

SDIC COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP GUIDE

Living Draft v2.0

Purpose

This guide exists to support healthy, regenerative, land-based communities rooted in the principles of the Society of Divine Inner Connection (SDIC).

We are not building communes.

We are not building retreats.

We are not building rental properties.

We are building living communities where people learn to live well together, care for the land, and steward resources for future generations.

The purpose of this guide is not control.

The purpose is clarity.

Clear agreements create trust.

Trust creates freedom.

Freedom creates thriving communities.

The Path to Stewardship

Stewardship is a path, not a destination.

Becoming a steward is a process of mutual discernment. Both the individual and the community take time to discover whether there is genuine alignment.

Stewardship is demonstrated through consistent action, accountability, contribution, and a sincere commitment to living the community agreements.

Stage One: Guest

Guests are welcomed for a visit of up to **three days**.

The purpose of a guest visit is to:

- Experience community life.
- Meet the residents.
- Learn the culture.
- Participate respectfully.
- Discern mutual alignment.

At the conclusion of the visit, the community gathers in Circle Up to determine whether the guest will be invited to continue as a Visitor.

A guest visit does not guarantee an invitation to continue.

Stage Two: Visitor

Visitors continue building relationships while learning the SDIC way of living.

Visitors are encouraged to:

- Participate in community life.
- Learn the agreements.
- Practice stewardship.
- Receive feedback with openness.
- Demonstrate responsibility through daily actions.

Visitors remain in a period of mutual discernment.

Stage Three: Lotus Way

Before stewardship may be considered, every Visitor must participate in the Lotus Way through **thesdic.org**.

The Lotus Way provides the shared language, principles, and practices that form the cultural foundation of every SDIC community.

Only individuals who have reached the **Rooted** stage are eligible to be considered for stewardship.

Completion of the Rooted stage does not guarantee stewardship.

It simply opens the possibility for consideration.

Stage Four: Stewardship Consideration

Stewardship is considered only after the community has observed consistent alignment over time.

The community looks for evidence of:

- Accountability
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Contribution
- Emotional maturity
- Care for the land
- Care for community
- Willingness to repair harm
- Consistent alignment with community agreements

Stewardship is demonstrated through actions, not words.

Community Consensus

Stewardship is offered through mutual trust.

A new steward is invited only when **all current stewards agree** that the individual has demonstrated readiness and alignment with the community's values and agreements.

This process exists to protect trust, culture, and the long-term wellbeing of the community.

Core Values

Every SDIC community strives to embody:

Peace

We seek harmony within ourselves, with one another, and with the living world.

Love

Love is expressed through action, care, service, honesty, and presence.

Unity

We recognize that we are interconnected while honoring individual sovereignty.

Respect

We honor people, land, animals, resources, boundaries, and agreements.

Responsibility

Each person is responsible for their choices, actions, belongings, commitments, and impact.

Accountability

Mistakes become opportunities for growth when we acknowledge them, take responsibility, and repair harm.

Stewardship

We leave places better than we found them.

Reciprocity

Giving and receiving remain in balance.

We contribute to the community that supports us.

Foundational Principles

The Land Is a Living Participant

The land is more than property.

The land is a living participant in the community.

Every decision considers:

- People
 - Land
 - Future generations
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Agreements Over Assumptions

Healthy communities do not run on assumptions.

They run on clear agreements.

If expectations matter, they should be spoken, documented, and agreed upon.

Unspoken expectations are not agreements.

Contribution Before Consumption

Every capable adult contributes according to their abilities and circumstances.

Contribution may include:

- Gardening
 - Cooking
 - Construction
 - Maintenance
 - Education
 - Administration
 - Stewardship projects
 - Community service
 - Other agreed forms of contribution
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Safety Is Sacred

Every person deserves to feel physically and emotionally safe.

Violence, intimidation, threats, repeated verbal abuse, or ongoing unsafe behavior are inconsistent with stewardship.

Creating safety is a shared responsibility.

Protecting safety comes before protecting comfort.

Accountability Builds Trust

Conflict is natural.

Mistakes happen.

Growth begins when we acknowledge our impact.

When harm occurs we are expected to:

- Acknowledge what happened.
- Listen openly.
- Take responsibility.
- Repair where possible.
- Learn from the experience.

Without accountability, trust cannot grow.

Family and Childcare

Children are welcome and valued members of our community.

Parents and legal guardians remain responsible for the supervision, safety, education, wellbeing, and guidance of their children.

Community support for families is welcomed through mutual agreement and consent.

Childcare is never assumed.

When a child's behavior creates harm or an unsafe environment, parents are expected to respond with presence, guidance, and accountability.

Supporting children also means protecting every child's right to feel safe.

Sacred Center Principle

Community gathering spaces exist for the benefit of everyone.

Shared spaces remain welcoming, functional, and available to the community.

Shared Food

Community Food belongs to the community.

Family Food belongs to individuals or families.

Gift Food is freely offered into the commons.

Every category is respected.

Generosity is encouraged.

It is never demanded.

Temporary and Permanent Use

Temporary arrangements remain temporary unless renewed through community agreement.

Review dates help maintain clarity.

Personal Belongings

Each resident maintains a defined personal footprint.

Shared areas remain functional, beautiful, and useful for the whole community.

Community Communication

We practice Living Language.

Speak truthfully.

Listen fully.

Communicate directly.

Avoid gossip.

Address concerns with those involved whenever possible.

Name what is true.

Name what is needed.

Name what is next.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict is a natural part of community.

Avoidance is not resolution.

When conflict arises:

- Speak directly.
- Seek understanding.
- Request mediation when needed.
- Return to shared values.
- Create clear agreements moving forward.

The goal is restoration, not punishment.

Discernment

Community membership is a process of mutual discernment.

At any stage, either the individual or the community may determine that the timing or alignment is not right.

Choosing different paths is not failure.

It is an act of honesty and respect.

We bless one another on our journeys and trust each person will find the place where they can best flourish.

Stewardship Covenant

As a steward of this community, I commit to:

- Respect the land.
- Honor our agreements.
- Contribute where I am able.
- Communicate honestly.
- Practice accountability.
- Support the wellbeing of the community.
- Care for shared resources.
- Leave places better than I found them.
- Consider future generations in my actions.

I recognize that stewardship is both a privilege and a responsibility.

My actions, more than my words, reveal my readiness to serve.