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# Land of Joy

Buddhist Retreat Community



*"Peace does not mean an absence of conflicts; differences will always be there. Peace means solving these differences through peaceful means; through dialogue, education, knowledge; and through humane ways."*

*-His Holiness The Dalai Lama-*

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March has arrived, and with it the first real whispers of spring. Here at Land of Joy, the gardens are beginning to stir, the birds are returning, and there is a quiet sense of possibility in the air, a reminder that renewal is always available to us, on and off the cushion.

We're delighted to share what's been happening here and what's coming up, and we hope something in these pages speaks to you. As always, thank you for being part of our community. 🙏🌿

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## Building Retreat Huts Together Project Update



An artistic impression of a new retreat hut on Site 1: *Please note: the design differs slightly to what will be constructed*



Occupied 95% of the time



3 Retreat Huts along the main drive

We are so deeply moved by the generosity of this community. **We have raised an amazing £8,676 toward our Building Retreat Huts Together fundraising**

**campaign** over the past 14 days. Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts. 🙏

This fundraiser remains open - so if you've been feeling called to contribute, there is still a beautiful opportunity to be part of something that will benefit practitioners for years, and perhaps generations, to come.

Every gift, whatever the size, will help create a space where practitioners can go deeply inward, away from the noise of daily life, and discover the stillness that is always waiting. What a beautiful thing to be part of.

[Donate Here](#)

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## Land of Joy Volunteers



February was a full and beautiful month here at Land of Joy, and none of it would have been possible without the extraordinary dedication of our volunteer community. 🙏

Our karma yogis worked tirelessly behind the scenes - and very much in the foreground - to support two significant retreats running across the month: the beloved annual Mahamudra retreat with Roy Sutherwood, and the White Tara Long Life Retreat with Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) and Di Carroll. Two profound and very different gatherings, each requiring care, attention, and wholehearted service to hold well.

From preparing nourishing meals and maintaining the spaces, to welcoming retreatants with warmth and ensuring everything ran smoothly day to day, our volunteers showed up with the kind of quiet, generous dedication that makes Land of Joy what it is. To every volunteer who gave their time and energy this February - thank you. Your service is a practice in itself, and it is felt deeply by everyone who walks through our doors. 🌿



We wanted to share something else that genuinely moved us. 🙏

As one of our beloved volunteers came to the end of his time at Land of Joy, he gifted us this stunning hand-drawn artwork of our beautiful centre - prayer flags flying, trees bare and winter-still, the old stone house standing quietly in the light exactly as it does. Inside, he wrote:

*"Thank you all for your kindness, generosity and for making me feel so welcome here. May we go deeper and deeper in the Buddha way. May we meet again as fellow pilgrims on the path and wherever you may go, may you find yourself in a Land of Joy."*

This is what community looks like. This is what the path looks like - people meeting, practicing, serving, and parting with open hearts and good wishes for one another.

Thank you for this gift. 🙏 It will hang with great love. 🌿

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Thank You!



This month, we want to take a moment to offer our heartfelt gratitude to **Laura**

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service to our community.

Laura has given so much of herself to Land of Joy, serving as Acting Director, as Chair of our Board, and in countless ways both seen and unseen. Her dedication, wisdom, and care have shaped this place in ways that will continue to be felt long after her tenure on the board comes to a close. She has been a steady, generous, and deeply committed presence through many chapters of our journey, and the impact of her contribution is woven into the very fabric of what Land of Joy is today.

We are forever grateful, Laura. What you have offered here is a true gift, to this community, to all who have practiced here, and to the Dharma itself. We wish you every happiness and hold you in our hearts with deep appreciation and warm wishes for all that lies ahead. 🙏

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## Upcoming Retreats



**A Mindful Heart with Wendy Ridley, Wednesdays 7pm-8:10pm from the 18th February until 3rd June with a 4 week break from 15th April until 13th May - ONLINE ONLY**

A Mindful Heart is a new 12-week course developed by the Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW), inspired by Pam Cayton's Creating Compassionate Cultures program and currently being offered as a pilot by Land of Joy. This course is designed to support participants in developing a deeper understanding of how the mind works, gradually letting go

of destructive patterns of thought and behaviour while cultivating a healthy self-confidence and a deep, compassionate connection with others.

