

Ground Rules for the Retreat

As guests of Land of Joy, we all need to create and maintain a safe, supportive environment that is harmonious and pleasant for all those on retreat, whether in person or online, and respect the guidelines of Land of Joy as a Buddhist Retreat centre.

Land of Joy asks that we respect and keep the five lay Buddhist precepts while on retreat: No killing of sentient beings, respect for the property of others, being honest and straightforward, being celibate and not compromising our ability to remain alert and mindful at all times by using intoxicants of any kind.

Land of Joy also reserves the right to ask participants to leave should their behaviour become too disruptive for the retreat.

We are using an inclusive, open and trusting model on this retreat, so it is important that all participants agree to some ground rules to respect and support each other. These will help ensure that the retreat runs smoothly and remains true to its underlying ethics and principles.

All participants have a responsibility to ensure these ground rules are observed. If anyone feels they are not, they are encouraged to raise this in the group in a constructive way:

- 1) **We are present and practice presence.** We avoid distractions from phones or other devices. We stay present in the space and give our whole selves during the retreat. We try not to derail any conversations and respect each other by observing the morning silence period, allow sessions to start and end on time and observe the agreed boundaries of the retreat.
- 2) **We act with honesty and integrity.** We respect confidentiality and trust others to do the same for us - what is said on the retreat, stays on the retreat. We are willing to speak up if we feel anyone is not keeping to the spirit of the retreat or not showing respect for other participants.
- 3) **We welcome different perspectives.** The retreat welcomes people from all backgrounds and points of view. There are no single right answers to many of the questions that will be raised, all questions and constructive perspectives are welcome.
- 4) **We are supportive and friendly.** The general spirit of the retreat is one where we treat each other in a supportive and friendly way. We may not always agree with each other, but we always treat each other the way we would like to be treated ourselves.
- 5) **We let everyone have a voice.** We respect each other by giving everybody the chance to contribute, listening to each other and not dominating or disrupting the conversation.
- 6) **We can all contribute** to each others learning and what we get out depends on what we put in.
- 7) **We share a bit of ourselves.** We are each willing to share some of our unique personal perspectives. The retreat is NOT group therapy and no-one should feel under pressure to say anything. But the best conversations tend to happen when we're willing to reveal a bit about ourselves and share how we feel inside, not just our intellectual ideas.

