



## **Welcome to The Dharma Centre of Canada**

### **GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCT**

We ask that all beings who stay on property respect the Five training Precepts from early Buddhist traditions. The precepts in positive form are as follows:

1. **I undertake to train myself to abstain from killing or harming**
2. **I undertake to train myself to abstain from taking that which is not freely given**
3. **I undertake to train myself to abstain from over indulgence of sense activities**
4. **I undertake to train myself to abstain from false speech**
5. **I undertake to train myself to abstain from taking substances that cause intoxication and non-clarity**

Retreatants are not permitted to bring alcoholic beverages and narcotics on site. Substances which cloud the mind are a hindrance to meditative practice. Failure to abide by this could result in expulsion from the Dharma Centre.

**Respecting Silence and Sacred Space** - Silence is encouraged if not required during many of the retreats we hold. For the sake of people's practice, please respect silence in and around the buildings. Avoid approaching remote cabins as there may be a long-term retreatants practicing there. Please have any necessary conversations take place quietly away from communal areas. If in doubt of the guidelines for silence on property, please check with the teacher or the Retreat Administrator.

When entering the Temple or Main House we ask that shoes are taken off and left in the mudroom. Indoor slippers may be used for comfort and warmth.

**Generosity Yoga – Leave No Trace** - Our Centre is run strictly by a minimal number of staff and volunteers and we rely on those staying at the Centre to help maintain the cleanliness of our buildings and property. We ask that guests adopt a 'leave no trace' practice and be mindful of tidying up after themselves so that the cleanliness of all common spaces and rooms can be maintained and enjoyed by those that follow. All retreatants are required to complete a daily work-as-practice-period as health permits. When you arrive, the

Retreat Administrator will assign each person a *Generosity Yoga* tasks.

**Leaving Property During Retreat** - In most cases, there should be no reason for a retreatant to leave the property during retreat, nor is it advised. Always notify the teacher if you must leave for any reason or if your activities are going to deviate in any way from the course schedule. If there is no teacher on site, please see the Retreat Administrator regarding your whereabouts. The Centre is located on 400 acres and we would like to know that no one has wandered off and become lost.

**Vehicle Use During Retreat** - Driving through the property while retreats are in session is not permitted except in cases where people have severe mobility or other health issues. Upon arrival and departure only, you may take your vehicle to your room or cabin to load and unload your baggage, but you are required to leave your car in the parking lot near the main house during the retreat.

**Cell phones** - We expect that when people come to the Dharma Centre they are coming for quiet retreat and meditation. Please ensure that the cares of daily life have been addressed and left behind for the period of time that you are here. Cell coverage is minimal on the property. If you need to make an important call and you have no coverage, please see the Retreat Administrator.

### **DANA – THE PRINCIPLE OF GENEROSITY**

The majority of teachers who lead retreats here do not receive any remuneration from the Dharma Centre. As such they rely upon the generosity of their students.

For those teachers relying upon their students' generosity, there is a Dana bowl in the foyer of the Main House. There are envelopes provided for cash or cheques. In some cases cheques may be written to the teacher directly but in most cases cash is preferred.

Dana bowls for staff and general donations to the Centre are also located in the main house foyer.

### **FACILITIES**

**Rooms** - Room assignments are given at the time of registration. Please care for your room while on property. If you are not in your room in the day or need the windows open, please adjust heat accordingly. Clean your room upon departure, including sweeping, dusting and removing garbage as consideration for the next retreatant. Please do not lock your room from the outside.

**Temple** - Classes are held in our Temple. We request that all retreatants enter through the mud room, around the back and down the stairs, so as not to track dirt inside, and coats and shoes can be left there. Outside of class times we ask that meditators be mindful that some retreatants have accommodations downstairs and will be in silence. The temple runs on a set heating and air ventilation system which should only be adjusted by designated members of staff.

**Library** - We have an extensive library at the Dharma Centre. For those whose retreat does not restrict reading, you are welcome to enjoy them, however, we ask that books are not taken out of the main building. There are books to purchase in the main foyer.

