



# A Survey of the Western Buddhist Order

## **Introduction**

Thank you for giving some of your time to this survey of the Order. This is the first time since 1985 that we have tried to produce a systematic survey of our community - who we are and how we live our lives.

The survey is in two parts. This part is wholly anonymous, ie your name will not be associated with your responses. The other part has your name attached, as it aims to create at least a partial directory of the vast collection of skills, interests, and experience that exists in the Order. They are on two separate pieces of paper and returnable to two separate addresses.

The questions have been developed in wide consultation, with the European Chairmen, Order Convenors, FWBO Development Team, Bhante, and others. It is being managed by Lokabandhu on behalf of the European Chairs and the Western Order Convenors. We have tried to balance 'multiple-choice' questions (easy to analyse) with open-ended questions where you can write what you like.

All the results will be made available on Sanghajala, the Order website, Shabda, and elsewhere as appropriate.

## **Filling it in:**

Please complete this on-line if at all possible - it's much easier for us to collate and you get more space for comments! The address is [www.survey.fwbo.org](http://www.survey.fwbo.org). You'll need a PIN number which will be emailed to you on or around 1/4/07; you can change this for security purposes. Computers for direct input should be available on the Order Convention and other Order events. If you can't go on-line by all means complete and post this form.



## **Questions:**

If you have any questions please see the FAQ on Sanghajala (under 'WBO/Survey FAQ'), or email [survey@fwbo.org](mailto:survey@fwbo.org).

**Return Address**

**Order Survey,  
c/o PO Box 4042  
Glastonbury  
Somerset  
BA6 9WE**

**--- UK ---**

Please note that everything you write in these pages is ANONYMOUS, ie, whatever you say will not be linked to your name. The idea is to build up a general but impersonal picture of how we in the Order live, work, practice, think, and feel.

## Your lifestyle & relationships...

### Mandala of Relationships

The Wikipedia entry on us says "the Order is, on one level, simply a network of friends committed to Dharma practice". This section is trying to build a picture of what our connections with other people look and feel like.

#### Dependants

Do you have dependants? (tick all that apply)  Children (how many under 18:.....)  Parents  Partner  Pets  Other  
 Do you expect to have (more) children in the future?  
 hope to  maybe  probably not  don't know  no  
 Do you expect to have other dependants in the future?  
 Parents  Other  probably not  no  don't know

#### Spiritual and other Friendships

How happy are you with your friendships in the Order/Movt?  
 very  fairly  not very  not happy  up&down  
 How are your friendships spread between inside and outside the Movement?  
 all inside  most inside  50-50  most outside  all outside  
 Do you feel new friendships are emerging for you?  
 In the Order?  yes  no  not sure  
 Elsewhere in the Sangha?  yes  no  not sure  
 Outside the Movement  yes  no  not sure

How well met is your need for 'vertical' friendship and/or spiritual guidance (eg from your KMs/Preceptors or other)?  
 very  fairly  not very  not at all  up&down  
 Are you happy with your chapter?  very  fairly  not very  
 not happy  not in one  don't know  
 Do you believe you could rely on the Sangha if you were in difficulties?  
 strongly yes  yes  no  strongly no  not sure

Are you confident the Sangha will care for you when you're old?  
 strongly yes  yes  no  strongly no  not sure  
 Is this a concern for you?  
 strongly yes  yes  no  strongly no  not sure

Do you feel you are in harmony in your chapter?  
 strongly yes  yes  no  strongly no  not in one  
 Would you say your best friends are in the Sangha?  
 strongly yes  yes  no  strongly no  not sure  
 Do you have any comments on any of the above? .....

#### Sexuality and sexual relationships

In the past 5 years have you generally practiced:  
 celibacy and/or chastity  settled monogamy  
 short-term monogamy (<1yr)  promiscuity  Other  
 How long have you been in your present sexual relationship? .....years (put 'n/a' if not in one)  
 Is he/she practicing with the FWBO?  yes  no  n/a  
 Are you married to your present partner?  
 yes  no, no plans to  no, but might get married in future  
 Are you living with your partner?  
 yes  no, no plans to  no, but might live together  n/a  
 Is your sexual preference to be with others of the:  
 opposite gender  same gender  
 either gender  other/none of the above

## Your practices and views

### What practices do you currently do?

Mark the appropriate letter to show how often you do each; then mark the number from 1-5 to show how satisfied you are with it as a practice for you.  
 1=very satisfied - 5= very dissatisfied; '?'= not sure; 'n/a'=not applicable

