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Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community



"Those with indestructible devotion are the most fortunate of beings: all success comes to them."

-Lama Zopa Rinpoche -

As we arrive at the close of 2025, we find ourselves filled with gratitude for this beautiful community we share. December invites us to pause, reflect, and celebrate—not just the milestones we've reached together, but the countless quiet moments of practice, connection, and kindness that have woven through our year at Land of Joy.

Join us as we look back on what we've accomplished as a sangha and honour the collective dedication that makes this centre a true refuge. Whether you've joined us for retreats, sat in meditation, volunteered your time, or held us in your thoughts from afar, you are part of something special.

Thank you for being here, for practicing with us, and for contributing to the warmth and wisdom of our community.

Our Year in Review

As we reflect on 2025, we're filled with gratitude for the vibrant community that makes Land of Joy a true sanctuary for practice and transformation. This year, we hosted 22 retreats with 253 in-person participants, welcomed 42 online guests, and maintained an impressive 95% booking rate for our retreat huts.

We also celebrated three successful fundraisers, raising nearly £5,000 to support our mission. In addition, we held 27 book club gatherings, 11 Q&A sessions with Tulku-la, 19 Community Meditation Wednesday nights, and 12 White Tara Group practices online.

We were supported by 45 onsite and remote volunteers whose dedication made all of this possible. With two new huts on the horizon and 18 retreats already scheduled for 2026, the momentum continues.

Thank you to everyone who contributed, whether by attending, volunteering, donating, or simply sharing in the spirit of awakening. Here's to another year of joyful service and deepening practice!



Community in Action: Service, Celebration, and Sacred Play



Our dedicated volunteers have been hard at work this month! Behind the scenes of the **Yamantaka Solitary Hero Nearing Retreat**, now nearly a month underway, they've been providing essential support so that practitioners can fully immerse themselves in their practice. From preparing nourishing meals to quietly tending the grounds, their presence has been a steady offering of compassion in action.

Beyond retreat support, volunteers have also been busy preparing Land of Joy for the new year—tackling practical tasks with joyful energy and deep care. Amidst all this activity, we've had the pleasure of celebrating two beloved birthdays: **Tulku-la** and **Di Carroll**, whose wisdom and warmth continue to bless our community. These moments of celebration remind us that spiritual life includes laughter, cake, and heartfelt connection.

We've also begun a new **Chenresig community puzzle activity**, gathering around the image of the Buddha of Compassion—piece by mindful piece. It's profoundly special to be creating a deity's form through such a quiet, contemplative act. Each puzzle piece becomes a gesture of devotion, each moment of alignment a practice in presence. It's not just a puzzle—it's a meditation on compassion, togetherness, and the beauty of slow creation.

We're deeply grateful for the service, spirit, and sincerity of everyone who

makes Land of Joy what it is—a place where awakening unfolds not only in silence, but in shared moments, mindful tasks, and the joy of being together.

Join Us as a Volunteer

At Land of Joy, volunteering is about more than getting things done—it's about who we become together. When we cook side by side, tend the garden, or gather for evening activities, we're weaving sangha and creating conditions for awakening.

We're looking for people who want to deepen their practice while serving the Dharma in a beautiful, supportive community. Whether you have a few weeks or a few months to offer, volunteering here is an opportunity to step into intentional living—where work becomes practice, and community becomes family.

Interested in joining us in 2026? Visit our website to learn more or contact us at volunteering@landofjoy.co.uk.



The East Wing Renovation Project Update

Lhabab Duchen Fundraiser Update

We're thrilled to share that our Lhabab Duchen fundraiser has raised £1,941.74 toward our £2,400 goal—that's over 80% of the way there!

Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far. Your generosity helps sustain Land of Joy and the teachings we offer.

Over the past two years, we've been steadily renewing our accommodation: the volunteer quarters were refreshed last year and the dining room and some rooms above were completed this year. We've now started turning our attention to the east wing which will be renovated in three stages.

Stage 1: Complete – The bathroom has been beautifully renovated, with the old bath transformed into a spacious, accessible shower.

Stage 2: Current Focus – We're now ready to remove the lining paper, repair plaster, apply new paper and paint the walls, in fresh warming colours. The old, moth eaten carpets will then be replaced by new, soft and comforting carpets, creating warmer, more welcoming spaces for those who live and practice here.

Stage 3: Future Vision – The final stage will replace the aging windows, ensuring the rooms stay warm, dry, and energy-efficient through Northumberland's winters.

If you haven't yet had a chance to donate, there's still time to help us reach our goal before the fundraiser ends on Lama Tsongkhapa Day (Dec 14th). Every contribution makes a difference.

[Make a Contribution](#)



Upcoming Retreats



With Alison Murdoch & Anna Colao: Friday 30th January to Sunday 1st February

As we step into a new year, this weekend offers an opportunity to slow down, release what no longer serves us, and reconnect with our inner capacity for joy and wholeness. Drawing on the deep wisdom of the Buddha, we'll explore how letting go—of craving, aversion and confusion—creates the space for joy to naturally arise.

The retreat will offer a rare opportunity to step out of the noise of daily life and into a safe, nurturing space where we can reconnect with our body, align heart

and mind, and begin to understand the habitual patterns of craving, aversion and confusion that obscure our natural clarity. Together we'll explore what it means to let go with warmth, playfulness and self-compassion so that we can be a more beneficial presence in the world.

[Register Here](#)



With Roy Sutherwood: Saturday 7th February to Saturday 14th February

Land of Joy warmly welcomes back the much-loved annual Mahamudra retreat. In the dark winter days, join us to turn inward under the guidance of the experienced and kind-hearted teacher Roy Sutherwood. The retreat is open to both newer and more experienced meditators, and is most suitable for those with a little stability in meditation.

