

# Five Points for Supporting Young People as an Order Member

## 1. Be confident

- You've got a lot to offer ... if practice were your day job, you'd have an impressive CV!
- Exemplification – young people are hunting for people to look up to.
- Don't worry too much about 'what young people want' (*or what think they want!*), we're offering something radical – the Dharma is what people really need.

## 2. Take them seriously

- Give them the Dharma – other places are much better at offering 'other stuff' anyway.
- Be visionary in the way you teach – they can take it! Be uncompromising.
- Take note of talks Bhante gave, in those early days he was often addressing captivated young people. Try Bhante-like titles for events, e.g. *The Taste of Freedom*.

## 3. Go to them

- It will be hard for them to approach you – so go to them!
  - Make it official if it helps, for example meditation reviews for young people.
- Invite them into the flow of Kalyana Mitrata. Prioritise them over others.
- You don't need to 'understand young people' or 'know what music the kids listen to these days'. Talk about life, the universe, everything. Reveal yourself, befriend them.

## 4. Give them responsibility (fast)

- Get them involved in something quickly, for example tea making and reception.
- Support them to start / run / teach at young people's class.
  - Let them steer the project, teach meditation etc. They need to feel like they have something significant to do, they need to be able to make *real* mistakes.
  - It is a risk to give responsibility ... but the bigger hidden risk is *no young people*.
  - Guard risks through active friendship/mentorship. You can strongly and positively influence them without taking away their initiative.

## 5. Work together

- Look to the centres where young people are engaging. Learn from them. Be humble.
- Get young people to support your retreats/courses... work with them on projects.
- Share with them that that you are part of something bigger (such as events online / Sub30 retreats etc) – this is important if your Centre doesn't have many young people.

*Bonus point...*

### **Don't spend too long talking about what to do – just do something...**

- One thing to look out for is becoming slow, meeting heavy, settled institutions – so that needs fighting:
  - Start a project, put on an event. Eventually the rest of your local order will follow you. Young people are exciting – they'll provide attraction and energy!
  - It's a slow road ... Sub25 classes at the LBC took almost two years to really get going (with ten years of Sub35 before that) – so keep at it!