**Food** – All communal meals are served in our main house dining hall. Each retreatant is responsible for washing his/her own dishes and cutlery. A conch shell is blown at mealtime. Please be on time for meals and considerate when helping yourself to your portion of food. Even if you prefer certain foods please be mindful that others may also wish to have an opportunity to enjoy all that is being offered. The kitchen is in active use between meal times and entrance is not permitted when the doors are closed. There is a small area in the dining hall where you can prepare a hot drink or have a peanut butter sandwich outside mealtimes if needed. Please note there may be speech and activity in the main house if you come outside mealtimes as staff are working there. If you prefer a silent place to enjoy a snack you can make use of our tea house.

**Water** - All of our water is well water and is regularly tested and is drinkable at all locations. Reverse osmosis filtered water is available in the kitchen and can be accessed during meal times.

**Tea House** - The Tea House is open 24/7 for retreatants to help themselves to tea or coffee. There is a full kitchen for retreatants who choose to bring and prepare their own meals. Please make sure to tidy up after yourself and keep all foods safely stored away in the fridge or closed containers.

**Washrooms and showers**- There are showers and flush toilets available at our Bath House and Hermitage, as well as a toilet in the Temple. The Temple and Hermitage also have outhouses nearby. Please make use of them. All cabins have an outhouse located in close proximity. The toilet in the main house is reserved for staff.

**Laundry** - A washer and dryer are located in the bathhouse basement. For long retreats, a schedule is posted in the main house. Please sign up in a time slot and then be mindful to use and complete laundry in that time.

## OUR LAND

**Trails** - Our trails are indicated with wooden signs visible from the main paths, and the trails are marked with orange ribbons tied to the trees. Please be mindful of staying on the paths, as it is very easy to get lost. If you intend to go for an extended hike on our trails, it is advisable to let someone know or have a companion with you.

**Boat Usage** - Please inform the Retreat Administrator before taking the canoe or kayak. Life jackets must be worn and only experienced canoeists should embark on an outing.

**Wildlife** - We request that all retreatants respect nature by not interacting or interfering with animals. Never feed or try to encourage animals to come near you or the buildings. Respect and admire them from a distance. **Black bears** sometimes travel across our property. Black bears, in general, are often afraid of humans and do not pose a great risk. However caution and respect are advised. Never, under any circumstances, try to feed or interact with bears in any way. If you encounter a bear, never run away. To avoid startling bears, make noise such as quiet hand clapping or shuffling your feet. Please do not keep food in your rooms or while walking in the woods. Leave any toiletries with candy-like smells (ie: toothpaste) in the bathhouse. **Wolves** or **Coyotes** are sometimes roaming the forest. They are primarily active at night, extremely

wary of humans and not aggressive toward them by nature. Should you encounter a wolf or coyote never approach, turn your back or run from it. Make yourself tall, wave your hands and make loud noises while slowly backing away. Avoid showing any signs of fear or panic and always carry a flashlight at night.

**Mosquitoes, bugs and ticks** – From mid May until mid September each year we experience high insect activity as part of our ecosystem. Some insects can carry and transmit diseases such as a mosquito-borne virus infection or Lyme disease carried by certain species of tick. To protect yourself please bring long, light colored clothing, closed shoes and socks, bug hat and/or bug jacket and a good repellent. Check yourself once a day thoroughly for ticks and avoid walking through high grass with shorts or open toed shoes. If you have been bitten and are concerned please speak to the Retreat Administrator. As a general rule a tick bite only poses a risk if the tick is attached to the skin for more than 24 hours.

## SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

Retreatants are responsible for conducting themselves in such a way that they do not pose a potential risk to themselves or others. Be mindful of your surroundings at all times and exercise caution when walking in the woods.

**Fire Extinguishers** - To prevent fire, we ask all retreatants not to burn incense or candles in their rooms. While on site, retreatants are asked to note the location and type of fire extinguishers in the communal buildings and your rooms and review the instructions for using them. Our fire extinguishers are all checked annually.

**Emergencies** - For all serious emergencies (gas, hydro, fire, first aid & criminal) get to the nearest phone and **call 911 immediately**. After calling 911, please see the Administrator. The onsite teacher or teacher's designate must also be alerted in cases of first aid or criminal activity regarding retreatants on group retreat.

Please give out our number if you need to get any emergency messages.

**Dharma Centre Phones:** 705 488 2704  
866 266 0966  
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