

The BSWA CARE GROUP at Dhammaloka

Leo Tolstoy's short story (often quoted by Ajahn Brahm) asks, "The Three Questions":

1. What is the most important time? (NOW)
2. Who are the most important people? (WHOEVER YOU'RE WITH)
3. What is the most important thing to do? (TO CARE)

This beloved homily has been adopted by the proposed new BSWA CARE Group into their name and as their main aim and objective. Composed of a diverse group of Buddhist volunteers from professional backgrounds including, Psychology, Social Work, Nursing and Health Education, they are in the process of developing a listening and befriending service that will include telephone support lines and meeting rooms to help BSWA members, their families and supporters.

The President of BSWA, Dennis Sheppard was a former Director of the Samaritans, managing their Crisis Support and suicide prevention helpline, spending over 22 years with them. Along with his many years of meditation practise and a wealth of life experience, he leads the group towards gaining good structures and supervision for the proposed service (with due diligence) to roll out a pilot program in March 2020.

Located at the Dhammaloka centre in Nollamara the group hopes to train volunteers in ways of offering emotional support to people in need (for those suffering from loneliness, despair, anxiety or depression) with a service that is private, confidential and judgement free. A triage system will encourage cases in need of further referral to access other qualified services. This community welfare programme sometimes called "Engaged Buddhism", can only enhance what is presently offered at Dhammaloka Buddhist Centre; a well-established and valuable community resource. All members will receive more information and an invitation to join the group if interested, very soon.

A fund-raising drive is underway to help cover the costs of two weekend-long Training Retreats at Jhana Grove in February, the setting up of office space with appropriate telephone and computer equipment, and meeting rooms (eventually with toilet access). If you would like to donate to this cause, please give to the Dhammaloka Running Costs account with a credit card or under PayPal's "Add a note" section, write: "**BSWA Care**". You can simply scan the code with your smartphone below, or go to the Dhammaloka Running costs page, [HERE](#).

