

Louisville Vipassana Community Guidelines for Practice

The Louisville Vipassana Community welcomes those who come in good faith to practice insight meditation, to support and be supported by like-minded persons.

Location

- LVC meets Monday evenings at Clifton Unitarian Church, 2231 Payne Street, just one block east of the Clifton Center. Street parking is available.
- Please enter through the side entrance on Rastetter Ave.
- The space used as a meditation room is the church sanctuary, which is at the top of the stairs.

Orientation for Newcomers

- All newcomers are asked to arrive at 6 p.m. to attend a basic instruction and orientation session before regular practice begins.

Arrival

- All who attend are encouraged to arrive by 6:15 in order to find a place to sit and settle in.
- The outside door is locked at 6:30 to avoid interruptions once practice has begun, and to alleviate concerns about the security of personal belongings.
- Because the integrity of the group is so vital to practice, it is expected that those who attend will remain for the duration of the evening. Please let the leader know before practice begins if you must leave early.

Weekly Practice Schedule

- A forty-five minute sitting begins at 6:30 after chanting the taking of the three refuges. Generally, instruction is not offered during the sitting time.
- The sitting is followed by a group walking practice of 10-20 minutes.
- The dharma talk follows the walking practice and generally lasts 20-30 minutes.
- After the dharma talk, we sometimes close with a brief metta (lovingkindness) meditation.
- Those wishing to do so may stay for a brief period after practice for questions or reflections, with the evening ending by 8:15.

Maintaining the Sacred Space:

- Nurturing an atmosphere of safety and trust is essential for the functioning of the group.
- Please leave shoes, purses, water bottles, coats and other belongings in the room next to the meditation room.
- TURN CELL PHONES OFF and leave them in the room next to the meditation room.
- Please attend to personal needs prior to sitting periods in order to avoid leaving and entering during the sitting.
- If you must leave during the sit, please wait quietly in the basement or next room, and rejoin the group for walking practice.
- The meditation circle should be used only for sitting. Please don't use the space inside the circle for yoga, walking practice, lying down, or other purposes.

Silence

- Noble silence is a key element of the Vipassana practice. It begins upon entering the meditation room and is maintained for the duration of practice, chanting excepted.
- Most of us have few opportunities to experience silence, and even fewer for sharing silence with others; please honor the gift of silence for yourself and your fellow practitioners.
- Unless a special group activity replaces the dharma talk, please continue to maintain noble silence during and after the talk, until the closing bell is rung.
 - It can be natural to have a spontaneous response of laughter on occasion when listening to a dharma talk, but please refrain from asking questions, making comments, or attempting to engage in a dialogue with the teacher.
 - There is usually an opportunity after the close of practice for questions or reflections, before the group breaks to leave. Glenda also welcomes individual questions after practice, as well as offering the option to schedule individual meeting time with her before weekly practice. A sign up sheet for this purpose is found on the piano.
 - We are conditioned to respond when others are speaking, and to automatically interject our reactions to create a conversation. However, the dharma talk itself is a further opportunity to practice mindfulness and to observe our own experience while also observing silence.
- We encourage that a mindful posture be maintained during the dharma talk.

Walking Practice Guidelines

- Walking practice is not a break, but a continuation of mindfulness practice.
- Walking practice maintains mindfulness of the body, but moves the object of attention to the feet, legs, or anywhere in the body where the motion is experienced.
- The designated leader sets the pace for the walk.
 - Some walks are slower and others are faster.
 - You may choose to walk slower or faster when you do individual walking practice at home. However, during a group walk, please respect the pace that is set. An important aspect of the practice is surrendering to the pace that is set by the leader.
- Be mindful of the distance between yourself and the person in front of you and maintain a space of about three feet. Please do not lag behind the person in front of you.
- If you experience physical limitations and prefer not to participate in the walking practice downstairs, please use the time for additional sitting or walking practice in the meditation room.

Social Opportunities

- From time to time, the group may set aside time outside of practice for socializing, such as after-practice snacks, a potluck supper, or a movie night.
- While meditation can be therapeutic, it is important to recognize that a meditation group is not intended to provide personal counseling, formal therapy, or guidance on specific interpersonal issues.

