



Triratna Young



Buddhists



young people in the Triratna
Buddhist Community



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Triratna Young Buddhists: Who, Why, What Next?

Who?

In 2008 the Development Team, responding to the lack of young adults entering our community, ran a weekend exploring how to inspire more young adults in the Dharma. Out of that weekend the Triratna Young Buddhists' project emerged, with the setting up of activities specifically for young adults facilitated by young Mitras and Order Members.

The project has grown significantly over the last 6 years with Young Buddhists' activities now thriving at many of our centres (see page 4 for a list of events) and with annual single sex and mixed retreats. Our annual large mixed retreat, now at Adhithana, is an inspiring event at the heart of the project. To help further this project in March 2014 Singhamati became Triratna Young Persons' Coordinator, working in the Development Team and funded by the European Chairs Assembly.

Why?

In February 2014 Singhamati undertook some research exploring: why is the Triratna Young Buddhists' project important and how could we better attract and support young adults to go deeper in Triratna? Here are some of the results of this research which included: 3 focus groups, 5 interviews and an extensive online survey of 250 young adults (18-35) who have had some contact with Triratna.

"I might not have stuck around if it wasn't for contact with young people, it made all the difference." 73% of those surveyed attend Young Buddhists' activities, a great reflection of the growth, success and popularity of Young Buddhists' events.

So why are they important?

Young Buddhists' events provide a place for **friendships** to form and offer an **alternative social contact** which is essential to going deeper: *"if there wasn't a community of young people, I don't think I would be as far down the path as I am, because I would have stayed with my old friends and way of life, rather than developing friends and my practice in the Sangha."*



Exploring the Dharma with other people at the same stage in life is important: *“the topics discussed at Young Buddhists’ events seem different, more relevant”.*

Young Buddhists’ activities, led by committed young Buddhists’, are invaluable in **helping young people commit to practicing the Dharma**: *“things really took off when I met young Order Members as I saw it was for young people too”.*

Increasingly Young Buddhists’ activities are **attracting new young people** to Triratna: *“I started going to other Buddhist groups but the people were all much older. Then I heard about the Young Buddhists and the prospect of younger people I could share life ideas with is what drew me here.”*

The Young Buddhists’ project is **helping young people go deeper**, with a visible increase in the number of young Mitras and GFR Mitras since the beginning of the project and 90% of those surveyed saying they felt they had gone deeper. It is **adding to the life of the main Sangha**, rather than creating a separate young Sangha, with 90% of those going to the centre regularly attending both Young Buddhists’ activities and other Sangha events. It also enables young Mitras to **work together and contribute** through facilitating events for young people.

What Next for Attracting and Supporting Young People?

The research identified a range of projects that would be beneficial including:

- more events for young people and engaging projects and right livelihoods
- increasing the visibility of young Buddhists through: them working or supporting events at our centres; and through going out to places where young people are, such as festivals, universities etc
- developing material on Buddhism aimed at the younger generation
- events for 16-25 year olds, including summer holiday and gap year projects.

For further information about this research or Triratna Young Buddhists contact Singhamati at youngtriratna@gmail.com

Monthly Young Buddhists' events around Europe

Birmingham

First Friday 19.30-22.00: meditation, talk, discussion; open to all aged 18-35
Third Sunday 18.00-21.00: women's group for all women aged 18-35
www.birminghambuddhistcentre.org.uk/?page_id=859

Brighton

Last Friday 19.30-22.00: meditation, talk, discussion; open to all aged 18-39
www.brightonbuddhistcentre.co.uk/other-activities/young-buddhist-sangha/

Cambridge

First Thursday 19.30-22.00: meditation, talk, discussion; open to all aged 18-39
www.cambridgebuddhistcentre.com/community/sig.php?gid=19

Cardiff

Fortnightly on Friday 19.30-22.00 and Sunday 10.00-13.30: meditation, talks, discussion; open to regulars aged 18-35
www.cardiffbuddhistcentre.com/sangha/younger-sangha/

Colchester

Third Saturday 19.30-22.00: meditation, discussion; open to all aged 18-39
www.colchesterbuddhistcentre.com/classes.php

Essen

First Sunday 16.30-19.00: meditation, discussion; open to all aged 16-35
<http://www.buddhistisches-zentrum-essen.de/ueber-uns/young-people.html>

Ghent

Regular events: open to all aged 18-35
http://triratna.be/?page_id=104

London

First Friday 19.15-21.45: meditation, talk, discussion; open to all under 35
Second Saturday 10.00-16.30: practice day for regulars under 35
Last Friday 19.15-21.45: men's and women's classes for regulars under 35
www.lbc.org.uk/YP.htm

Leeds

Monthly meetings on a variable day: for regulars aged 18-39

Manchester

First Friday 19.00-21.30: practice eve
Third Friday 19.00-21.30: Dharma study
Both are for regulars aged 18-40
www.manchesterbuddhistcentre.org.uk/sangha/children-and-families

Norwich

First Sunday 16.30-18.30: beginners and regulars groups for those aged 16-35
Third Saturday 16.30-18.30: Lion's Roar study or younger Sangha meets an Order Member, both for regulars 16-35
www.norwichbuddhistcentre.com/youngbuddhists/

Sheffield

First Saturday 19.30-21.45: Pali Canon study; open to those who've attended an intro course aged 18-39
www.sheffieldbuddhistcentre.org/events/sheffield-younger-sangha-events-13/

Stockholm

Last Saturday 13.00-15.30: meditation, talk, discussion; open to all aged 15-35
<http://stockholmsbuddhistcenter.se/Buddhism/ung-buddhist.html>