

IBOGA PROVIDER ETHICS

ROOT HEALING IS COMMITTED TO:

- Safe and effective work with iboga
- Continuing the lineage of the Missoko Bwiti tradition
- Collective and individual integrity

A MESSAGE FROM RYAN AND MADELEINE (CO-FOUNDERS OF ROOT HEALING)

We're happy to reassure you that there is nothing complex about the code of ethics we follow as providers at Root Healing.

In essence, we have one single requirement for everybody on our staff:

We ask that you follow the same Bwiti teachings that, as an iboga provider, you share with our guests when you lead a retreat.

This might sound like an obvious ask, but it's a requirement we've come to understand the need for by learning as we've grown. And we are excited to be able to invite you to work with us with the refreshed embrace of Bwiti values and interpersonal authenticity that our new code of ethics provides.

CLARIFYING WHO WE ARE

Our first year operating two centers – Root Healing (Portugal) moved into our current Sintra location at the start of 2023, and we launched Root Healing (Thailand) in Chiang Mai in September the same year – was a big learning curve for us.

Our main takeaway – and the one which informs the code of ethics we invite you to follow when you join us as providers – is that there is much more to being a responsible iboga provider than your interactions with guests while they are with us on retreat.

INTEGRITY IN RETREAT – LIVING THE BWITI WAY, EVERYDAY

Root Healing providers deliver exceptional retreats – this code of ethics is a reminder that the integrity you demonstrate when you're in a retreat context should be nothing exceptional.

To be clear, we're not saying that how you deliver the retreat matters less than you thought – ensuring each guest is listened to, supported and supervised safely throughout their iboga experience while they are with us is of paramount importance.

But you will find it a lot easier, more natural, and more authentic to provide care of this caliber when you lead retreats, if the way that you behave to our guests when they're at the center is aligned with your general overall approach to being a part of Root Healing.

Meaning that your treatment of each other and your movement within the organization (administratively, and in the literal physical space) is typified by the same integrity that you embody on retreats.

ROOT HEALING

BWITI ETHICS, BWITI MORALS, BWITI TEACHINGS

Ethics – from the Ancient Greek ethos – literally means “morals.”

So it couldn't be clearer – as an organization providing traditional Bwiti iboga retreats – how to conceptualize the ethical backbone of our organization.

The Bwiti teachings themselves – the same teachings that have been passed down by the Bwiti in ceremony for thousands of years, the same Bwiti teachings that you as providers will share with our guests in retreats – light the way to the ethical standards we ask you to uphold as an iboga provider at Root Healing.

“JUST BE”

The purest form of honesty – if you are truly inhabiting this teaching, you will operate effortlessly from a place of authenticity and transparency that feeds perfectly into the co-creation of a medically and spiritually safe container for our guests.

“THE ART OF KNOWING”

There is a crucial difference between what we know, and what we believe. When it comes to working together to provide iboga – especially with regards to the medical safety of our guests – this is all the more crucial. Check your assumptions and ask one another direct questions – clarify everything you're unsure about, no matter how trivial-seeming, with one another and our medical team. Tell each other what you've noticed; support each other in gravitating towards the truth of every situation your collaborative provision of Root Healing retreats involves.

The Art of Knowing also plays into interpersonal relationships – none of us are psychic (officially speaking!) – ask yourself and tell each other what's going on for you in a given moment, and what support you need from the rest of the team.

“CARE NOT TO CARE”

The extent to which following this teaching can prevent the kinds of workplace dynamics that drive people to leave offices is impossible to overstate. It is true to the nature of the way the Bwiti teachings are passed on to us by our teachers in Gabon that each and every one of our providers will have your own personal take on the Bwiti teachings, and ways of doing things.

Celebrating this diversity of expression (while remaining true to the essence of each teaching!) is living absolutely in the spirit of the “care not to care” teaching. We encourage each of you to focus on living in line with your personal truth as supported by the Bwiti teachings you embody – and to respect other providers' doing the same.

“LOVE YOURSELF”

Listen to your heart, eat well, rest deeply. Tell yourself what a brilliant job you're doing and tell us immediately if there is anything you need in order to keep doing such a brilliant job.

CODE OF ETHICS: SIMPLE PROVIDER GUIDELINES

As a provider with Root Healing, we ask that you uphold our values of:

SAFETY. All our providers receive full training when joining the Root Healing team to ensure you will be able to work effectively with our medical staff. This means you will be fully able to play your part in ensuring we never deviate from delivering the consistent standard of medical care we offer to support the safe iboga experiences of all our guests.

PROTECTING THE MISSOKO BWITI TEACHINGS. We set up Root Healing with reverence for our teachers in Gabon – in order to pass on intact the teachings from the Missoko Bwiti tradition – one of the oldest forms of Bwiti and the only form to focus on healing. Root Healing is the only provider of purely traditional Missoko Bwiti iboga retreats in Portugal and in Thailand and for their preservation it is of paramount importance that we pass on the teachings in an unaltered form.

The Bwiti have followed the tradition we practice at Root Healing since the inception of Bwiti – following it as best you can is the surest means available to you in leading a safe, effective Bwiti iboga ceremony – no matter what the individual situational dynamics are – each and every time.

RECIPROCITY & SUSTAINABILITY. Root Healing maintains strong links with our village in Gabon, where we source the medicine that you will provide to our guests on retreats. The relationship we have with our teachers and their community in the village is one that we nurture year-round. While we do not expect our providers to get involved with the volunteering activities that we – Madeleine and Ryan – do to support our Bwiti community, we encourage you to stay informed about our reciprocity activities. This is so that you can easily help us share Bwiti perspectives wherever openings come up naturally to do so – and ensure our friends in Gabon have a voice in discussions about providing iboga.

RESPECT. Embody respect always – for your co-providers, for all other Root Healing staff, for your guests, for yourselves. Online, offline and in person. Everybody comes to iboga with their own backstory, including a unique set of spiritual and psychological experiences, memories, traumas and coping strategies incurred over the course of their lifetime so far. Exercise your expert judgment and err on the side of holding back on sharing your own experience or personal perspectives when in a retreat context – to hold an unslanted, safe space for each individual guest.

CLEAR BOUNDARIES. Given the nature of your work with us providing iboga – on psychospiritual and/or detox retreats – you will encounter guests at their most delicate, vulnerable – and expressive and potentially aggressive or abusive in their external expression of what they are experiencing internally.

It is vital that you act from a standpoint of clarity about your personal boundaries in relation to the behavior of our guests – and ensure that you seek support from your co-providers in mitigating all situations where these may be transgressed. This will help you in cultivating an atmosphere in which everybody – guests and providers – respects one another's boundaries and feels confident that theirs will be respected in turn.

ZERO INTIMACY. There is no ambiguity about whether it is appropriate to develop intimate relations with people you have provided the medicine to – this is never appropriate.

FINANCIAL INTEGRITY. We price our retreats as best we can to balance the running costs of our centers with our ideal that finances should never be a barrier to healing with iboga. We are always open to possibilities for providing iboga to individuals at discounted prices, and to talking through each situation. We ask that you respect the financial structures that underpin the organization absolutely – and follow procedural guidelines for collecting payments from guests.

We trust our providers to do this – just as with all other administrative processes – with integrity, in line with the Bwiti teachings which you have joined Root Healing in order to share with our guests.

"There is no iboga without Bwiti, and no Bwiti without iboga."