions shall be confidential, except for compelling professional reasons or as required by law.
- 1.3. Knowledge that arises from professional contact may be used in teaching, writing, lecture, or other public presentations only when effective measures are taken to absolutely safeguard both the individual's identity and the confidentiality of the disclosures.
- 1.4. While counseling a minor, if a Clergy Member discovers that there is a serious threat to the welfare of the minor and that communication of confidential information to a parent or legal guardian is essential to the child's health and wellbeing, the Counselor or Spiritual Director should:
 - 1.4.1. Attempt to secure written consent from the minor for the specific disclosure.
 - 1.4.2. If consent is not given, disclose only the information necessary to protect the health and well being of the minor.

2. Conduct with Youth

- 2.1. Physical contact with youth can be misconstrued and should occur (a) only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate, and (b) never in private.
 - 2.2. Members should refrain from (a) the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol at all times, and (b) the use of alcohol when working with youth.
 - 2.3. Members should not provide shared, private, overnight accommodation for individual young people including, but not limited to, accommodations in any - facility owned by a temple or religion, private residence, hotel room, or any other place where there is no other adult supervision present.
3. African Priests and Priestesses and Healers, acting as Pastoral Counselors or Spiritual Directors or Healers assume the full burden of responsibility for establishing and

Ethical Code and Self-Governing Ethical Standards for I.B.A.P.P.H. Board and Council Members
maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all counseling and counseling-related relationships.

4. African Priests and Priestesses and Healers, when acting as Pastoral Counselors or Spiritual Directors shall not step beyond their competence in counseling situations and will refer clients to other professionals when appropriate.
5. African Priests and Priestesses and Healers, when acting as Pastoral Counselors or Spiritual Directors should carefully consider the possible consequences before entering into a counseling relationship with someone with whom they have a pre-existing relationship (i.e., employee, professional colleague, friend, or other pre-existing relationship).
6. African Priests and Priestesses and Healers must never engage in sexual intimacies with the persons they counsel. This includes consensual and nonconsensual contact, forced physical contact, and inappropriate sexual comments.

Guidelines to implement the mandate of the Board Ethics Division [Ethics Committee]



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In order for a society to function properly and maintain order, harmony and justice there needs to be a mechanism for enforcement of regulations that have been deemed positive and just by the society.⁷²

1. BOARD OF ETHICS COMMITTEE

1.1. The Council will appoint a number of persons, who may be Council members, Board members or Ethics Scholars or others deemed worthy by the Council, to act as a review Committee [Board Ethics Division] to check the activities of the board groups and the activities and individuals to insure that the integrity and transparency of those activities are in keeping with the values and principles of the board as expressed in the Guiding Ethic Statement. This review Board will act as a first step in the review of complaints or grievances by persons within or outside of the Board relating to the affairs or ongoing activities of the Board.

1.2. The ethical standard by which this Board will operate will be provided by the Council through an official approved Ethics Code (this Document) that is to be observed by all members of the organization.

Regulations based on the Triune Conceptualizations of African Ethical Philosophy



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An organization seeking to base their ethical standards on the Triune Conceptualizations of African Ethical Philosophy is modeled as follows. The concept of the three relationships in African life charge a human being who is member of the society with three areas of responsibility that are to be upheld. For each area of responsibility there are regulations and consequences for the inability to uphold the responsibilities.

The regulations below are primary ethical applications of the Responsibilities based on the Triune Conceptualizations of African Ethical Philosophy. Thus, specific situations occurring in modern society will be covered by one of the core essential principles implied by each conceptualization. Since African society is inclusive, the deviation by a member of the community from upholding their duties is first confronted with admonition, then penalty and

⁷¹ Krado - mmra krado (Seal of law and order). Symbolizing the authority of the court. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

⁷² *Too much tolerance paves the way for trouble.* -Kenyan proverb

⁷³ Sankofa (return and fetch it). "SE wo werE fi na wosankofa a yenkyi." It is no taboo to return and fetch it when you forget. You can always undo your mistakes. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

finally expulsion from the family, or community. The expulsion may be considered as a high penalty. In some cases incarceration may be considered.



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Capital punishment may not be considered by an ideal African society since the use of capital punishment in most modern societies is predicated upon the pathological nature of society itself, which produces highly deviant mental states and thus, highly deviant crimes, hardened criminals and high recidivism due to the inability or unwillingness provide proper conditions for the development of ethical and well integrated members of society and when necessary redress the errors of society that contributed to the development of individuals who broke the ethical code of the society and then to heal and reintegrate the violators back into society.

