

Guidelines for Serving as a Leader in The Eno River Buddhist Community

Leaders in the Eno River Buddhist Community (ERBC) serve the group in various roles, including acting as Practice Leaders, as members of the Guiding Committee, or as members of the Program Committee. Serving in these roles provides opportunities to offer time, energy and effort on behalf of ERBC and to experience the benefits that come with engaging in this work.

The guidelines listed below identify areas that the ERBC Guiding Committee believes will help individuals meet the challenges connected with serving as a leader in ERBC in ways that support the integrity and positive functioning of the group. We view involvement with the areas of study and practice included here as important for participation in leadership roles at ERBC. At the same time, we understand engaging with these areas to be a complex process that is likely to unfold in deeply personal ways.

The ERBC Guiding Committee requests that current and prospective leaders work with each of the following guidelines:

- *We ask that you attend our Monday evening or Saturday morning practice sessions regularly for six months before serving on the Guiding Committee, and that you are familiar with, and feel comfortable supporting, the ERBC mission statement.* Attending our group for six months allows you to develop a good understanding of our group's approach to the Dhamma and how well it fits with your path of practice.
- *We ask that you cultivate a regular meditation practice.* We understand meditation to be a central element of the Buddha's path that serves as a key means for developing experiential insight into the teachings. We've found that meditation practice also cultivates qualities that are valuable for serving skillfully in leadership roles, such as mindfulness, patience, and goodwill. The cultivation of meditation often unfolds for practitioners in ways that are personal and varied. We ask that ERBC leaders work to develop or maintain a regular meditation practice.
- *We ask you to engage with the Five Precepts in your everyday life.* We understand undertaking the precepts to be an essential element of the Buddha's path that serves as a key support for meditation and for skillful relations with others. At the same time, individuals necessarily work with the precepts in ways that vary from one person to the next. We believe undertaking the precepts does not require compliance with a rigid standard, but understand them as a training path that one refines over time. Our request is that ERBC leaders work with each of the areas addressed by the Five Precepts, sensitive to the intentions expressed in them. We also ask that, whenever attending ERBC sponsored activities, ERBC leaders observe the Five Precepts as practiced on retreat (with exceptions related to keeping silence when appropriate).
- *We ask that you have attended at least one multi-day Theravāda, or Vipassana (Insight Meditation) retreat.* We have found that retreat practice develops experiential understanding of the teachings and helps one understand the supports needed to create an

effective container for practicing in a group. Participating in meditation retreats can thus deepen your individual practice and your understanding of the teachings, and helps you support ERBC as practice community.

- *We ask that you develop your understanding of the Buddha's teachings through study.* This may take the form of study of the early Discourses, or of the writings or talks of contemporary teachers whose teaching is grounded in these sources. Regular study of this sort can provide inspiration for practice and deepen understanding of the Dhamma. It also helps ERBC leaders understand and support the mission of the group.
- *We ask that you be willing to cultivate service as an ERBC leader as a form of practice.* This includes applying qualities of mind developed during meditation practice, such as mindfulness and investigation, to the work we do in meetings and other settings. It also involves nurturing the intentions of letting go, good will, and compassion when engaging in leadership work.
- *We ask that you are familiar with and supportive of the mission of the Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (ERUUF) and the principles of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA).* ERBC is sponsored by ERUUF and carries out its activities in keeping with the mission of the Fellowship and the principles of the UUA.

Our intention in offering the above guidelines is to help leaders have a positive and satisfying experience while serving, to help them support our community and its mission, and to do so in a way that is in harmony with the Buddha Dhamma. We invite you to speak with members of the Guiding Committee if you have questions or concerns about these guidelines, about serving as a leader, or if you would like to learn about other avenues for offering service to ERBC. More information on serving as a Practice Leader, serving on the Guiding Committee, or on the Program Committee may be found in the ERBC guidelines for each group.

With gratitude for your interest in contributing to ERBC and with appreciation for your Dhamma practice.