

PFOD Survey & Research Results

In May 2018, the PFoD Board began a three-year planning process to help us realize the vision of PFoD. It started with interviews of teachers and board members around the mission and vision. We established via these interviews that the mission and vision were held in a common understanding by these community leaders and remain inspiring.

Next there was a survey of the community at the annual meeting and via the egroup. We conducted this survey to better understand where we stand today and what the community sees. The results are at surveymonkey.com/results/SM-V2TC8H39L.

Below is a summary of what was learned through the interviews and surveys. These notes are a summary of the responses only and do not represent a consensus by the board itself.

Mission

- Overall: Good, but dry
- Sakula and Matthew will change a chunk with an eye to preserving most of the original
- Ideas
 - Swap “experiential” and “intellectual”
 - Change “all traditions”
 - Consider structure

Vision

- People love this, and feel engaged and inspired by it. Keep as is!

Strengths

- Free teachings/access to monks/depth of teaching
- **Kids program**
- Building
- Community has noticed fundraising efforts (with some concerns)
- Gathering after Sunday Sila
- *(Feedback more often from board/teachers:)*
 - Lineage
 - Like-minded individuals

Board vs. Participants

- Board tends to see community as more diverse, open and welcoming than participants do
- Board sees a more urgent need for volunteer help and organization
- Board hopes for a stronger sense of ownership/for people to step forward

Sakula and the Board Working Together

- One of Sakula's strengths is one-on-one work that guides participants to define a role that best works for them
 - True of both board members, teachers and community members
 - Wants space to explore/leave things open-ended
 - Feels more ease now than in the past about stepping back/letting go
- Defining roles in recent years. Searching for when to put things down/pick them back up (e.g.: organization at times has confusion as to who is ultimately responsible for something Sakula's "set down")
- Comfortable with inherent uncertainty (NOT "this has to work"), but not always comfortable making decisions when tension arises; can tend to back away
- There can be tension in Sakula's roles as both spiritual teacher/mentor and board participant and leader: Board at times hesitant to bring things up with someone they see as a spiritual mentor, and potential of defensiveness can stall debate and decision-making
- Board consensus is important, but does not require 100% agreement, only that everyone agrees to move forward based on the values of the group

PFoD Areas for Improvement

- Welcoming newcomers
- Finding a home for mid-level volunteers (or find a way to engage them)
- Communicating all that PFOD offers
- Lack of diversity/female teaching presence
- Small group of super-doers/majority less engaged

Community's Unspoken Questions

- Are we OK on the mortgage? Are we OK financially?
- Where is the money I donate going?
- Why does the spiritual director receive a salary?
- How will volunteering work? How can I get involved without getting overcommitted? How do I "break in" to this inner circle?
- Where do I go for more info -- there are all these different sources...

Opportunities for Future

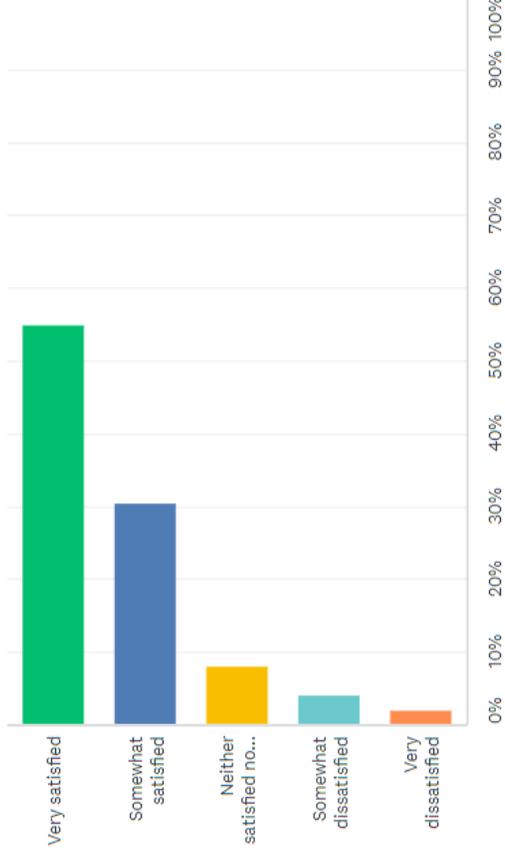
- Encouraging residential retreats
- Female visiting teachers/monastics
- Unburden current board with broader, more organized volunteer base
- Build community/keep upasikas engaged/grow community of kalyana-mitta
- Capturing data from PFOD attendees and communicating upcoming opportunities efficiently
- Building "bench strength" in board members (and teachers, but this is up to Sakula and is not a linear process)
 - Ultimately figuring out who replaces Sakula
- Strengthen hermitage connection
- Make newcomers feel more welcome