How often do you do: daily-weekly-monthly-rarely-never | satisfaction

- Any kind of Buddhist meditation d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Mindfulness of Breathing d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Metta Bhavana d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Just Sitting d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Pure Awareness (formless meditation) d-w-m-r-n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Dharma Reflection d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Sadhana visualisation d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Chant Refuges & Precepts d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Order Metta d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Seven-fold Puja d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Prostrations/Mula Yogas d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Confess to another person d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Report-in d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Consciously give money d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Go on retreat ..... times/year approx | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Bodywork (any kind) d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Read Bhante's books d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Read other Dharma teachers d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Read the sutras/suttas d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Engage in personal study d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Engage in group study d--w--m--r--n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a
- Receive Dharma teaching o/s Order d-w-m-r-n | 1-2-3-4-5-?-n/a

Other (please specify): .....  
 How satisfied are you that your meditation practice is effective?  very  fairly  not very  not at all  up&down  
 How satisfied are you your understanding of the Dharma is deepening?  very  fairly  not very  not at all  up&down

#### Bhante and his teaching

Some of Bhante's key ideas and teachings are listed below.  
 Which do you subscribe to? strongly yes -yes -no -strongly no-not sure

- GFR to 3 Jewels as defining a Buddhist sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- GFR as primary, lifestyle secondary sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- A single order/ordination for men and women sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- WBO manifesting 3<sup>rd</sup> Order of Consciousness sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Underlying unity of all schools of Buddhism sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Evolution Lower and Higher sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Spiritual Friendship central to spiritual life sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Value of art for the spiritual life sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Importance of positive institutions sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- An emphasis on the Three C's for the New Soc sy-- y --n --sn--?
- The 'System of Meditation' sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Notion of becoming a 'True Individual' sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- The value of Single-Sex Situations sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Movement as building the 'New Society' sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Need to move towards complete Brahmacharya sy -- y --n --sn--?
- Value of "therapeutic blasphemy" sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Women & men's different spiritual aptitudes sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Team-based RL as effective path to Insight sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- Experimentation as a Pillar of the FWBO sy -- y ---n ---sn--?
- An isolated OM is a contradiction in terms sy -- y ---n ---sn--?

Are there any other specific teachings by Bhante you'd like to comment on? Please say whether or not you subscribe to them .....

Do you have any specific disagreements with Bhante/his teaching? (please specify) .....

## Ethics and Altruism

### Ethical borderlines...

- Do you ever- *never -rarely -monthly -weekly -daily*
- Eat meat? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Eat fish? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Eat any dairy products? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Smoke cigarettes? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Drink alcohol? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Consume illegal drugs? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - View pornography? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Fudge declarations to avoid paying tax *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Knowingly break speed limits? *n-----r-----m-----w-----d*
  - Would you ever condone abortion?
    - no  yes in especial circumstances  yes  don't know
  - Would you ever condone euthanasia
    - no  yes in especial circumstances  yes  don't know

How many flights have you taken in the past year? (NB: return flight=2) .....long-haul business .....short-haul business  
 .....long-haul pleasure .....short-haul pleasure

Do you think the Order's ethical standards are falling?  
 strongly yes  yes  no  strongly no  not sure

Do you have any comments on any of these? .....

### How do you see yourself making a contribution to society and the world?

*Please mark as many as apply.*

- Domestic & work recycling  Good neighbourliness
- Environmental campaigns  Avoiding flying and car use
- Local politics  National politics
- Marches and demonstrations  Civil disobedience
- Local pressure groups  Fundraising for charity
- Giving to non-FWBO charities  Voluntary work
- My work/personal practice  Helping the Buddhist Centre
- By living in community  My practice of Dana
- My meditation practice  My ethical practice
- My meditation teaching  My Dharma teaching
- Simply being an Order Member  Simply being myself
- Regular voting  This area is not a priority for me

Other (please specify): .....

Do you belong to any political party?  yes  no

Are your political views generally  Left-wing  Right-wing  
 centrist  green  variable  don't know/none

Are you currently living away from yr native land?  yes  no

How often have you moved home over last 5 years? .....

Might you be interested in Dharma-Dhuta (outreach) work at some point in the future?

- almost certainly  maybe  probably not  definitely

What would make you more likely to take up such work?  
 .....

Do you feel confident to teach Dharma or meditation?

- very much  quite a lot  not much  little  up&down

Do you feel inspired to teach Dharma or meditation?

- very much  quite a lot  not much  little  up&down

### Livelihood and income

Where does your income come from?

- Professional work  Unskilled work  Spouse
- Unemployment benefits  Student grant  Pension
- FWBO employment  Disability benefits  Dana
- Private Income  Personal savings
- other (please specify) .....

## Your involvement in the Order

### Order gatherings & practices

Mark your actual engagement/attendance with each in the left-hand column and your satisfaction with them in the right-hand one. 1= attend as often as available/very satisfied; 5=never attend/very dissatisfied. n/a=not available

Are you a member of a chapter?  yes  no

If you have left one within the last year, can you say why?  
 .....

	attendance	/	satisfied
• Regular Chapter meetings	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?
• Regional Order weekends	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?
• National Order weekends	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?
• Order Conventions	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?
• Chapter weekends	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?
• Order-only retreats	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?
• Reading Shabda	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?
• Writing to Shabda	1-2-3-4-5-n/a	/	1-2-3-4-5-?