[Register Here](#)

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## **Vajrayogini Enabling Action Retreat**

With Paula Chichester (supported by Yeshe Palmo), Friday 10th April to Thursday 7th May. Requirements: [See retreat information page.](#)

Land of Joy warmly welcomes the return of the Vajrayogini Enabling Action 100,000 Mantra Retreat, an important step for those wishing to deepen their connection with Vajrayogini.

It offers the chance to accumulate the required mantra recitations within the supportive and peaceful conditions of retreat. More than this, it creates space for the heart to open, for clarity to grow, and for Vajrayogini's fearless wisdom to become ever more alive within us.

[Register Here](#)



## Loving Kindness: A Journey into Compassion & Equanimity

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](#)



## Falling in Love with the Future

With Paul Wielgus, Friday 19th to Monday 22nd June

This Summer Solstice gathering at Land of Joy is an invitation to pause, to

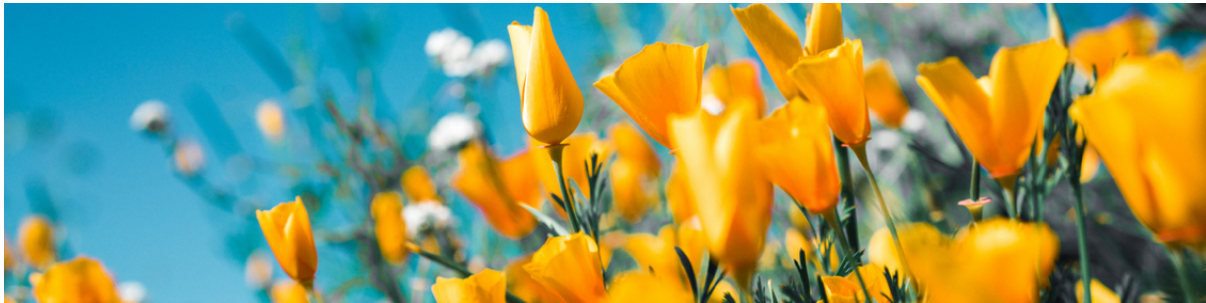
breathe, and to remember what it feels like to be truly alive, rooted in nature, in community, and in yourself.

Over a long golden weekend at the height of summer, we will rest in the stillness of the land, share in meditation, breath, and gentle movement under open skies, gather around the fire in the long evenings, and practice the simple, radical art of being human together. The theme - *Fall in Love with the Future* - is not about optimism or escapism, but about something deeper: discovering that joy, hope, and creative response are acts of genuine courage, and that our wellbeing is inseparable from the living world around us.

This gathering is for anyone who feels the pull toward something more nourishing - the curious, the weary, the wild-hearted. No experience is needed, just a willingness to show up and be surprised by your own aliveness.

Let the land love you back. 🌿

[Register Here](#)



## **Building Inner Strength: 16 Guidelines (Level 1)**

With Wendy Ridley, Friday 17th to Sunday 19th July

Feeling overwhelmed by global crises, work, family, or personal challenges?  
Seeking practical tools for positive change and emotional resilience? This experiential weekend retreat is designed for you.

We will explore embodied mindfulness and universal ethical values in this Level 1 of the 16 Guidelines for Life Program developed by the Foundation for

Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW). The program offers a simple yet profound framework for reflecting on how we think, act, relate to others, and find meaning. Through mindfulness, self-inquiry, and ethical reflection, we will gain tools to foster well-being, purpose, and inner strength.

[Register Here](#)

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## **The Two Wings of Wisdom & Bodhichitta: An Exploration of the Lam Rim**

With Ven Mary Reavey, Friday 3rd to Saturday 11th July

The Buddhist path to awakening is often described as two wings of a bird: wisdom and bodhichitta. Only when both wings are fully developed can we truly take flight. In this retreat, Ven. Mary Reavey will guide us in exploring these two essential aspects of practice. We will look more deeply into the Lamrim—the graduated path to enlightenment—focusing on cultivating wisdom and the compassionate intention of bodhichitta. The emphasis will be not only on intellectual understanding, but on using meditation to feel and experience the teachings directly, so that they become a living part of our practice.