PFoD Survey Results

May 2018

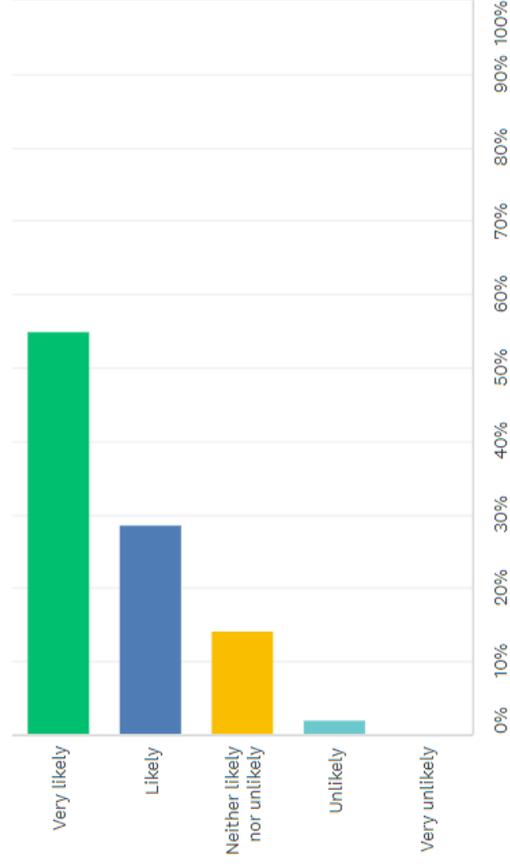
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with PFoD?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



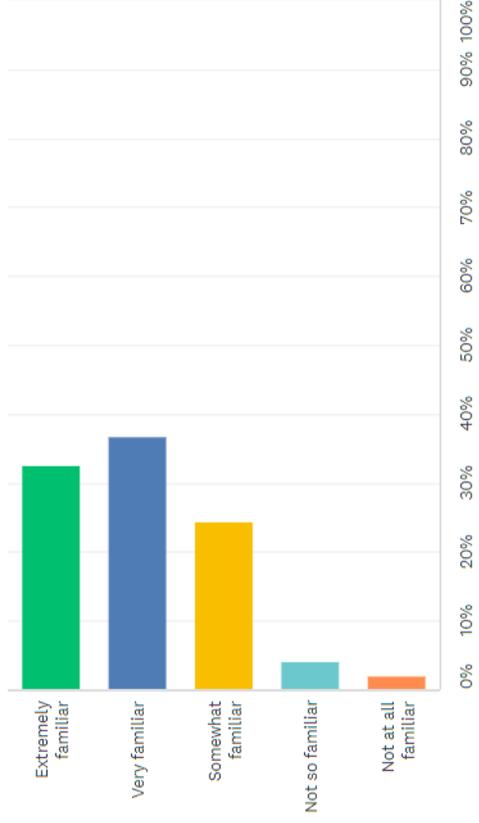
How likely are you to recommend PFoD to others?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



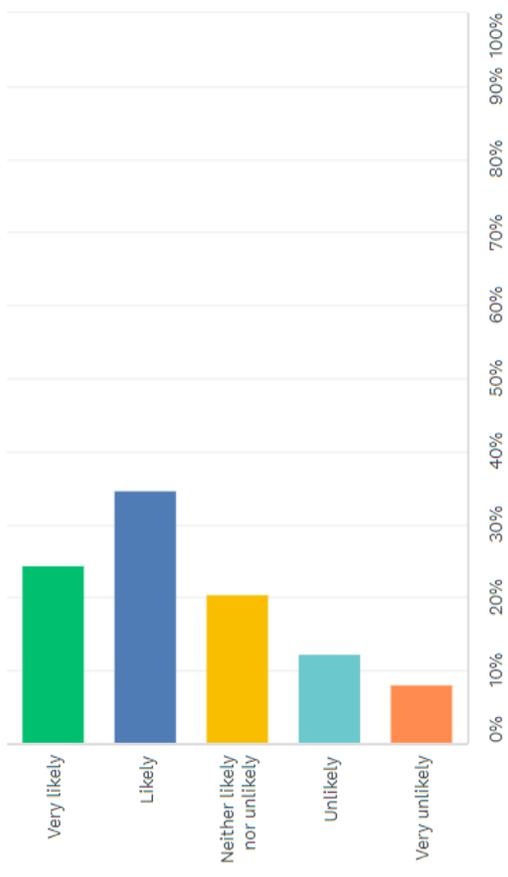
How aware are you of ways to become involved with PFOD? (Consider the leadership, volunteer opportunities, and general programming.)

