

Sophianic Animism USA Grievance Resolution Procedure

Not Bible-Based

The approach to grievance resolution taken by Christian churches typically begins with citation or quotation of Matthew 18:15-17 in the Bible, which outlines in words attributed to Jesus how Christians are supposed to proceed in striving to resolve serious personal conflicts with other Christians. Readers will note that the approach to conflicts and their resolution that is recommended in Sophianic Animism (a non-Christian religion), outlined below, is radically different from the instructions given in the verses of Matthew. This document does not discuss those instructions, the assumptions on which they are based, or their effects in theory and practice; it simply notes that the approach that is aligned with Gaian ethics is different and focuses attention on its particulars.

Guiding Principles and Processes for Interpersonal Behavior

Principles of Gaian ethics that aid Sophianic animists in maintaining or restoring good relations with friends and allies, fellow Shaktas in the Sophianic way of life, were outlined very effectively by JLL in two talks given to participants in the Gaian Navigation Experiment (GNE) early in 2014, under the title “Pristine and Copacetic.” This article begins with an effort to essentially paraphrase a few paragraphs from the latter part of the second of those talks – transferring application of the principles it articulates to Sophianic Animism, whereas the original talk was intended to be directly relevant to the Kalika War Party (an informal Sophianic assembly with a mission different from that of Sophianic Animism).

“Pristine” describes an ideal in quality of interaction to which Sophianic Animists aspire. The word means, in a pure state, without pollution. Pristine interactions are without blockage or impediment, free of judgment and limitless – pure, clear, free and open. They are unhindered by impeding elements. They are like the precise interactions of practiced musicians or dancers. They manifest perfect and impeccable coordination of will, intention, passion and intelligence and exhibit perfection of alignment in word and deed. Pristine interaction is not a result of extensive practice or great effort. It just happens, but one must open oneself to its flow by being receptive to the spontaneous emergence of Buddha nature operating cognitively.

We (Sophianic Animists) can express ourselves to one another with infinite variety and diversity. We have an unlimited range of expressivity available to us – all without flaw, conflict, offense or misunderstanding. We do not work toward pristine interaction nor do we get there in stages. Our aim is to start interacting pristinely on every occasion and practice sustaining the flow of such interaction. As is also true of Planetary Tantra, interactions among Sophianic Animists are non-progressive and immediate in their realization and expression of full beauty and splendor. They are based in our complete solidarity as devotees of the Planetary Animal Mother. We are united by the sorcery of love and intention. We interact with one another as Shaktas – handlers of the power shared with us by the Goddess, divine power of which we are human-and-animal instruments. Our matching with one another in interaction is lucid and fearless.

Obviously, however, it would be unreasonable to expect completely flawless and unflinching adherence to any standards or aspirations as far as behavior is concerned. So, what’s to be done when someone, or two or more people, fail(s) to maintain pristine interaction?

This is where the second of that pair of terms comes into play – “copacetic” as a state of being or as a goal to be strived for or toward. The origins of the word are shrouded in a degree of mystery; its derivation is debated and related allusions are very rich and diverse. (See [World Wide Words: Copacetic](#).) “Copacetic” may have come into English from Hebrew via Yiddish, from phrases meaning “all is in order” or “all with justice,” the latter phrase incorporating the word “tzaddik.”

It is worth noting in passing that the Hebrew word “tzaddik” represents one of the most dangerous notions ever introduced into human language. It carries the presumption that perfection in human behavior is possible and that one who attains it is special, superior – which is an irrational presumption that everyone carries subliminally to some degree, but with the ancient Hebrews it was elaborated into an important religious concept or set of concepts, amplifying the danger it embodies. One must not expect superhuman perfection of either oneself or others because to do so is to set oneself up for cognitive dissonance and, if one works too hard at it, for much hurt both self-inflicted and inflicted on others – perhaps even literal madness of a sort, such as nervous breakdowns, depression and anxiety.

So, how can the notion of “copacetic” be applied in a Sophianic setting? We take it to mean, accepting *lack* of justice and righteousness, prioritizing getting along in spite of differences, being OK with others being themselves and overlooking perceived “microaggressions.”

