

Life Together

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Summary: Re-established in exile in South India in 1972, Dzongkar Choede is home to a community of more than 300 monks. Here community is not a passive lifestyle but the active, lived embodiment of interdependence: daily labor in the kitchen and shared spaces is treated as an extension of mindfulness; young monks live in residential monastic houses with guardian teachers who supervise their wellbeing and studies; governance under the Abbot and the disciplinarian supports practice rather than exerting power, and conflicts are resolved through restorative dialogue. Within these walls a monk's standing is measured not by productivity or speed, but by conduct, attention, altruism, and restraint.

Tags:

COMMUNITY

INTERDEPENDENCE

MONASTIC LIFE

Read the original page at: <https://dzongxpan.xpandinghorizon.com/en/community/life-together>

Interdependence in Action: Community and Daily Life at Dzongkar Choede

In a world increasingly driven by speed, comparative performance, and technological isolation, Dzongkar Choede Monastery stands as a quiet counter-model — a living experiment in collective harmony and shared purpose. Re-established in exile in South India in 1972, the monastery is now home to a vibrant community of over 300 monks. Here, community is not a passive lifestyle, but the active, lived embodiment of interdependence (prat ·G·asamutp F 'à

Interdependence in Action: Daily Life and Service

At Dzongkar Choede, daily labor is never treated as a mere chore or a distraction from spiritual study; it is an extension of mindfulness and an active practice of compassion.

The sacred kitchen: preparing meals for a community of over 300 is a highly coordinated, communal effort. Monks rotate through responsibilities, ensuring that nourishment is prepared with focus and clean intent. Food becomes a shared practice, an offering of vital energy to sustain the collective mind.

Shared spaces: from sweeping the debate courtyard to maintaining the temple grounds, the cleanliness of the monastery is the responsibility of everyone. Shared dormitories and communal upkeep naturally weaken the boundaries of the isolated ego, prioritizing the ease of the collective over personal comfort.

Residential Care and the Monastic School

A significant portion of our community consists of young monks, many of whom come from socially and economically vulnerable families in the Himalayan border regions, such as Tawang, Nepal, and the Tibetan region of Tsum.

Pastoral care: the Dzongkar Choede Monastic School is fully residential. Young monks live in dedicated monastic houses, cared for by designated guardian teachers who live alongside them.

Holistic growth: these guardian teachers serve a deeply parental role. They supervise the children's daily well-being, guide their homework and monastic studies, and provide a secure, nurturing environment that balances academic discipline with emotional safety. It is a holistic formation process where intellectual training, ethics, and care converge.

Leadership, Structure, and Harmonious Resolution

For a complex community to flourish across generations, structured tranquility must be balanced with clear governance and compassionate authority.

Monastic governance: the community operates under a transparent hierarchy designed to support practice rather than exert power. Spiritual leadership is guided by the Abbot (Khenpo), while day-to-day discipline, coordination, and communal organization are managed by the disciplinarian (Gegu or Gegeu) and an administrative committee appointed by the monastery's general board.

Resolving conflict: in any human system, differences arise. At Dzongkar Choede, conflicts are handled not through adversarial systems, but through restorative dialogues that prioritize mutual respect, listening, and collective harmony. The goal of resolution is always to preserve the individual's dignity while restoring the clean flow of communal peace.

A Blueprint for a Mindful World

The most profound aspect of daily life at the monastery is the complete absence of competitive anxiety.

Worth beyond performance: within these walls, human value is never measured by productivity, speed, or comparative success. A monk's standing is not defined by their intellectual speed or individual output, but by their conduct, attention, altruism, and restraint.

An invitation to the world: by offering a space of slowness, silence, and mutual care, our community acts as a mirror to a fast-moving, ego-driven world. We invite visitors and supporters to experience this alternative way of being — a reminder that a meaningful, harmonious life is found not in self-assertion, but in deep, cooperative relationship.