⁷⁴ Hye wo nyhe (the one who burns you be not burned). Symbol of forgiveness. Turn the other cheek. [Ashanti mythology and adinkra symbols]

Regulations in the area of family



1. Regulations based on the Concept of family

- 1.1. The failure to take care of or the failure to make an honest effort to take care of the members of one's family should be considered as a violation of the African ethic of family. The wise are ready to forgive,⁷⁵ first admonish and counsel; then warn and finally take strong action.
 - 1.1.1. The violator should be issued an admonishment with counseling and recommended action to redress the violation along with a recommendation of how the society can assist the violator to understand the problem and correct it.
- 1.2. Children who are disobedient should be administered greater attention, instruction, discipline and caring.
- 1.3. Adults who fail or are unable to meet their responsibilities to their children and or elders should be admonished as to the nature of the violation. They are to be assisted by the community with counseling⁷⁶ in learning skills and also other members may be assigned to assist them to work towards meeting their responsibilities.
 - 1.3.1. Meeting the responsibilities of caring implies non-violence. Those who commit violence are to be issued a warning and counseling for anger issues and conflict resolution. The failure to accept this regulation leads to expulsion from the society and referral to the social greater authorities.
- 1.4. Elders who are unable to carry out their social responsibilities are to be cared for and made comfortable by the society.
 - 1.4.1.1. Those elders who are able but unwilling to fulfill their role in society are to be admonished by the Village Council and assigned assistance from other family members or members appointed by the society to help them work through the problems they may have.
 - 1.4.1.2. If an admonishment and counseling fails to resolve the issue the elder should receive a warning from the Council.
 - 1.4.1.3. If a warning fails the elder should be made comfortable but not allowed to interfere with the otherwise balanced and ordered society.

⁷⁵ *He who forgives ends the argument* -African Proverb

⁷⁶ *Advise and counsel him; if he does not listen, let adversity teach him.* -Ethiopia proverb

Regulations in the area of village



2. **Regulations based on the Concept of village** - The human in relation to the social world.
 - 2.1. the violation of the regulation to care for the village and not just for the family, displaying greed, hoarding resources, unwillingness to share⁷⁷ with others and contribute to the common good should be confronted by:
 - 2.1.1. The violator is issued an admonishment and counseling. Councilors may make further recommendations to resolve the situation.
 - 2.1.2. If an admonishment and counseling fail to rectify the situation. The Council will issue a warning and offer solutions to resolve the problems, promote order and balance in society.
 - 2.1.3. If the warning and solutions fail to resolve the issues due to unwillingness of the violator(s) to comply with these regulations and or the directives of the council, the council may take other actions to resolve the problem including expulsion of the violator(s).
 - 2.1.4. It is the responsibility of the council and village to produce regulations that promote the spirit and meaning of the Fundamental African Ethical Conceptualizations. If the regulations of the council and or village elders is found to violate the ideal of promoting peace, harmony and advancement in the African society those regulations are to be reviewed and changed in order to reflect the spirit and meaning of the conceptualizations.
 - 2.1.5. Serious breaches of the ethical code such as stealing, fraud, physical violence, criminal behavior and any other action that the Council determines to be a serious infraction will be cause for expulsion and notification of the appropriate authorities.
 - 2.1.6. In the event that a Board or Council member should become physically or mentally incapacitated and become unable to fulfill their role and duties they may be removed from their positions.

⁷⁷ *Knowledge is like a garden: if it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested.* -Cameroon proverb

