

# **TREE OF LIFE COOPERATIVE**

## **Membership Terms and Application Form**

### **VISION**

To provide a self-sufficient place in Salmonier where people can connect with Nature, themselves and others.

### **TERMS OF ENGAGEMENTS**

*NOTE: There is limited space for full time membership in the Tree Of Life Cooperative in Salmonier although we are developing concepts to expand its capacity if the need is apparent. Initially we are limiting the full time resident membership to 10 households. This means that some people may be declined initially. You can remain in priority on the TOL wait list by not seeking refund of your application fee (see below). This leaves you in priority for (i) an existing lot if an accepted member decides to withdraw or (ii) new lots that may open if we are successful in acquiring more property. Applications will be considered in the order received and decisions will be made within 90- days. We reserve the right to decline applicants.*

### **FULL TIME MEMBER**

Full time members are those who commit to acquire a building plot, intend to commence building on their sites within 2 years, and aspire to live there full time within 5 years and contribute to the running of the cooperative through ongoing engagement in General Meetings and Action Groups. Full time members will pay an annual membership fee of \$1000 paid in quarterly installments into the cooperative treasury. Within the greater community vision for an ecovillage, community members are free to raise families, commute to work, entertain guests, etc. within the general rules of the Tree Of Life Cooperative.

### **Part time Membership**

Part time members are people who may visit often and work on the land or in community action groups but who do not own property in the community. He or she may also stay in a visitor hut for periods of three months or more for retreats and community participation. They may pay fees for rent or work to earn TOL credits or do a combination of fees and work. Part time members should fill out this application form.

### **Visitors**

Visitors are paying participants who come only for a one day, weekend or week-long workshop or retreat as a Lotus Centre participant. Some visitors may come and enjoy the full benefits of the community for several months at a time but remain as paying participants. They may work as part of their personal practice but not work to earn TOL credits. Visitors will fill out a Visitor form.

### **Tree of Life friends**

People who want to visit on the property as part of their personal practice to enjoy the benefits of nature, and the community's spirit and services, they may do contemplative work and earn TOL credits.

### **Tree Of Life Credits (TOL)**

For every hour a person works, they will earn 1 Tree of Life Credit. These credits can be forwarded to several future benefits of the Tree of Life, The Lotus Centre or through a TOL Bartering system.

1. **Land investment:** Tree of Life Credits can be used towards investment into a lease of a 1-acre lot worth \$10,000.00. It will take 2000 TOL credits or approximately 2-six month periods of 40 hr weeks.

2. **The Lotus Centre activities:** TOL credits used for The Lotus Centre:

Yoga: 10 credits = 1 yoga class, 35 credits = 5 yoga classes, 50 credits = 10 yoga classes

Meditation: 10 credits = 1 guided meditation, 35 credits = 6 guided meditations,

50 credits = 4 class Beginner Meditation Course

Spiritual Movies: 10 credits = 1 movie night

Clearing Sessions: 30 credits = 1 clearing session, 120 credits = 5 clearing sessions

Workshops: 35 credits = 1 workshop

Enlightenment Retreat: 200 credits plus \$150.00 = one 3-4 day

There will be no TOL credit system for Thai massage or Meditation Teacher Training

3. **TOL Bartering:** Firewood, green energy, garden organics and more.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

**The initial administration of the Tree Of Life Cooperative in Salmonier, i.e., to seek and review applications and establish membership, will be by the Coordinating Team. That Coordinating Team is comprised of Ian Goudie and Meranda Squires.**

**Upon achievement of a quorum of 10 full time members, a legal Cooperative will be formed. The cooperative will include Ian Goudie as the 11<sup>th</sup> member.**

**Full time members have an equal vote in administration of the community.**

**Decisions are made by consensus and a 3/4 majority is considered a valid consensus.**

**Decisions are acted upon through the Action Groups and their designates.**

1. The Application Form must be completed and submitted. It is vital to include at least 4 character references to support your integrity to be part of this intentional community. We will be contacting your references. The Application Fee is Fulltime: \$150.00, Partime: \$50.00. Applicants who are not accepted will be reimbursed their application fee.
2. Full time members are committed to working the community property, attendance to General Meetings and participation in at least one Action Group (e.g. gardening or alternative energy, etc.).
3. Full time members may miss no more than two consecutive general meeting or action group meetings without prior approval or designating an alternate.

4. Financial pre-qualification for a building plot ( $\geq 1$  acre) is preferred. Lots are available at \$10K on a first come, first serve basis. Individuals that qualify for full time community residency (accepted application) but do not have sufficient financial resources may be able to negotiate a payment plan over a 2-year period. This plan can include the use of TOL credits to reduce the amount owing. Such arrangements must first meet the approval of the coordinating team.
  
5. After acceptance of the application, there is a minimum of a six month trial period before the application will be accepted as a supporting member by the coordinating team. Applicants are required to become a provisional member for up to 6 months. (A provisional member applies for full membership after a 6 month period, participates in group activities and retreats, and attends a group meeting to tell his/her life story. During the 3 weeks following the story meeting, other members can express their concerns; if no one objects, then the supporting member can become a full-time member.) A full time member participates in community meetings, lives in the community, pays a community-joining fee, and signs a contract agreeing to pay a site lease fee at the time of full membership.