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



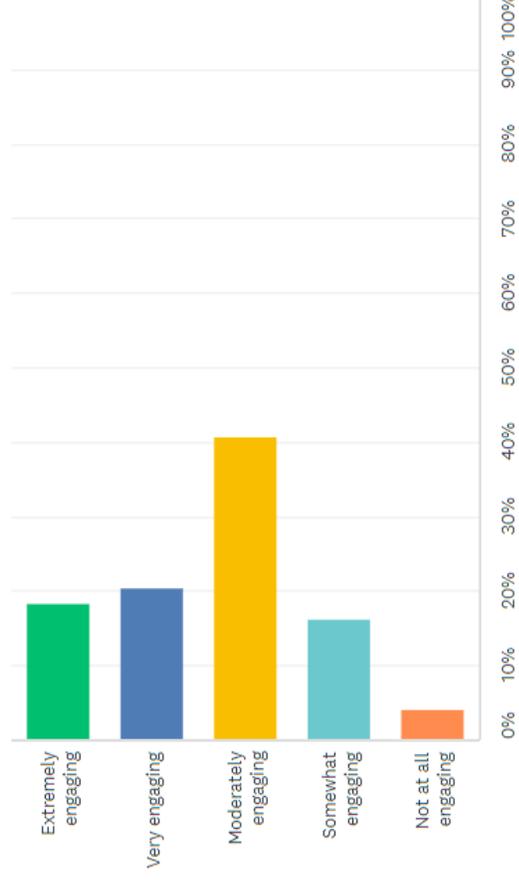
How likely are you to increase your participation with this organization (via sharing time, talents, donations, etc.)?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



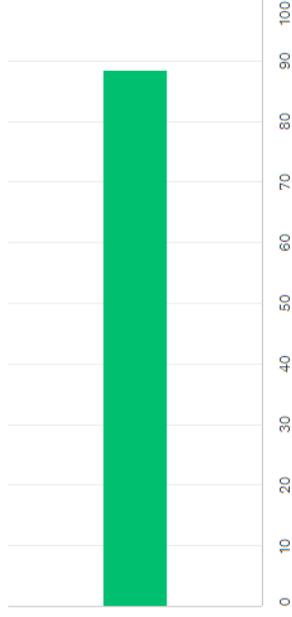
How engaging has your involvement with PFOD been? (Consider whether it meets your needs/draws you in.)

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



How well does PFOD's mission statement fit the organization? Friends of the Dhamma exists to support access to the Buddha's teachings. We encourage contact with like-minded individuals (both lay and monastic) through community gatherings, retreats, and the free distribution of books and tapes. Our purpose is to promote both the intellectual and experiential understanding of the Dhamma and provide a community of support for living the eightfold path. Friends of the Dhamma arises from the Theravada, Thai-Forest meditation lineage of Ajahn Chah and is advised by and affiliated with Abhayagiri monastery. We welcome all traditions dedicated to the integrity of the Buddha's teachings: generosity, virtue, mental cultivation, wisdom, and compassion. Friends of the Dhamma is supported by contributions (dana) from the community and does not charge fees for events.

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0



How well does PFOD's vision (below) fit this organization? We envision a City Sanctuary/Refuge, where we as laypeople can set aside our worldly burdens within a community that nurtures virtue, contentment and calm, so wisdom can arise. We aim to provide support for personal explorations into the Buddha's teachings, guidance in training our minds, and direct contact with lineage of Ajahn Chah monastics. Finally we envision a community of mutual support and companionship as we strive to apply these teachings in our daily lives, and walk the eight fold path.

Answered: 49 Skipped: 0