Regulations in the area of Spirit



3. **Regulations based on the Concept of connection to the Universal Divine** -that expresses as all nature and transcendental of nature - The human in relation to the spiritual world.
 - 3.1. A society is responsible for providing a conducive environment for spiritual evolution. The leaders of the African society are charged with the responsibility of taking actions that uphold this highest of social ethics for the common good. Their ambitions cannot overtake their desire to serve⁷⁸ and pursue wisdom for if those in leadership are not wise enough to be an example of peace and harmony and teach⁷⁹ their people the wisdom of ethics and lead them to proper ethics, that society will ultimately fail.⁸⁰
 - 3.2. The elders in a society and a family are responsible for disseminating the mythic teaching of the society to the young. Myth is a language that includes the story of the society and humanity, the place of its members in the order of the society and the greater scheme of the cosmos. A myth relates the individual to their higher nature and informs of the realms beyond. It provides meaning to one's existence and purpose and instructs as to the goals of life in the realm of the living and the realm of the afterlife.
 - 3.3. An individual is responsible for accepting the myth, listening to its teaching, reflecting upon its meaning and applying it in life by developing ethical conscience and personal purity.
 - 3.3.1. The proper application of the mythic teaching and philosophy leads to metaphysical experiences and intuitional realizations that produce new wise elders, spiritual leaders and enlightened ancestors.⁸¹
 - 3.4. If these regulations are not maintained a society becomes spiritually bankrupt and socially bereft of reason for its existence. It may devolve into secular goals of life that are destructive, selfish, petty and vile. Such a society loses its spiritual conscience and awareness of the essential divine nature of life, human beings and nature itself. In such a society great crimes, hedonism, devastations of nature and personal degradations are possible. In modern times the supervision of this issue is the paramount responsibility of the Council. The council recognizes that human beings have three essential needs, *food, shelter and opportunity*⁸²

⁷⁸ *A man with too much ambition cannot sleep in peace.* - Baguirmi proverb

⁷⁹ *He who learns, teaches.* -Ethiopia proverb

⁸⁰ *"When opulence and extravagance are a necessity instead of righteousness and truth, society will be governed by greed and injustice."* -Ancient Egyptian Proverb

"Ambition is to spiritual development what termites are to wood." -Ancient Egyptian Proverb

⁸¹ Hieroglyphic translation presented by Dr. Muata Ashby at the 2007 Neterian Conference, based on the Teaching of the Temple of Aset, myth of Ra and Aset.

⁸² In Chapter 125 of the Book of the Dead, the person uttering the declarations states:

{opportunity for self actualization in society and self-realization in spiritual life}; if these needs are provided for there is a greater possibility for maintaining a well ordered, peaceful and harmonious society that respects humanity, sustains nature, truth and spiritual conscience for those currently alive and those who will come in the future.⁸³ Conversely, if the basic needs of life are not provided, the higher ethical dimensions of the personality are more difficult to develop. So priorities⁸⁴ are understood in African ethics but this does not mean that ethics can be discarded or allowed to be forgotten in times of crisis since such an eventuality would lead not only to the physical degradation of the society but also the ethical and spiritual degradation as well.⁸⁵

- 3.5. The council has the responsibility to use the Fundamental Principles of African Ethics, the Triune concepts of African socio-spiritual ethics as guidelines for creating further regulations as necessary. These guidelines may not be changed by the present or future council members since these are transcendental principles that may be applied in varying degrees of application and enforcement depending on the level of human evolution but may not be altered, as they represent socio-spiritual constants that reflect human and cosmic truths that do not change with time.

"I have done God's will. I have given bread to the hungry, water to the thirsty, clothes to the clotheless and a boat to those who were shipwrecked. I made the prescribed offerings to the gods and goddesses and I also made offerings in the temple to the glorious spirits. Therefore, protect me when I go to face The God."

⁸³ *"Do good because of tomorrow"* -Ghanaian Waalli proverb

⁸⁴ *If your house is burning, there is not time to go hunting.* - West Africa proverb

⁸⁵ *If you don't stand for something, you will fall for something.* - Africa proverb

The Ethical Board Division and the Appeals process

The council establishes an Ethical Board, composed of four members of the society entrusted to uphold the integrity of the organization. This group agrees to meet on a quarterly basis to handle [A] Applications for new members and [B] Formal Appeals. Their charge is to review *Applications* and *Formal Appeals* for the Council.

In this context an appeal is defined as a presentation to the Ethical Board from a person seeking an action to be taken by the organization. There are two forms of Formal Appeals: *Petition Appeal*⁸⁶ and *Grievance [complaint] Appeal*.

- Petitions may involve a request to review an action that a member of the Board or member of the community wishes to have considered by the Board. An application for new membership may be considered as a Petition to the Board. The Board is charged to authenticate its ethical compatibility with the mission of the Board.
- Complaints may involve some unintended injury to a member from an action of the Council and Board or a complaint against an action or a person member of the board.

