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Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community

Spiritual Newsletter - November 2025



"Your up and down emotions are like clouds in the sky; beyond them, the real, basic human nature is clear and pure."

- Lama Yeshe -

As 2025 begins to wind down, it's a natural time for reflection—to

appreciate the practice we've cultivated this year and to consider where our path may lead us next.

We're thrilled to announce that registration is now open for our 2026 programme. The year ahead offers a rich tapestry of retreats, from foundational practices in loving kindness and letting go to deep explorations of White Tara, Vajrayogini, and the profound teachings on wisdom and bodhicitta.

In this newsletter, you'll find the complete 2026 programme alongside updates from our Land of Joy community.

Thank you for being part of our sangha and for your ongoing dedication to practice. 🙏

Planting Seeds of Longevity: An Oak Tree for His Holiness The Dalai Lama



This autumn, our Land of Joy community gathered to plant a special oak tree dedicated to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long life. Blessed on His Holiness's 90th birthday in July, the tree was planted with prayers and aspirations for his continued health and activity in the world.

Community members came together to place the young oak in the earth—a living symbol of longevity, strength, and enduring wisdom. As this tree grows and flourishes over the decades to come, may it reflect His Holiness's boundless compassion and the flourishing of the dharma.

May this tree stand as a reminder of our connection to His Holiness and our commitment to the path he has illuminated for so many. 🙏



Lhabab Duchen at Land of Joy



Our Land of Joy community gathered together to celebrate Lhabab Duchen, one of the four great holy days in the Tibetan Buddhist calendar. This auspicious day commemorates the Buddha's descent from the god realm after teaching his mother, reminding us of the precious opportunity we have to practice and the power of dedicating our efforts for the benefit of all beings.



2026 Retreat Programme Now Open for Registration!



We're delighted to share our 2026 retreat programme—a rich tapestry of teachings, practices, and contemplative experiences to nourish your spiritual journey throughout the year.

From the depths of winter meditation to summer solstice celebration, next year's offerings include:

For Those New to Buddhist Practice:

- Making Space for Joy: Learning to Let Go with Alison Murdoch & Anna Colao (January)
- Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism with Ven Mary Reavey (October)

Deepening Meditation & Study:

- Mahamudra Retreat with Roy Sutherwood (February)
- The Two Wings of Wisdom & Bodhichitta: Exploring the Lam Rim with Ven Mary Reavey (July)
- Shamatha Retreat with Ven Mary Reavey (September)
- Emptiness in Everyday Life with Geshe Rinchen (September)

Tantra & Advanced Practice:

- White Tara Long Life Retreat with Tulku-la & Di Carroll during the Days of Miracles (February)
- Vajrayogini Enabling Action Retreat with Paula Chichester (April) – Already full with waiting list!
- Yamantaka Generation & Completion Stage Retreat with Andy Wistreich (October)

Heart Practices & Ethics:

- Loving Kindness: A Journey into Compassion & Equanimity with Paula Chichester & Lou Beaumont (May)
- Building Inner Strength: 16 Guidelines with Wendy Ridley (July)
- Living with Integrity: The Second Perfection with François Schick (September)

Embodied Practice & Connection:

- Falling in Love With the Future with Paul Wielgus over Summer Solstice (June)
- Tasting Kum Nye: Tibetan Yoga with Liza Weber (June)

More retreats are still being added to the programme—check our website regularly for updates!

Whether you're taking your first steps on the path or deepening years of practice, there's a place for you at Land of Joy in 2026.

Popular retreats fill quickly—book early to avoid disappointment!

Visit our website to view the full programme details and secure your place

Upcoming Retreats



Making Space for Joy: Learning to Let Go

At the threshold of a new year, this weekend invites us to pause, shed what weighs us down, and rediscover our inherent capacity for joy and completeness. Through the Buddha's teachings, we'll examine how releasing our grip on craving, aversion, and confusion allows joy to emerge naturally.

This retreat rests on a fundamental truth: every being possesses an innate capacity for compassion, wisdom, clarity, and spaciousness—what the Buddha called our Buddha nature. Yet amid life's daily demands, we easily lose touch with this, clinging instead to thought patterns that diminish our happiness and block our natural joy.