[Register Here](#)



With Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) and Di Carroll: Monday 23rd February to Wednesday 4th March

Requirements to attend: [See retreat information page](#)

We are delighted to host a 10-day White Tara Long Life Retreat dedicated to the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Held during the Days of Miracles—the auspicious period after Tibetan New Year (Losar) when virtuous actions are said to be powerfully multiplied—this retreat offers an exceptional chance to gather merit and make strong prayers for His Holiness’s continued health and activity.

This will be the first retreat Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) will lead at Land of Joy and we are extremely grateful to him for offering his precious time and knowledge, supported by the wonderful Di Carroll.

Register Here



With Paula Chichester & Lou Beaumont, Friday 15th to

Sunday 17th May

This weekend retreat at Land of Joy is an invitation to open our hearts to the power of loving kindness — for ourselves, for others, and for the world we share.

Through a blend of teachings, guided meditations, group discussion, and gentle body practices, teachers Lou Beaumont and Paula Chichester will guide us in exploring kindness as a profound source of strength and happiness. Together, we will look closely at what supports kindness, what can prevent it, and how we can cultivate it in daily life with courage, balance, and warmth.

[Register Here](#)

A recipe from the Land of Joy Kitchen





Land of Joy - Dharma Dhal

A deeply nourishing, traditional dhal layered with spices, sweetness from carrots, creaminess from coconut, and a magical final tadka that awakens the whole dish.

Ingredients Base Cooking

- 4 medium potatoes, boiled & diced
- 4 carrots, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1-inch piece fresh ginger, chopped
- 2–2.5 cups red lentils, washed well
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- Water as needed
- 1/2–1 cup coconut milk
- 1–2 tsp garam masala
- Salt to taste

Homemade Curry Powder (your signature blend) - Mix in a small bowl:

- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp turmeric

- 1/2 tsp paprika or Kashmiri chilli
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- Pinch fenugreek powder (optional)

The Magic Final Tadka (Tempering) (This is your secret touch — the part cooks rarely do.)

- 1 tablespoon kalwanti seeds
- 1 full garlic bulb, peeled & chopped or sliced finely
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon black mustard seeds
- 1–2 onions, thinly sliced
- Fresh curry leaves (1 sprig)
- Oil for frying
- Fresh coriander (cilantro), chopped

[Click Here for Step-by-Step Instructions](#)

**Nature's Embrace at Land of Joy: A View from
Above and Within**



There's a lovely stillness that lives here at Land of Joy—one that doesn't ask for attention, but rewards it. Nestled among rolling hills and ancient trees, our retreat center is more than a place to rest; it's a sanctuary where nature itself becomes a teacher.

Thanks to the generous gift of a drone from one of our volunteers, we've been able to witness this landscape from new heights—literally. The drone has offered us breathtaking aerial views of the estate, revealing the quiet poetry of winding forest paths, and the gentle curve of the stream that hugs our grounds. Each flight feels like a meditation in motion, a reminder of how expansive and interconnected this place truly is.

One of our recent retreatants, staying in a private retreat hut, shared a moment that left us all smiling: they spotted a pair of otters playing near the stream. No fanfare, no performance—just beings at ease in their habitat, reminding us of the joy that arises when we slow down enough to see.

These glimpses—whether from above or beside—are part of what makes Land of Joy so special. Nature here doesn't just surround us; it welcomes us, lives along side us, teaches us, and sometimes, if we're lucky, surprises us.


The Room That Teaches - A Forty-Day Journey From Seeking to Seeing




What if the chipped mug on your desk, the towel on your chair, or the lamp by your bed were trying to teach you something?

What if desire itself—what we chase, grasp, and name—was never the end, but the beginning of a deeper return to wholeness?

We're honoured to share a new series written by Land of Joy volunteer **Sandeep Krishnappa**, who spent forty days in a single room at Land of Joy. What began as a quiet corner for rest became a mirror for awakening.

 *The Room That Teaches: A 40-Day Journey from Seeking to Seeing* is a collection of short, luminous stories—each born from an encounter with the ordinary. A drawer. A spider. A salad bowl. Each one a window into awareness.

This is not a book of reflections. It's a book of windows.

 Three minutes to read. A lifetime to live.

Join us as we begin this journey inward—where perception becomes practice, and the room you inhabit becomes your teacher.

Story One: The Mirror That Wanted Compliments

The Mirror That Wanted Compliments

'When you stop chasing beauty, you create it.'

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your bed, not for display but for quiet joy.

Reflection:

Where did beauty arise naturally when I gave attention without expectation?

He looks into my mirror every morning.
Sometimes, I think the mirror holds its breath first.
This morning, he stared at it as if waiting for enlightenment to blink back.

He frowned, adjusted his hair, tried a smile.
The mirror smiled too , but in that slightly sarcastic way only mirrors can.

Then he spotted it, a streak of toothpaste across the glass.
He grabbed a cloth and wiped it clean.
For a moment, both of them seemed relieved.

I wanted to laugh.
The face hadn't changed at all.
But suddenly, he thought he looked better.

That's what humans forget, beauty doesn't come from fixing what's reflected.
It appears when the glass between seeing and being finally clears.

After that, he looked softer.
Not because he became beautiful
but because he stopped trying to be.

Light doesn't chase what it shines on; it just shines.

Moral: When you stop chasing beauty, you create it.



**A big thank you, as always, for your ongoing support of Land of Joy.
Please continue to visit us and support us in any way you can.**

We hope to see you soon!



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