



Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community

GETTING the BEST out of YOUR CONTACT with LAND OF JOY (with disclaimer)

Meditation, mindfulness and the study of Buddhism is generally considered a safe activity and a powerful intervention in bringing about inner peace. However, whilst it can be a useful and transformative approach to integrate and enhance one's spiritual awareness in everyday life, it is not intended to be a standalone treatment or therapy for serious mental health problems.

If someone is currently working with a psychiatrist, psychotherapist or counsellor, it may be useful for them to have a discussion with this practitioner before attending a course or engaging in certain types of regular meditation. This is not to say that meditation will be harmful, however it is sometimes better to be on the safe side particularly if a person is experiencing psychotic or dissociative symptoms, is experiencing suicidal ideation or is heavily reliant on drugs and alcohol. (Intoxicants are not permitted whilst at LoJ). Furthermore, the small team at Land of Joy does not have the skills or resources to offer the level of support that may be required. If anyone is taking medication for their mental health it is advised that they do not stop or change their medication other than in close collaboration with their GP or medical prescriber.

Some types of meditation and study can require a willingness to sit still and be in silence and require you to use your powers of concentration in order to engage in self-study and reflection. If you feel you might be uncomfortable engaging in this kind of self-examination, then we ask that you do not proceed or that you pace yourself accordingly, until you feel secure and comfortable to proceed further. We prioritise physical and psychological safety by supporting each person to take control of their own practice regarding when and how they engage and to take breaks when needed as well as to decide for themselves if they wish to engage in any meditation or movement practices.

If anyone is currently in a crisis or is going through a traumatic life event, it is wise to think carefully if this is the right time to attend a particular course, group or solitary retreat. Similarly, someone with significant unexplored trauma in their past may not find the intensity of some practices to be the most beneficial approach. There are no hard and fast rules, however, and this will very much depend on a person's psychological health and their support networks.

In order to register for a course or retreat, we may ask for additional information from you as some retreats have special requirements. For anyone needing to withdraw from a course or practice there is always the option of attending in the future. Please be aware that the Land of Joy teachers and team make no claim to be mental health professionals. All programs, courses and retreats, materials and advice should be understood as only providing spiritual advice to help you deepen your own Dharma practice and understanding. Anything we say or write should be understood as personal interpretations of the Buddhist view and not an expression of professional therapeutic advice or prescriptive guidance. You are entirely responsible for how you choose to understand, use or follow any of the content of courses, writings or communications. Land of Joy can accept no responsibility for any adverse effects, direct or indirect, that may result from your use of the information in any of our communications such as on our website, guided meditations and courses, or any retreat at Land of Joy or online. Furthermore, we make no guarantees that any of this information or practices will function in the same way for every individual. By using the website and guided meditations, as well

as attending courses or any retreats, you are agreeing that you use the information contained entirely at your own discretion.

Although each Land of Joy team member will be doing their best to interact with kindness and compassion, there will be limitations of time, resources, and skills. We cannot operate beyond the limits of our own competency and capacity. Designated Safeguarding Leads can offer support within our available resources, and can signpost, but not offer direct therapeutic help. Land of Joy recommends that you listen to your mind and body and where necessary, modify what you need to do in order to take good care of yourself. It is healthy to take responsibility your own practice and feel empowered and comfortable in your exploration of meditation and study.

Our safe recruitment policy recognises that Land of Joy team members, teachers, and volunteers within the FPMT organisation are in a position of trust. We recognize that it is important that we follow safe recruitment vetting processes when appointing individuals to these positions.

The benefits of meditation and the integration of Buddhist perspectives into everyday experience have enormous potential for spiritual development and a peaceful, healthy and fulfilling life, both for yourself and others. We recommend as the Buddha advised, that you examine and reflect on what you learn and make your own decisions about how you incorporate the many dharma practices available.

Please do feel free to contact the Land of Joy team to discuss the suitability for attending specific courses or to raise any other questions or concerns you may have.

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