

FWBO Young People weekend conversation cafe

October 2009

Three questions to discuss:

- ❖ What is it about the FWBO that inspires your practice?
- ❖ Where is your radical edge?
- ❖ What do you want to make happen in the FWBO?

Three questions to report back:

- What are the DOMINANT THEMES that have emerged for you?
- What DISCOVERIES have you made?
- What would you like to EXPLORE FURTHER?

What are the DOMINANT THEMES that have emerged for you?

(replies grouped into 5)

1. **Collective practice**
2. **Individual practice**
3. **Valuing what we have**
4. **Identifying what's missing**
5. **Taking initiative**



Collective practice

- The vital role of Kalyana Mitrata IIIII - The depth and substance of friendship; the importance of sangha and peer friendship
- Actively being part of the Sangha - Sangha is the anchor of the FWBO
- Commitment, attendance, and enthusiasm are important
- The importance of 'just being there' - being present at Sangha activities
- The opportunity to shape the role of the Buddhist centre by taking a lead - The need for young people to keep a high profile and to be involved as much as possible
- Commitment to institutions offers opportunity to others
- The need to put compassion into practice - Metta is active not passive
- The importance of creating sangha II
- The importance of encouraging people
- The need to inspire young people for the first time - but also to keep them inspired , and my role in this in my Sangha
- The power of community (especially for young people) - The importance of living and working together
- Involvement in the Centre can further my practice
- Involvement in Right Livelihood and community living can further my practice
- Everyone has a lot to offer individually - collectively this could be very powerful!
- Working together to build new institutions
- The diversity of enthused young people
- Spiritual friendship needs to be practical eg TBRL, communities, schools, care homes
- Hierarchies and systems

Individual practice

- Youth and urgency II

- A desire to stay in touch with, develop, and live from the radical vision of possibilities the Dharma presents - Ever deeper confidence in continuing to live a full-time Dharma life
- Taking risks and daring to dream - It's good to DREAM...
- I can always be more radical - go beyond myself - I can take responsibility for change
- Commitment - how much is enough? Can I be more radical?
- The need to go beyond my ego to help others - Altruism and a desire to give more - Being inspired to be radical by seeing suffering
- The need to act on my inspiration and creativity - Having a vision - then aiming for it!
- Ethics
- Responsibility II
- Excitement
- Sraddha
- Bodhicitta
- Renunciation II
- Coming out as a Buddhist - so people associate my ethics and positivity with Buddhism
- Choice and commitment
- The realisation that if you don't make a choice of lifestyle it's likely to be made for you
- The need to know what you want
- Taking chances
- Staying in touch with one's awkwardness and self-consciousness is important to growth
- Not allowing fear to box me in - Feel the fear and do it anyway

Valuing what we have

- How RADICAL practicing the Dharma really is! Living Buddhism and the Dharma - Dharma makes us happy...
- How much I appreciate the FWBO for cutting through cultural encrustations to what is really important - How radical the FWBO is - People appreciate the FWBO - There is so much in the FWBO to engage with and so many opportunities to be creative - What we are doing is radical - in ethical practice, spiritual friendship, TBRL, community living
- The FWBO as a 'safe space'
- The importance of Sangha - The joy of Sangha
- Committed practitioners inspire - People already in the Sangha are inspirational figures
- Metta is radical II
- Friendships
- Gratitude II
- Bhante II
- The Dana Economy

Identifying what's missing

- Training for young people in the FWBO III
- The importance of specific training situations for young Buddhists - intense and full-on!
- The need for Right Livelihood and Community Living IIII
- Like attracts like - the benefits of building a young Sangha
- Making sure 'older' Buddhists are available to newer Buddhists for KM, exploring the possibility of an experienced OM responsible for younger Buddhists at a Centre, directing their studies and practice, a point of reference!
- The need for exciting and radically ways to get young people involved/inspired
- Not confusing commitment and maturity in relation to young people's ordination requests/involvement
- Full integration of people of all ages, key word = support, internal and external, from many sources

Taking initiative

- Empowering young people at FWBO centres
- To push the 'young people's initiative internationally - Wanting to connect and establish a young FWBO Sangha. The future - realising the importance of the 'second wave' - To continue to meet
- Outreach to young people
- Reaching out to young children
- Reaching out to the community - using skills from the sangha and collaborating
- Communities
- New Centres
- TBRL
- Exploring ways to pursue my vocation but with Buddhist co-workers

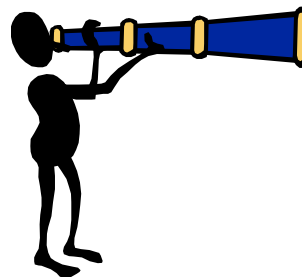
What DISCOVERIES have you made?