Anyone who is part of the African village (the society of the organization) may make a Formal Appeal by presenting it in writing to the Ethical Board Division and agreeing to be interviewed by the Ethical Board Division which will review the application and recommend what action if any should be taken based on it. That recommendation will be given to the Council and if the council determines an action should be authorized it will issue a formal directive to the appropriate members of the society. The Ethical Board Division and the Council will prefer to manage matters in private if the situations are confidential but may handle them publicly if they are public and or affect the integrity and or well being of the village as a whole.⁸⁷

Ethical Board Division/Committee–reviews petitions

Ethical Board Division/Committee–reviews petitions in order to establish:

- Facts- by interviewing petitioner.
- Validity of the petition
- Recommendation to the Council.

Ethical Board Division/Committee –reviews complaints

Ethical Board Division/Committee –reviews complaints in order to establish:

- Facts- by interviewing petitioner and any other parties necessary.
- Validity of the petition
- Recommendation to the Council.

⁸⁶ an Application for new membership is considered as a Petition Appeal

⁸⁷ *Home affairs are not talked about on the public square.* -Ethiopia proverb

- The Ethical Board has a set period of time to meet and review such Grievance Appeals.
 - In the case of violations involving issues such as sexual misconduct, malfeasance, criminal behavior or violence, or any violations the Board may determine to be serious threats to the balance and order of the society, the Ethical Board will be directed to convene a meeting as soon as a minimum quorum may be able to meet (half of the appointed members of the Ethical Board) to make a determination and recommendation.
 - If a recommendation is made that the issue should be reviewed by the Council the Council is responsible to meet as soon as a minimum quorum may be able to meet (half of the members of the Council) to make a ruling. [the meeting may be conducted at a regular conference or at a regular semi annual teleconference or internet meeting or at any other time the Council deems appropriate after all Council members have been notified of the issue and have been requested to convene by the Council leader.]

- ❖ **Emergency Meetings:** The Council may request that the Ethical Board meet at times other than its regular schedule and they may request a report on a complaint earlier than their usual schedule if the Council deems that the issue is important to the integrity of the organization and that immediate or timely action is required to handle the issue.

Schedule and Steps of Review of Appeals and Grievances

Step 1: the Ethical Board Division will officially receive the petition and will forward a copy of the petition to the Council leader. At this time the Council leader may seek an expedited treatment of the petition if it is deemed to be required. The Council leader may order an expedited review to be accomplished within 30 days. The Council Leader may inform the Council of pending applications and appeals as part of the regular meeting process but in any case will make an immediate notification of emergency requests to the Ethical Board Division.

Step 2: For regular [non expedited (emergency reviews) the Ethical Board Division will research the petition through inquiries to and interviews of the appropriate persons within 70 days

If there is an ongoing investigation by the police the ethical Board Division will wait to see the outcome of that investigation before concluding their assessment.

If there is an ongoing civil investigation by the courts or other civil authorities the Ethical Board Division will proceed with their own investigation while monitoring the civil action and render their assessment to the Council.

Step 3: The Ethical Board Division will review the merits of the petition within 80 days

Step 4: The Ethical Board Division will render a recommendation in writing [together with summaries of evidences and interviews to the Council who will deliberate and issue a final judgment within 90 days

The final report from the Ethical Board Division to the Council should include:

- 1- Copy of original Appeal
- 2- Summaries of evidences discovered
- 3- Summaries of interviews [depositions] of the interested parties
- 4- For Applications for membership include:
 - a. Does the person meet the standards of the Board they are applying for and are they a member in good standing of their religious or healing tradition? This should include a statement from the head of that particular Board Division.
 - b. Does the person have any outstanding legal or ethical complaints?
 - c. Training
 - d. Years of service
 - e. References [Ethical Board should contact the references to verify]
 - f. Summary of the viability of the candidate.
 - g. The Ethical Board may include items submitted by the applicant (such as resume) only as supporting documents once they have been authenticated by the Ethical Board
- 5- For *Grievance [complaint] Appeal* include:
 - a. Recommendation as to the validity of the Appeal –it is a real and not frivolous complaint.
 - b. Summary of findings and Recommendation as to the nature of the violation and which area of the Ethical Code or Constitution covers the issue. In other words: Recommendation as to how it relates (which area is affected) to the Ethical Code and Constitutional Principles of the Organization (contained in the Constitutional Documents and their amendments).

Step 5: the Council will render a judgment at the next Council meeting which will be transmitted to the Ethical Board for announcement, and publication to the general community in the public record. The Ethical Board Division will also transmit the judgment to the Records Division. The full reports and investigations of the Ethical Board are to be stored in a secure location with access granted only to Ethical Board Division members and Members of the Council – for a period of 7 years.