

Asia Plateau Community Guidelines

The purpose of Asia Plateau (AP) is to bring about a positive change in the world starting with one's own change, through the ideas of Initiatives of Change (IofC). AP is for those who are sincerely interested in knowing about and putting into practice the ideas of IofC.

Participants from various backgrounds come for programmes of 3 to 5 days. Facilitators, almost all voluntary, come for varied periods from many regions and sometimes from abroad.

Full-time volunteers, support staff and Interns live on campus as a Community and play a crucial role in creating an open and conducive atmosphere for the participants and guests to absorb the IofC ideology .

The community exists to support the programmes of IofC, both in the practical running of the centre and in ensuring the programmes' effectiveness. Each member of the community has a responsibility to heighten its harmony with openness, honesty, selfless care and sensitivity in all relationships. The following guidelines are meant to nurture this spirit. They also apply to those who come to AP for an extended stay.

1. Community living at AP implies a sincere attempt by all to live by the basic values and practices of IofC: a readiness to admit where we need to change and adopting the practice of daily inner listening. The very foundation of IofC is drawing inspiration in silence from the Inner Voice and writing down thoughts. Getting up early to do this as a daily practice is strongly promoted.
2. Community members are expected to be punctual, courteous, and inclusive with each other and the visitors and programme participants.
3. Community Inner Listening and Sharing take place each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 7 am in the Daw Nyein Tha (Ma-Mi) Room. All are expected to take part except if involved in a programme.
4. A multi-religious prayer meeting is held in the Daw Nyein Tha Room every Tuesday at 1830 hrs. On every other day the option of silent prayer from 1840 to 1855 hrs will be available and is encouraged.
5. Alcohol, drug and tobacco in any form are strictly banned on the campus.
6. Community members are expected to be sensitive to people of other religions and cultures and their practices.
7. It is recommended that all find time to read IofC books and watch IofC films and also to take a half or full day of silence from time to time for reflection and inner listening.
8. Talking behind the back and gossip should be avoided. Any issues with another person should be raised directly with the concerned person with care and sensitivity.
9. Families and friends desiring to know about IofC are welcome at AP. Prior approval should be taken from AP in-charge. Such visitors may contribute for their stay according to their capacity and should participate in the regular work and programmes. Holiday seekers are not permitted.
10. Punctuality at all times is important. Unless otherwise announced the meal timings are as follows:

0800 hrs – Breakfast (0830 hrs. on Sundays)

1030 hrs – Tea

1230 hrs – Lunch

1600 hrs – Tea

1900 hrs – Dinner

Please lead the way in clearing and cleaning the tables after meals and laying breakfast tables at night.

11. In addition to the allotted responsibilities, everyone is expected to be flexible, willing and responsible to pitch in wherever there are needs for the smooth running of Asia Plateau. During emergencies (e.g. forest fires) everyone is expected to help.
12. Generally, Sunday will be observed as a day off.
13. Participation in the periodic Community meetings is obligatory. They provide an opportunity to discuss any community life and AP issues before any decisions are taken.
14. The Community Notice Board in the Kitchen passage gives information relevant to the Community.
15. The two washing machines in the Laundry room behind Rock View are for the Community's use at a contribution of Rs 5 per load. The fans for drying clothes are needed only during the monsoon months and should always be switched off at night.
16. A PCO (for personal STD and ISD phone calls) is available at the Post Office behind Rock View. Bills should be settled immediately.
17. The Cyber café in Rock View can be used during the specified timings. There is also WiFi connectivity in all the buildings. A contribution of Rs.100/-per month may be made at the office for its use.
18. The TV in the Community Room should be used within limits and with consideration for others who may be reading.
19. During non-conference days the Community is responsible for wash-up after meals and is done by roster. At conference times, the members will be included in service and wash up teams to lead the participants.
20. Members, when asked, are expected to assist the programme organisers and participate in specified sessions. Interactions with delegates at meal tables and free times will be an opportunity to make them feel at home, make friends and to learn from them.
21. Please do not waste food, water or electricity.
22. First aid kits are available in the kitchen and the office. For additional medical needs, doctors are available in Panchgani town.
23. Residents are requested to be in their rooms by 11pm and keep conversations, sound and lights to a minimum for the sake of others who are resting.
24. Keeping in mind 1) the rural Indian environment in which AP is situated with its particular cultural norms and, 2) the focus of all AP programmes being personal moral and spiritual growth , it is important for the AP residents to set the example:
 - * by dressing appropriately and modestly.
 - * by keeping all relationships in the open and transparent. During the stay here, we request you to refrain from any exclusive romantic relationships.
 - * to avoid the risk of developing unhealthy intimacy, it is required that one should not go into the living quarters of the other sex and one is requested to exercise discretion in spending exclusive time in pairs. Perception matters; therefore one must be mindful of how one's conduct may be perceived and at all times, behave in a way that respects one's own dignity and that of the place.
 - * In case you develop a genuine feeling of romantic attraction during your stay here, it is important to be open and upfront about this and to talk it over with a senior friend for clarity. In spite of this, continue to exercise a healthy, respectful and open behaviour in relationships with all during the stay in AP and to pursue a romantic relationship only after one's time in AP.

These guidelines are meant to help us go further in our search to become initiators of change, which is the purpose of this Centre. We hope that the daily practice of seeking clarity and inspiration through inner listening and starting change with oneself will make the rest of your life more meaningful and adventure-filled.