



Bath Inter faith Group Executive Committee: Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Bath Interfaith Group (Bath IFG) is dedicated to creating an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment where people from diverse faiths, beliefs, and backgrounds can engage in dialogue and share experiences. This Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for how members and participants should treat each other in all interactions, ensuring that everyone feels safe, valued, and heard.

Code of Conduct

The following brief and practical code of conduct should be followed at any meeting or event held under the auspices of the IFCG.

- Believe the best of every person present.
- Be honest and open in your dealings with others.
- Treat everyone with courtesy and respect.
- Look for common ground and celebrate the differences.
- Take care not to disparage beliefs, practices and viewpoints that are different from your own
- Refrain from talking or behaving in a way that is likely to anger, upset or offend another/others present.
- Recognise that this is not an opportunity to proselytise.
- Ask questions in a polite and respectful manner NOT a confrontational manner

- Treat people as individuals, remembering that members of the same faith community do not necessarily all believe the same things or behave in the same way.
- Remember not to equate political viewpoints with religious affiliation.
- Ask first before distributing promotional literature at BINF events.

Building Good Relations with People of Different Faiths and Beliefs

In Britain today, people of many different faiths and beliefs live side by side. The opportunity lies before us to work together to build a society rooted in the values we treasure. But this society can only be built on a sure foundation of mutual respect, openness and trust. This means finding ways to live our lives of faith with integrity and allowing others to do so too. Our different religious traditions offer us many resources for this and teach us the importance of good relationships characterised by honesty, compassion and generosity of spirit. The Inter Faith Network offers the following code of conduct for encouraging and strengthening these relationships.

As members of the human family, we should show each other respect and courtesy. In our dealings with people of other faiths and beliefs this means exercising good will and:

- Respecting other people's freedom within the law to express their beliefs and convictions
- Learning to understand what others believe and value, and letting them express this in their own terms
- Respecting the convictions of others about food, dress and social etiquette and not behaving in ways which cause needless offence
- Recognising that all of us at times fall short of the ideals of our own traditions and never comparing our own ideals with other people's practices
- Working to prevent disagreement from leading to conflict
- Always seeking to avoid violence in our relationships

When we talk about matters of faith with one another, we need to do so with sensitivity, honesty and straightforwardness. This means:

- Recognising that listening as well as speaking is necessary for a genuine conversation
- Being honest about our beliefs and religious allegiances

- Not misrepresenting or disparaging other people's beliefs and practices
- Correcting misunderstanding or misrepresentations not only of our own but also of other faiths whenever we come across them
- Being straightforward about our intentions
- Accepting that in formal inter faith meetings there is a particular responsibility to ensure that the religious commitment of all those who are present will be respected.

All of us want others to understand and respect our views. Some people will also want to persuade others to join their faith. In a multi faith society where this is permitted, the attempt should always be characterised by self-restraint and a concern for the other's freedom and dignity. This means:

- Respecting another person's expressed wish to be left alone
- Avoiding imposing ourselves and our views on individuals or communities who are in vulnerable situations in ways which exploit these
- Being sensitive and courteous
- Avoiding violent action or language, threats, manipulation, improper inducements, or the misuse of any kind of power
- Respecting the right of others to disagree with us

Conclusion

Living and working together is not always easy. Often, religion harnesses deep emotions which can sometimes take destructive forms. Where this happens, we must draw on our faith to bring about reconciliation and understanding. The true fruits of any religion are unity, healing and peace.

We have a great deal to learn from one another which can enrich us without undermining our own identities. Together, listening and responding with openness and respect, we can move forward to work in ways that acknowledge genuine differences but build on shared hopes and values.

Drafted May 2025 Narinder Tegally