During this retreat, we'll step away from everyday busyness into a supportive environment where we can reconnect with our bodies, bring heart and mind into harmony, and recognize the habitual patterns of craving, aversion, and confusion that cloud our natural clarity. We'll discover together what it means to let go with kindness, lightness, and self-compassion, enabling us to bring greater benefit to the world around us.

Date: Friday 30th January – Sunday 1st February 2026

Retreat Leaders: Alison Murdoch & Anna Colao

Requirements: Everyone is welcome

[Learn More and Register Here](#)



Mahamudra Retreat

Mahamudra—"the great seal"—represents one of Tibetan Buddhism's most direct and profound paths. It points us toward recognizing mind's true nature beyond conceptual thought, opening the door to genuine inner freedom.

We're delighted to welcome back our beloved annual Mahamudra retreat. As winter settles in, join us for a week of turning inward with Roy Sutherland, whose experienced and warmhearted teaching has guided many practitioners. The retreat welcomes both newer and seasoned meditators who have developed some stability in their practice.

Daily sessions will include guided meditation supported by mindful movement, helping us maintain attention without fatigue. Following the Tibetan approach, we'll begin by settling into mind's natural clarity and awareness—like a mirror becoming conscious of itself—and progressively recognize the mirror's own empty nature.

This gradual path offers a powerful method for realizing liberation and enlightenment.

Date: Saturday 7th until Saturday 14th February 2026

Retreat Leader: Roy Sutherland

Requirements: Everyone is welcome but it is most suitable to those who have some stability in their meditation practice.

[Learn More and Register Here](#)



White Tara Long Life Retreat

We're honoured to host a 10-day White Tara Long Life Retreat dedicated to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long life. Taking place during the Days of Miracles—the blessed period following Tibetan New Year (Losar) when positive actions are said to carry multiplied benefit—this retreat provides a meaningful opportunity to accumulate merit and offer sincere prayers for His Holiness's continued well-being and activities.

Buddhist communities around the world continue to mark His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 90th year with long life prayers. For those who feel connected to His Holiness, this is an especially significant time to join in collective practice and dedication. You're also welcome to dedicate your practice toward the health, happiness, and longevity of your teachers, loved ones, all beings, and yourself.

White Tara, the female Buddha embodying compassion and long life, bestows blessings that enhance vitality, wisdom, and clear obstacles from our path. The retreat will include an opportunity to observe the Eight Mahayana Precepts for one day, and we'll conclude by celebrating Chotrül Düchen (the Day of Miracles) together—a particularly powerful time for accumulating merit and making aspirations.

This marks the first retreat at Land of Joy led by Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la), and we're deeply grateful for his generosity in sharing his time and wisdom, along with the support of Di Carroll.

Date: Monday 23rd February – Wednesday 4th March

Retreat Leaders: Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) & Di Carroll

Requirements: Ideally one would have received a full kriya tantra empowerment. However it is possible to join if one has received a White Tara 'Je Nang' permission to practise. (In the West this is often called a White Tara Long Life Initiation.)

[Learn More and Register Here](#)



Loving Kindness: A Journey into Compassion and Equanimity

This weekend retreat invites us to discover the transformative power of loving kindness—toward ourselves, others, and the world around us.

Teachers Lou Beaumont and Paula Chichester will guide us through teachings, meditation, group discussion, and gentle movement practices as we explore kindness as a wellspring of both strength and joy. We'll examine what nurtures kindness, what obstructs it, and how we can develop it in our daily lives with courage, steadiness, and genuine warmth.

Brief sessions of pranayama and chi gong will help settle body and mind, creating spaciousness from which loving kindness can arise naturally. These

embodied practices will be interwoven with dharma teachings and opportunities to reflect and learn together.

Date: Friday 15th – Sunday 17th May

Retreat Leader: Paula Chichester & Lou Beaumont

Requirements: Everyone is welcome

[Learning More and Register Here](#)

Retreat Hut Availability



Land of Joy is a wonderful environment for retreat. Our semi-rural location offers quiet, spacious and beautiful grounds which can be explored during your breaks whilst the retreat facilities provide a private space that will support your practice.

Our three private retreat huts are in a part of the woodland close to the main house overlooking the valley. We ask that you plan to stay for a minimum of one week and a maximum of three months.