Being copacetic is what one must turn to when being pristine falters or fails. It is getting over effronteries, offenses and all the things that bring people into conflict. It entails the ability to remain friends with someone in spite of possibly-vexing differences. Being copacetic can be difficult. When achieved, it’s a triumph over fickleness and egotism. It involves absolute conviction and trust that we can get over whatever comes up that might divide us and turn us against one another, and not giving up in pursuit of that goal.

It’s unrealistic to expect others to act according to one’s particular perception of “what they ought to do and how they ought to be” at all times. It just doesn’t happen and won’t happen. Personalities clash sometimes, and there is *nothing* wrong with that.

The standard of behavior that SA offers its adherents is holding oneself to the standard of honest and fearless self-expression with other Shaktas, regardless of consequences. This approach fosters the very best in human communication – when paired with the agreement to get over any negative reactions to anyone and everyone behaving in this manner. In getting over what hurts and offends you, you become copacetic. This can be a great challenge but if we truly and deeply desire to manifest our full potential, we must be willing and able to achieve it.

“Copacetic” transforms the concept that perfect human behavior might be possible by turning the idea of “tzaddik” around, replacing and counteracting that concept with a challenging but rewarding personal practice, or set of practices, that can lead to resolution of every conflict, to inner peace and to reliable maintenance or restoration of peace and harmony among friends, allies and colleagues, including colleagues in the collegium of Sophianic Animism.

The Sophianic standard of behavior is politically incorrect and confers permission to “spit in the eye” of political correctness. Kali as an aspect of the Mother Goddess confers upon each adherent of SA liberation from any reticence to express himself (or herself) fully without inhibition in any way that he likes, to observe how those with whom he interacts handle the consequences and to adjust accordingly if and as he likes. Complete and fearless self-expression is a key component of becoming copacetic and

living in a copacetic state as much as possible. The responsibility that comes with such freedom, which is conferred upon all Shaktas, is sticking around and getting over whatever consequences arise from one's behavior with the individuals with whom one interacts, assuming they are similarly willing to do so.

The Sophianic goal that each Shakta may adopt at his pleasure is to release himself from the enmeshment with power games and egotism that permeates the human condition. This includes releasing the choices, that cheapen one's humanity, to be "righteous," to be too easily offended by the behavior of others, and to refuse to get over it when an offense occurs.

Additional Options

Ministers of the CNS who are not psychologists or relationship counselors are not technically qualified to give specific advice to aid Shaktas in practicing the above principles or in devising arbitrary or customized / personalized processes to aid individuals to come to mutually copacetic resolutions of difficult interpersonal issues. However, the CNS does offer two procedures that might be useful in some situations: mediation and arbitration.

It is assumed that before the CNS is approached to potentially provide a minister as mediator or arbitrator, other approaches will have been tried and failed. When being pristine fails, the effort to be copacetic must be engaged; if reasonable hope of that effort succeeding without third-party aid is lost, mediation may be engaged; and if mediation fails to result in a solution acceptable to all parties, arbitration is the final alternative that would remain within the boundaries of the church (remaining within those boundaries ordinarily being seen as desirable).

Mediation is designed to help people who are in a state of conflict to listen to each other (or one another) intently, respectfully and with empathy and to conduct discussions in a calm, balanced way that fosters and facilitates resolution of issues. After careful observation, a mediator may point out where cognitive distortions, projections, egoic perceptions and the like are hindering communication, and assist the parties in overcoming such blockages. The mediator's role is not to advise anyone what to think or feel, but to help restore and maintain effective communication and effect the restoration of good relations, if possible.

In extreme situations, **arbitration** offers a way to resolve fundamental disagreements where matters of fairness are at issue. An arbitrator will consider all the facts of a case and make a decision intended to resolve the matter in a reasonable and fair way.

A key aspect of these services is that engaging in them must be fully **consensual** on the part of the parties who are at odds; they must agree in advance to willingly abide by the decision of an arbiter and treat it as **final**; and they must hold the mediating or arbitrating minister **harmless**, recognizing that person's sincere desire to assist them in finding the **best possible solution** to their issue, whatever its nature may be.

Details of the mediation and arbitration procedures offered are explicated in the document **Sophianic Animism USA Ministerial Roles**.