

# **Understanding Buddhist Etiquette (How We Behave)**

## **Welcome to Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre**

The centre is a place for all to learn Buddhist meditation and the teachings of the Buddha.

You may notice that people attending the centre observe some forms of etiquette, or ways of behaving. If you are new to our centre then here is a guide to help you to join in.

### **Greeting**

One of the ways that Buddhists show respect to each other is by holding the palms together near the chest and slightly lowering the head, when greeting one another or saying thank you.

### **Bowing During Chanting**

You may observe people bowing three times. To bow or lower the head below that of another is a form of humility and the cultivation of humility is a Buddhist virtue.

During the act of bowing, one recollects the Buddha (the embodiment of Wisdom and Compassion), the Dhamma (the Teachings of the Buddha and its benefits, e.g. peace and harmony) and the Sangha (the community of monks and nuns).

### **Meeting Monks and Nuns**

Theravada Buddhist monks and nuns are bound by precepts and do not have direct physical contact with the opposite gender. If you wish to offer something to them you can place it within their reach to accept. It is also customary to place the item on a cloth held by the monk or nun, so they can accept and acknowledge the offering.

### **Shoes**

It is customary to remove shoes before entering Buddhist buildings (socks, stockings and the like are acceptable).

### **Pets**

No dogs or other pets in the buildings please (guide dogs excepted).

### **Be Peaceful**

Should you need to leave the hall during a meditation session or a talk, please do so as quietly as possible.

### **Dress Code**

For meditation, comfortable and loose clothing is recommended. Dressing in a modest way is a gesture of respect for the monks and nuns. In a Buddhist temple the principle is that your clothes should not draw attention to yourself.

### **Sitting during meditations and talks**

During a Dhamma talk by a monk or nun, or during meditation, it is respectful to sit upright, with feet folded underneath you, but in a comfortable position. It is not considered polite to have the soles of your feet facing the speaker – feet should be turned away. If you are uncomfortable in a normal meditation position, you can sit with your feet to the side, or behind you, or sit on a chair.

Enjoy your visit and be happy.

May you be peaceful and happy, and may your life be filled with joy and contentment. Come and visit with us regularly, check out our calendar and join in with our many activities.