What needs of yours are met by your chapter?

*(tick all that apply, graded 1=fully met; 5=hardly met)*

- Emotional support when needed 1---2---3---4---5
- Self-disclosure/opportunity to confess 1---2---3---4---5
- Care for you when ill 1---2---3---4---5
- Deep friendship 1---2---3---4---5
- Feeling connected to the Order 1---2---3---4---5
- Having an impact on the Order 1---2---3---4---5
- Trusting you'd be helped financially in need 1--2--3--4--5
- Other (please specify) .....

### Resignation

Have you ever considered resigning from the Order?

- yes, this year  yes, in past  never

If yes, can you say why? .....

### Collective practice

How much do you value our coming together for collective practice?

- very much  quite a lot  not much  little  up&down

### Conflict

Do you consider yourself to be in conflict with any other

Order Member?  yes, this year  yes, in past  never

If so, would you consider using the Order Mediation Panel?

- yes  no  not sure  not been aware of it

### Decision-making in the Order

Are you happy with the present decision-making processes in the Order, as you understand them?

- very  fairly  not very  unhappy  unclear what are  unsure

Are you happy with the present working of the College of Public Preceptors, as you understand it?

- very  fairly  not very  unhappy  unclear what are  unsure

Are you happy with the present ordination processes as you understand them?

- very  fairly  not very  unhappy  unclear what are  unsure

Any comments on any of the above: .....

Would you be willing to contribute more to Order finances?

- very happy  fairly happy  not happy  very unhappy
- not sure, unclear what they are  yes, but not able to

## Your involvement in the FWBO

### Involvement in local FWBO Centre

In what ways are you involved (if at all) in your local FWBO Centre? (mark all that apply and the degree you're involved)

as often as possible—regularly—intermittently—rarely—never—not poss for me

- Teaching classes *aoap--reg--int--rare--never--xposs*
- Supporting classes *aoap--reg--int--rare--never--xposs*
- Financial contributions *aoap--reg--int--rare--never--xposs*
- Helping out in your spare time *aoap--reg--int--rare--never--xposs*
- Offering KM *aoap--reg--int--rare--never--xposs*
- Council membership *aoap--reg--int--rare--never--xposs*
- National FWBO projects *aoap--reg--int--rare--never--xposs*
- Other (please specify): .....

How often do you visit your nearest FWBO centre?

- daily  weekly  monthly  annually  never  isn't one

What's the travelling time to your nearest Centre?..... (hrs)

### Your involvement in the 'Three-C's'

Do you work in an FWBO team-based right-livelihood?

- Yes, full-time  Yes, part-time  No, never  No, but used to

If you still do, what motivates you to stay? (tick all that apply)

- working in a team of Buddhists  helping the Dharma and/or FWBO to flourish  doing work connected to your values  spiritual training  learning new skills/self-development  simplicity of lifestyle  raising dana for Bhante/the Movement  other (please specify below) Any other comments on this? .....

If you've left, what led you to leave? (tick all that apply)

- wanting more money  concern about security/pensions  wanting to develop career/skills  felt weren't learning anything new  no longer felt in tune with the vision of TBRL  wanted to do something not available in the FWBO  other (please specify below) Any other comments on this? .....

Have you lived in one or more of the FWBO's single-sex communities?  yes  only a little  never

If yes, and you've left, why did you most recently leave? .....

Do you feel you are moving towards more/less involvement with FWBO institutions?  more  less  no change  unsure

What are the principle factors inhibiting your greater involvement in 'the 3Cs'? .....

How do you think the Movement can best be described?

(eg: "we're a ..." or "it's like a ...") .....

How would you describe it as it was 10 years ago? .....

Do you want to feel your activity is a part of the Movement?

- strongly yes  yes  no  strongly no  unsure

Please add any comments, eg, how could you be helped to feel more part of it: .....

## Anonymous personal details

.Please complete this to help 'place' you within the Order. It's NOT a way to identify you. Circle one option per question as appropriate.

Gender: M / F

Age (approx): 20s / 30s / 40s / 50s / 60s / 70s / 80+

Years ordained: 0-2 / 2-5 / 5-10 / 10-20 / over 20

Living in: UK / Europe / USA / India / Aust-NZ / other

Nationality: .....

## Your personal Wealth & Health

What's your approx annual income? (including all 'perks')

- under UK£5k  5-15k  15-25k  25-50k  over £50k

How contented are you with your present income?

- very  fairly  not very  unhappy  very unhappy

Do you expect to receive any inheritance?