Our retreat huts are very popular once again 2026. We still have some availability during the first six months:

- **Retreat Hut 2:** 22nd - 28th May

- **Retreat Hut 3:** 21st - 28th May, 16th - 30th June

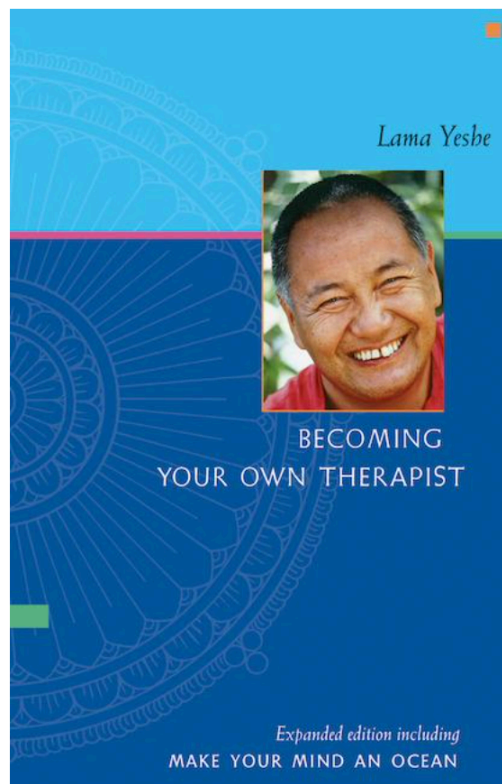
NOTE: Our retreat huts bookings are open to 2027, be sure to book in advance!

Feedback from the Huts

"I enjoyed very much. The hut was cosy, food delicious and the volunteers contributed to a joyful atmosphere. Love the nature here too! Thank you, thank you, thank you and I hope to be back soon!"

Learn More, Check Availability and Book Your Stay

Therapist's Couch Optional: The Volunteer Book Club's Next Selection



Our Volunteer Book Club is delighted to announce our next read: *Becoming Your Own Therapist* by Lama Yeshe, a wonderfully accessible collection that proves profound wisdom doesn't require complicated language—or a psychology degree.

First published in 1998, this gem of a booklet contains three public talks Lama Yeshe gave on the general topic of Buddhism, each followed by the kind of lively, anything-goes question and answer sessions he so clearly relished. If you've ever experienced that special energy when a genuine teacher meets curious minds without pretense, you'll recognise it on every page.

While these gatherings were formally called "lectures," Lama Yeshe had something more intimate in mind. He invited each person in his audience to use his words as a mirror—not to passively absorb teachings, but to look beyond the concepts, find themselves, and become their own psychologist. It's an invitation that feels particularly relevant for those of us living and practicing together in community, where self-awareness and inner work are part of our daily rhythm.

The beauty of Lama Yeshe's approach is that he meets us where we are with clear, warm, often humorous guidance on understanding our own minds—the very thing most of us struggle with despite (or perhaps because of) overthinking it.

How does mindfulness meditation apply to daily life?

"Meditation is very simple. Actually watching television, which we all do, is a bit like meditating. When you watch television, you watch what is happening on the screen, and what you meditate, you watch what is happening on the inner screen of your mind, where you can see all your good qualities, but all your inner garbage as well. That is why meditation

is so simple.”

- Lama Yeshe -



Deepening Your Meditation Practice

Whether you're new to meditation or looking to strengthen your existing practice, we've gathered helpful resources to support your journey. Our meditation resource page offers guidance on establishing a daily practice, understanding different meditation techniques, and preparing for retreat.

From practical tips on posture and creating a meditation space to exploring the various styles of Buddhist meditation, you'll find tools to help you cultivate a steady and meaningful practice.

[Visit our meditation resources page](#)

Nurturing Our Branches of Joy



We have updated our Branches of Joy programme, and are excited for this important initiative to bloom.

Our monthly donors help us:

- Maintain our retreat sanctuary and cover operating costs
- Offer retreats to everyone regardless of finances
- Fund improvements like new windows and guest spaces

Thanks to the generosity of the Branches of Joy, last year we were able to:

- Offer 22 group retreats serving 220 people
- Welcome Phara Khenchen Rinpoche as our first Minister of Religion
- Host 60 individuals for personal retreats (1 week to 3 months)

Your steady support allows our work to flourish!

Learn more about and join our Branches of Joy

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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