

## Current COVID-19 Precautions for Western Chan Fellowship Retreats (updated May 1<sup>st</sup> 2023)

Please ensure you are happy with the retreat procedures set out below **BEFORE** you book. If you book on a retreat we take that as your consent to abide by these guidelines.

### **Before booking:**

There is always going to be a level of COVID-19 risk when mixing in close physical proximity with others for a week in a residential situation, so the first thing is to check whether you feel able and ready to come on retreat, bearing in mind the wellbeing of yourself and others.

No residential retreat can be set up to be totally safe or COVID-19 risk free. If you are or feel vulnerable, this may not be the best time to book on a residential retreat.

To help keep everyone attending a retreat as safe as possible we aim to reduce the risk of introduction of COVID-19 to a retreat, or if this occurred then to reduce the risk of transmission between those present.

### **Before arriving:**

Please take a lateral flow test within the 24 hours before arriving at your retreat. If the test is positive, do not travel but let us know you are unable to attend, and remain at home and self-isolate. (The one exception to this requirement is if you have had a recent confirmed COVID-19 infection, more than ten days ago but less than 8 weeks ago. In this case a positive test is not considered a sign of active/ongoing infection and there is no need to do a test before travelling to retreat).

Please bring more lateral flow tests with you for use during the retreat. We will all do a test on the second day of the retreat and further tests may be required after that (see below – 'Further testing during your retreat'). One test for each day may be required, so for a 7 day retreat bring 7 tests.

Lateral flow tests are available for a small charge. You can order them online or buy them in pharmacies.

Please get in touch with us and **DO NOT ATTEND** the retreat at the time your retreat commences if:

1. You have tested positive for COVID-19 **OR**
2. You are a household or overnight contact of someone who has had a positive COVID-19 test result within the 10 days prior to the retreat. This is due to the high risk of this contact resulting in transmission of infection. It may take up to 10 days for the infection to develop and it is possible to pass on COVID-19 to others, even if you have no symptoms **OR**
3. If you have any symptoms of COVID-19. Symptoms of COVID-19, flu and common respiratory infections include:

- continuous cough
- high temperature, fever or chills
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell
- shortness of breath
- unexplained tiredness, lack of energy
- muscle aches or pains that are not due to exercise
- not wanting to eat or not feeling hungry
- headache that is unusual or longer lasting than usual
- sore throat, stuffy or runny nose
- diarrhoea, feeling sick or being sick

### **Cancellation terms and conditions**

Your retreat fee will be refunded if you find it necessary to cancel your booking for one of the following reasons:

- you, or someone in your household, have had a positive test result for COVID-19 in the last 10 days
- you have one or more of the symptoms in the above list

If any of the retreat staff are unable to attend due to COVID-19 related reasons the retreat may be cancelled and in this event your retreat fee will be refunded.

Otherwise our [standard cancellation terms and conditions](#) apply.

### **Covid-19 precautions during your retreat**

Retreats are communal events. You will be sharing bedrooms, showers/bathrooms, kitchen, dining and living spaces as well as the meditation hall. You will also need to work together with others on the retreat during work practice. In order to reduce the risk of infection the following precautions will be taken in all areas:

**Ventilation:** Good ventilation has been shown to be very important in minimising the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Therefore, please bring plenty of warm layers with you as rooms will be well ventilated throughout the day and night even if the temperatures are cool outside.

**Social Distancing:** So far as is practical in a communal event please reduce close contact and allow more space when moving around.

**Hand washing/sanitising:** You will need to wash or sanitise your hands regularly throughout the day especially before making drinks and serving food. Hand sanitisers will be placed throughout the centre.

**Face Masks:** We are no longer requiring the wearing of face masks on most retreats. However you are welcome to wear a face mask at any time if you prefer to do so – please bring your own supply with you.

Also, face masks may be required if someone develops signs of infection during a retreat, in order to reduce the spread of infection through the retreat (see next section).

### **Further testing during your retreat**

On day 2 (e.g. Monday of a 7 night retreat starting on Saturday) everyone will need to take a second lateral flow test. The test will be done during the morning.

If anyone tests positive on day 2 or any other day, they will need to self-isolate and leave the retreat as soon as possible. Other retreatants will be able to continue the retreat but will need to wear face-masks while moving around in communal areas and when working in close proximity with others. This is in order to minimise the risk of transmission of COVID -19.

The remaining retreatants will need to test every day to check if they have developed COVID-19.

*Please bring enough tests and face masks with you to cover this eventuality.*

### **What if I become ill with COVID-19 symptoms while on retreat?**

If you become ill with any COVID-19 symptoms you must let the retreat team know immediately. You will need to self-isolate in a specified room while making arrangements to leave the retreat as soon as possible. i.e. by driving yourself home, by arranging for someone to come and collect you, or by using public transport if private transport is not available to you.

*Western Chan Fellowship may update these precautions and requirements without notice in the event of changes in government rules or guidelines or in the severity of the pandemic. The updated precautions and requirements will be those applicable to the retreat and will apply even if you made your booking under the earlier provisions. If the level of restrictions increase we may need to cancel the retreat. If this occurs, full refunds of retreat fees will be given.*