[Register Here](#)

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## **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.

We still have availability in 2026:

**Retreat Hut 1:** 22nd September - 30th September | 27th October - December 31st

**Retreat Hut 2:** 20th April - 17th May | 20th June - 28th June | 29th

September - 7th October | 3rd - 19th November | 8th - 18th December,  
2026

**Retreat Hut 3:** 24th March - April 7th | 4th - 21st September | 5th  
October - 26th November | 10th - 20th December, 2026

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

*"I was very happy to see so much wildlife now - I saw an otter twice, bats,  
two herons, and three white-tailed deer! Happy sentient beings!"*

-Sheri, a recent retreatant in a private retreat hut-

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## Recent Retreat



We offer our deepest thanks to everyone who joined us for the recent **White**

**Tara Long Life Retreat.** Over these ten days, the group created a field of quiet devotion and heartfelt practice, reciting an incredible 422,793 mantras for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

We are especially grateful to Phara Khenchen Rinpoche (Tulku-la) and Di Carroll for their generous guidance, which made the retreat both memorable and deeply nourishing.

May the merit we gathered together continue to ripple outward for the benefit of all. 🙏



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**A recipe from the Land of Joy kitchen**



## Marie's 'Pizza in a Pinch'

*Our Centre Coordinator Marie calls this her "In A Pinch Puff Pastry Pizza" - she rolls out puff pastry (gluten-free pastry works just as well!), adds pesto, veggies of her choice, then cheese/vegan cheese.*

*Bake for 15 minutes....et voilà!*

*NOTE: Sometimes, when she's feeling fancy, she substitutes harissa or red pesto for the green pesto!*



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## Stories from Land of Joy

*We're honoured to share this series written by Land of Joy volunteer Sandeep Krishnappa, who spent forty days in a volunteer 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.*



#### **Story 4: The Blanket That Negotiated Peace**

Last night, he tossed and turned as if wrestling invisible paperwork.  
Pillow, blanket, conscience, all entangled.

He kept sighing, then praying for peace, then sighing again.  
The blanket did what blankets do best, waited.

It didn't demand attention; it simply stayed available.  
Sometimes it covered him, sometimes he kicked it off.  
Peace is a lot like that.

Around 2 a.m., he finally gave up the struggle.  
He lay there, eyes open, listening to the radiator's hum, the faint breath of  
wind  
through the window.

He pulled the blanket back over himself without ceremony, and there it  
was,  
warmth, quiet, ease.

Nothing had arrived; he'd just stopped fighting what was already here.

I've noticed that peace doesn't come when called.

It comes when you stop conducting the orchestra and start hearing the  
silence  
between the notes.

**Moral: When you stop begging for peace, you rest in it.**

### **COMMENTARY SECTION:**

The commentary sections are for those who want deeper philosophical  
context. If  
you prefer to stay with the stories and practices, that's perfect too.

### **Madhyamaka Reflection: The Stillness of Dependent Arising**

The blanket teaches that peace has no self-nature.  
It is not an object to acquire, nor a state to defend.  
It arises only when conflict and grasping fall away , when causes and  
conditions  
align in their natural balance.

Nāgārjuna might say:  
The blanket is not inherently a blanket.  
It is called blanket in dependence upon body, warmth, and the longing for  
rest.

Likewise, peace is not inherently peace.  
It depends on attention, acceptance, breath, and the cessation of  
resistance.

When we stop insisting that peace appear, we see it was never absent.  
Our struggle to find it only disturbed what was already resting quietly.  
The Middle Way here is the surrender of control , the willingness to let  
phenomena  
unfold without interference.

The blanket knows this by nature.  
It does not chase the sleeper or abandon him.  
It simply participates in the rhythm of covering and uncovering.

## Zen Poetic Mirror: Thusness of Rest

The blanket breathes.  
Not with lungs,  
but with waiting.

He turns, sighs, reaches.  
The blanket listens.

Nothing moves toward peace.  
Peace moves through everything.

A hum in the radiator.  
Wind against glass.  
The silence between.

When the seeker sleeps,  
the world tucks itself in.

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**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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