

CMSC Policy

Ethical Guidelines for MSC Teachers

Teaching Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC), I am aware of my responsibility in regard to the course participants. For that reason, I observe the following ethical guidelines:

1. Transparency and Openness

In advance of the course, I will accurately inform all participants about the content, form, duration and costs of the course. I will also be clear about my own qualifications and training to teach MSC.

2. Embracing Diversity

MSC is a learning environment that is inclusive of all. I will respect the differences between people, both visible and invisible, and will teach without biases based on differences of any kind. I will honor the unique challenges that each individual faces as we learn together to embrace our common humanity.

3. Financial Integrity

Although I recognize that I am entitled to be fairly compensated for my time teaching MSC, my primary goal is to be of service to others and I agree to always balance my own economic needs and those of my participants when making decisions about fees and scholarships for those in need.

4. Respecting the integrity of the program

Being a member of this teacher organization, I will ground my teaching in what I learned at the MSC Teacher Training and subsequent group consultation sessions. I respect the integrity of the MSC curriculum and when using the MSC name I will strive for a minimum of 85% adherence to the curriculum. To the best of my ability, I will abide by the CMSC policies and procedures for teaching MSC, and will seek out consultation from CMSC if I have questions or concerns about these policies and procedures.

5. Acknowledging the limitations of the program

I am aware that MSC is not a substitute for medical or mental health treatment, and I will endeavor to assure that my public communications (e.g., advertising, writing, speaking) make this clear to all prospective and current participants.

6. Ongoing learning and personal practice

In order to remain qualified to teach, I will stay abreast of developments in the fields of mindfulness and self-compassion and participate in the professional community of MSC teachers. I am aware that an ongoing, personal practice of mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion, both formally and informally, is essential for teaching.

7. Responsibility for my relationship to participants

I understand that the way to teach mindfulness and self-compassion is to behave compassionately. I also realize that the relationship between teachers and students is asymmetrical. I take responsibility for this relationship without seeking further material or immaterial rewards, and above all else, hold the emotional and psychological safety of my MSC participants as paramount. For this reason, I will maintain a professional teacher-student relationship with all participants while teaching an MSC course.

8. Respect in regard to other teachers and programs

I see clearly that compassion and mindfulness includes my behavior towards other teachers as well as other mindfulness and compassion-based programs. This includes adopting an appreciative attitude - recognizing the commonality of our shared goals of bringing mindfulness and compassion to the world - and not commenting on other teachers or other programs in a disparaging way. I will also attempt to address any existing or potential conflicts directly in a constructive and compassionate manner.

9. Ideological neutrality

Teaching MSC I refrain from political, ideological or religious indoctrination. I may, of course, discuss the background of MSC or my own practice if asked.

10. Disregard of the ethical guidelines

I am aware that if I continually disregard these ethical guidelines it may lead to exclusion from the Center for MSC, its activities, or other MSC organizations.

Adapted with permission from the Ethical Guidelines of the German MBSR-MBCT Association