## **CODES OF RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY**

### **RESPECT**

- i. Physical Respect – We honour personal boundaries, touch others appropriately and refrain from violence.
- ii. Emotional Respect – We honour other people’s feelings and emotions and take responsibility for our own.
- iii. Verbal Respect – We are always honest, use respectful forms of communication and hear what others are saying.
- iv. Territorial Respect – We honour our own and others’ right to privacy, solitude, quiet, and security in their personal space, and negotiate the use of communal space.
- v. Material Respect – We take care of individual, communal and community property.
- vi. Respect for Diversity – We honour the diversity of people’s ages, sex, racial origin, sexual orientation, spiritual practices, and physical and mental capabilities.
- vii. Community Respect – We abide by the community structure and its consensus decision-making processes.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

- i. We are conscientious of our attendance of community meetings.
- ii. We communicate our ideas and feelings.
- iii. We contribute time and energy to the community, through active participation in physical work and chores, and we negotiate any reduction in community participation.
- iv. We serve as a contributing member of a planning team during a rotation and as at least one action group.
- v. We will be open and conscientious regarding our financial responsibilities.
- vi. We will inform the community about guests staying for extended periods of time, and any changes in our personal situations that affect the community or our ability to contribute to it.
- vii. We promptly inform the appropriate people of any violence or serious violations of the Codes of Respect and responsibility.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

- i. Direct one to one communications if this feels safe, otherwise go to 2 or 3 below.
- ii. Hear and clear session(s). Each conflicted member invites a trusted community member and the four individuals work towards a resolution.
- iii. Consultation with the Respect and Responsibility Committee if 1 and 2 above have not worked. If the parties cannot resolve the issue then they will be required to engage in a contract of self empowerment with the community.

- iv. Self-empowerment Contract will be signed and the conflicted individuals will have one month to submit in writing and present to the R & R Committee how that person will make the necessary changes in his or her life. This contract will have monthly updates and a duration of 6 months. If after 6 months there is no improvements then proceed to v.
- v. Community Action Meeting (can proceed directly in case of flagrant violations) where it is demonstrated that no successful progress has been achieved, then the member may be evicted by consensus, and his/her membership to the TOLC revoked. Note that the conflicted member does not have voting powers.
- vi. If a consensus is not reached the R & R Committee will meet with the person(s) who vetoed the action and the person who violated the self-empowerment contract in order to seek a solution.

#### PET POLICY

Tree Of Life Cooperative in Salmonier will develop a clear pet policy by consensus process. All full time and part time members are expected to abide by the TOL Pet Policy. In the interim, no pets are allowed on site without permission from the coordinating committee. Because the area is a wildlife area, we recommend that pets be left at home.

*APPLICATION FORM*  
**TREE OF LIFE COOPERATIVE**

Name:

Address:

Phone No:

Type of Application (check one):

Full Time

Part Time

E-mail:

Other contact information:

1. Succinctly describe your primary reason for wanting to join the Tree of Life Cooperative?

2. What is your current sense of self and community?

3. How do you feel about abiding by “community” decisions?

4. How do you feel about speaking up and expressing your truth? How do feel about being willing to listen and respect others?

## TELL US MORE ABOUT YOURSELF

5. How have you supported yourself financially?

6. Can you describe some of your long-term relationships?

7. How much schooling did you complete and why?

8. Have you pursued alternative training, internships, on-the-job training? If so, where & for how long, did you complete them?

9. Have you lived in shared (e.g. dorms) or cooperative housing situations or intentional communities before? If so please describe your experiences.

10. Do you have a significant love and/or family relationship now? If so, for how long, and do you plan to live together in community?

11. Are you a single parent? Do you share custody or have regular visits with your children? What is your relationship like with your ex-partner?

12. Describe some of your worst past behaviours and how you have evolved.

13. How can you meet the labour and especially the financial requirements of the Tree Of Life Cooperative?

14. Detail here your skills, beliefs and knowledge that would ensure that this eco-community development is enhanced by your membership.

15. Please provide a list of at least four references that we can contact to confirm your credibility and integrity of character. It is important that all these references are current with active phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

I \_\_\_\_\_ the undersigned, do acknowledge that I have fully read through the terms of engagement in the Tree Of Life Cooperative and understand that I am seeking membership in a unique community, and as such it obligates me to abide by specific rules and responsibilities. I understand that the coordinating committee has a responsibility to ensure that my credentials are suitable to, and in the best interest of, the larger community, and that they can accept only a specific number of applicants. I believe all the information on this application to be true to the best of my knowledge and I understand that the coordinating committee has the right to contact my references and seek confirmation on my integrity. I understand that I may withdraw my application at anytime by providing written notice to the coordinating committee.

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE ENCLOSE YOUR APPLICATION FEE OF  full time \$150

Payable to: The Lotus Centre  part time \$50

52 Prescott Street

St. John's, NL, A1C 3S6

(709) 739-4429

Visit [www.thelotuscentre.ca](http://www.thelotuscentre.ca) for additional information on Nature Days and Background Information on the Tree Of Life.