- Lots of people feel the same as me! We all have similar experiences and aspirations - I'm not that strange! People are inspired by and enjoy similar (if not the same) things as me. I'm not the only idealistic, enthusiastic, and committed radical in the world - he he he!
- Other people find the lack of young people hard too.
- Other people find the drinking culture hard too.
- There are many people out there devoting their lives to the Dharma!
- There's enthusiastic and committed young people at other centres. III
- Lots of others are wanting to live a Dharma life more whole-heartedly - TBRL, community...
- The importance and urgency of encouraging other young people
- Young people are very inspired by the Dharma
- People are inspired by much the same things - friendship - community - commitment - renunciation - sangha...
- We're already doing it! (Doing it = acting out our beliefs)
- People need different approaches and are in different places
- Lots of Energy! Even more Enthusiasm! It's an exciting time with lots of opportunities.
- There's people keen to start a women's community in Sheffield
- I need to go for it and not waste time. Life is too short - wake up!
- Much more can be done together! The power of spiritual community. A supportive sangha goes a long way. Sangha is everything. It's Sangha that inspires people.
- The importance of being present and caring for your peers.
- I need to do more than just practice if the FWBO is to be a place to live in. I have to change me and my life and get into action in my Sangha and bring my vision to truth...
- Age and nationality are not hindrances to the understanding the Buddhist path
- Bhante is deeply appreciated.
- An appreciation of the wider FWBO beyond our direct experience
- Being radical is good! Being radical is possible for me. I am radical. Commitment is key.
- Other people want to live the radical life... start now - we have the potential to create big change - very exciting III
- The FWBO is radical.
- Some people are wary of the term 'radical'.
- Tells OMs that we want training. Agitate! Stir up things!
- Full-time commitment to the Dharma life is a rich opportunity
- Inspiration comes through discussion with others who have inspiration
- These weekends (with other young people) are important to keep practice alive
- Clarity and self-belief, inspiration and ideas for the future



What would you like to EXPLORE FURTHER?

(replies grouped into 5)



Running activities at your Centre

- Specific/practical projects and how to make them real II
- What activities do we need to do - what do we like? II
- How we can inspire each other?
- What are the conditions to bring about energetic, vibrant centres/situations?
- Specific tips for attracting new people eg advertising, interesting events...
- What REALLY attracts young people to Dharma? What attracted us? How can we do more of it?
- How to encourage more young people to start meditating?
- What are the differences between different centres?
- Explore the reason (in a positive way) we don't have many young people

UK-wide young persons' Kula and Sangha events

- Weekend retreats for young people III
- Other events for young people - at Centres, Retreat Centres, internationally...
- Promoting events for young people at centres
- What would be the role of a young persons' facilitator?
- How can we establish an FWBO Young Persons' sangha? Do we want to? II
- Should there be an age limit on 'Young Persons' activities? And if so, what?
- Establish a Core Team of people to run young persons' activities
- How can we stay in contact with one another and support one another?
- Create a young persons' team at the International Retreat in May next year

Right Livelihood

- Karuna appeals
- Is there help available to set up new right livelihoods? The Development Team?
- Building the New Society. Explore radical approaches.
- Explore Right Livelihood II How to make TBRLs enjoyable as well as ethical? How to make them interesting and exciting for young people?
- Create a RL helping very disadvantaged children and young people
- What are the options for people wanting to work full-time as a Buddhist? For community living?

Training

- Training in the Dharma IIII
- Training for teaching the Dharma II
- Full time Dharma life and training III How to live as a full-time member of the FWBO? How to live the Dharma life? How to practice in the modern world?
- How to ensure people get the training and support they need?
- Explore how people would like to be trained

Lifestyle

- Explore renunciation
- Explore how people make lifestyle choices
- Help people be clear about the implications of their life choices
- Get to know more about others' life choices, their practice and spiritual visions...
- How can I take my practice of the Dharma further AND have a vocation and a family...?
- Explore what Effective GFR means for someone at a young age
- Explore what first inspired people to start meditation etc - and what sustains them when the going gets tough