

AT Forum Policy

Policy: One of Awakening Together's places for communal conversation is our discussion Forum. Our intention is to create a safe, respectful and kind environment focused on spiritual enrichment.

Awakening Together shall have a policy that addresses administration of the Forum. This policy shall include procedures that address the composition and responsibilities of the Forum Subcommittee, Forum etiquette guidelines, and a consistent procedure for maintaining etiquette guidelines in the Forum.

Procedure I: Forum Subcommittee. The Forum Subcommittee shall be comprised of the Forum Director, an Awakening Together Board of Trustee or Board of Directors Member and another Awakening Together member.

- A. Forum Subcommittee purpose
 - 1. To oversee the operation of the Forum and act as liaison between Forum participants and the Board of Trustees.
- B. Subcommittee requirements
 - 1. The Committee will meet quarterly, or as needed, to assess the progress of the Forum and deal with any issues and/or needed changes to the Forum.
 - 2. Routinely review procedures to ensure they are up to date and accurate.
 - 3. Recommend policy level changes to the Board of Trustees.
- C. Forum Subcommittee is responsible for:
 - 1. Developing written procedure and policy for the Forum.
 - 2. Recruitment and management of volunteers to assist in monitoring and administering the Forum.
 - 3. Reviewing user accounts that require disciplinary action and taking such action as is consistent with this policy.
 - 4. Suggesting/implementing any changes to overall Forum design or function.

Procedure II: Forum Etiquette Guidelines. Like our Sanctuary, the Awakening Together Forum is a place to share and teach, to associate, extend love, inspire and be inspired. We invite everyone to participate in our Forum with reverence, respect, kindness and discernment. The etiquette guidelines for participation in the Forum are intended to promote the spirit of our intention. Consistent adherence to the rules helps to maintain an environment that encourages people to share openly. The Forum Etiquette Guidelines specifically include the following:

- A. When posting or responding to a post on the Forum, do so with respect and kindness.
 - 1. Respect includes regard for one's feelings and for one's spiritual point of view. Respect does not necessarily mean agreement, since everyone is asked to use discernment that comes from one's own heart. However, honor the Forum participant's freedom to share as he/she feels to share without interfering.

2. When responding to a post, be sure your comments are related to the topic currently being discussed by the Forum participant and never indicate that someone else is wrong. You may share your experience and understanding, but your sharing should never negate the sharing of another.
3. Do not use the Forum to have unrelated discussion with other participants. If participants wish to share contact information so that they may have discussions unrelated to Awakening Together's mission, they may do so in the members only section of the Forum.
 - a. Members are permitted to use the Members Forum section of the Awakening Together Forum website to advertise products and services to other members. This section of the Forum is intended to be much like a bulletin board one would find in any brick and mortar church.
4. Gossip is never permitted in the Forum under any circumstances.

Procedure III: Forum Etiquette Guideline Infractions. All Forum participants are asked to adhere to Procedure II. Participants who do not adhere to these procedures, which have been developed in the interest of all and to maintain the purpose of this assembly, are subject to the following:

- A. Removal/edit of the participant's post. Upon removal/editing of the post, the participant will be immediately informed of the reasons therefore.
- B. Reminder to follow the guidelines for Forum participants.
- C. After two warnings posting privileges may be temporarily removed for a Forum participant who remains noncompliant. In making such a determination discernment should be employed and the severity of the infraction considered. Any removal of posting privileges shall be brought to the attention of the Forum Subcommittee for further decision on continued removal of posting privileges.
- D. If it is determined that a participant's posting privileges should be temporarily removed, the participant will be immediately informed of that decision. Soon afterwards, the participant will be contacted by a member of the Forum Subcommittee to discuss the participant's commitment to comply with Procedure II of the Forum Policy and Procedures. This meeting shall also serve as a warning to the participant to honor the terms of the agreement that attend the privilege of posting in the Forum.
- E. If a Forum participant violates this policy repeatedly, he/she may have his/her Forum posting privileges suspended for a period of time to be determined by the Forum Subcommittee. It is within the Forum Director's discretion to recommend suspending posting privileges based on repeated failure to adhere to this policy. The number of violations required before the Forum Director recommends suspension is left to the discretion of the Forum Director. The seriousness and/or repetitiveness of the violation shall be taken into account when making decisions regarding suspension.
- F. A Forum participant has the right to appeal to the President-Minister at any time throughout this process.