- yes-over £100k  yes-under £100k  don't know  no

Do you have a pension plan of any sort?

- yes-adequate  yes, but inadequate  don't know  no

Do you own a property?  yes  no  no, but want to

How is your general level of health?

- excellent  adequate  poor  very poor

Are you anxious about your economic or medical future?

- not anxious  sometimes  yes  very anxious

Do you regret any financial decisions you have taken during your time in the FWBO?  many  few  not sure  none

Any comments...? .....

## Open questions...

How important to you is it to identify yourself as a Buddhist?

- very  fairly  not very  not at all  up&down  don't know

What issues in the Order/Movement are of increasing concern to you? .....

What's the best/worst things to have happened in the Order or Movement in the last 5 years?

best: .....

worst: .....

What's your most-hoped-for development in the Order or Movement? .....

What do you feel is the most exciting project in the Order or Movement right now? .....

Do you have any comments on any other Order matter...? .....

What features of Bhante's teaching do you find particularly inspiring/try to live by? .....

What would most give you confidence in the future thriving of the Order and Movement? .....

What do you feel is your cutting edge? .....

What in your life most supports your practice? .....

Do you have any comments on this Survey, eg suggestions for analysis, or questions for next time...? .....

**the end: thank you**





### **Return Address**

**The Western Buddhist Order Directory Project,  
c/o Lokabandhu  
Bristol Buddhist Centre,  
162 Gloucester Road,  
Bristol  
BS7 8NT**

**--- UK ---**

# *The Western Buddhist Order's Directory of Inspirations, Interests, Activities, and Skills*

### **Introduction**

This section of the Survey is NOT anonymous. The intention is to build up a Directory of some of the vast collection of skills, interests, and experience that exists in the Order, and to share that as appropriate, either only within the Order or with all interested parties. The purpose is both to make visible and celebrate our breadth and diversity, also to make it easier to put like-minded people in contact.

The Directory will be made available on Sanghajala, the Order website, and elsewhere if individuals have indicated they are happy for their entries to be shared in this way. You can add or remove material at any time.

### **Filling it in:**

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### **Questions:**

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## Lifestyle and Livelihood

### Introduction

*This section is an opportunity to update your details on the Order Register. It is also adding some new fields to create the Directory – a way both to enable like-minded people to contact one another and to better make known our diversity. Please complete it as fully as you can. There's more room on the internet...!*

Name: .....  
 Nationality (eg, British) .....  
 Ethnicity (eg, Afro-Caribbean) .....  
 Languages spoken fluently .....  
 Languages spoken reasonably well .....

### Living situation *(tick whichever most apply; more than one if necessary)*

Are you living in a -  
 Single-sex FWBO community  Mixed FWBO cty  single person accommodation  
 Shared Buddhist house  Shared non-Bst house  I'm homeless  
 Living with partner  As a live-in carer  
 Parent living w/children  Parent - not living w/ children

### Livelihood

What is your current occupation/livelihood? :.....  
 .....

### Roles (if any) within F/WBO

Which of these 'hats' do you currently wear?  
 Mitra Convenor  Chapter Convenor  Chairman  
 Mitra study leader  Meditation teacher  Dharma teacher  Kalyana Mitra  
 Which of these 'hats' have you worn in the past but don't at present?  
 Mitra Convenor  Chapter Convenor  Chairman  
 Mitra study leader  Meditation teacher  Dharma teacher

## Order Benevolent Fund

Do you think there is a need for some sort of benevolent fund for Order Members in financial need, especially in the case of old age and sickness?  
 yes  no  not sure  
 Would you be willing to be contacted if it is decided to set up such a fund?  
 yes  no  
 Might you be interested in contributing -  
 regularly  by one-off donation  in my will  
 Might you be interested in applying to the Fund?  
 yes  no  not sure

## Inspiration, Interests, Activities and Skills

*Please write in as many as you like of your interests, activities and skills in the following categories. Please also mark whether you're willing for what you write to be shared only with the Order or made public in the planned Directory. (NB: there's much more room for comments on the Internet!)*

**Sharing**  
 Order-only   public

Sources of Dharmic inspiration (which teachers or schools of Buddhism do you draw most on for inspiration, and why):.....

Areas of social engagement (how do you choose to engage with the suffering in the world/try to be of benefit to the world?):.....

Artistic/Creative pursuits (do you practice or enjoy any form of art you'd like to share with others?):.....

Hobbies and passions (what else are you into? – never mind if it seems whacky...!):.....

Professional skills (including any medical/alternative health expertise): .

Medical/alternative health conditions (have you had to suffer any particular illness or medical condition you'd be willing to share your experience of with others?):.....

Countries you're familiar with/drawn to: .....

**DATA PROTECTION ACT:** Please note that this information will be stored on computer and may be made available to others according to the degree of consent you have given above.