



# The Charter of the Communities of L'Arche

**“Together, we are people with and without intellectual disabilities, sharing life in communities belonging to an International Federation.”\***

By re-reading, sharing, and gathering our experiences from across the Federation, we created this Charter together. This process has enabled us to acknowledge the joy and challenge of our shared lives.

The purpose of the Charter is to express all that unites us in our great diversity. It calls us to be more intentional and effective in our mission:

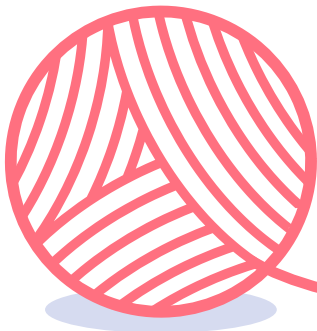
**“... to make known the gifts of people with intellectual disabilities revealed through mutually transforming relationships.”\***

This Charter builds on the 'Identity and Mission Statement'\*. It is to be read alongside the 'Constitution of the International Federation of L'Arche Communities'. The Charter will continue to come alive as we reflect on it and engage with it in our daily lives.

This Charter helps to guide us to inspiration and action. It is like a map. It helps us to chart our way forward together.



\*Our 'Identity and Mission Statement' was adopted as a foundational text by the International Federation Assembly in Kolkata 2008

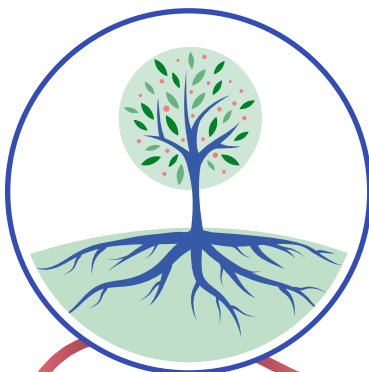
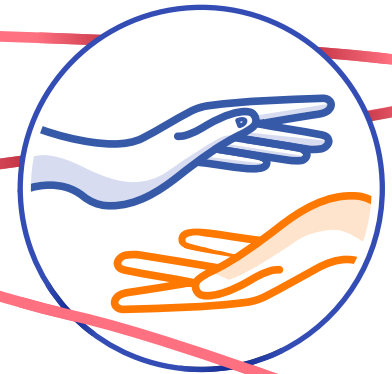


## 1. Our guiding insight

Mutual relationships among people with and without intellectual disabilities transform us by revealing the unique value of every person. This experience is a sign in the world that all belong.

## 2. Our core values

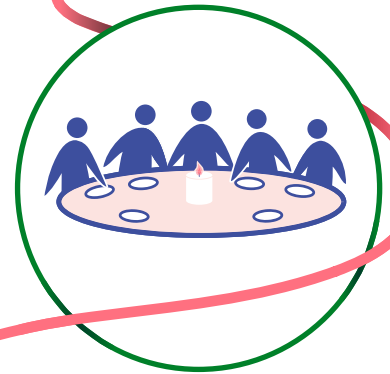
- 2.1** We are committed to the dignity of every person.
- 2.2** People with intellectual disabilities have insights, leadership, and gifts that society needs.
- 2.3** We value sharing life together with all our differences. We live the call and challenge of community.



- 2.4** We value our relationship with the whole of creation. Caring for the Earth is part of caring for each other.
- 2.5** Spirituality and the search for meaning are fundamental to the fullness of life. L'Arche is originally rooted in the Christian Gospel and continues to take root in and be shaped by different traditions, philosophies, and practices. By sharing this journey together and opening ourselves to welcome such diversity, we deepen our own inner life.
- 2.6** Our core values are rooted in our lived experience.

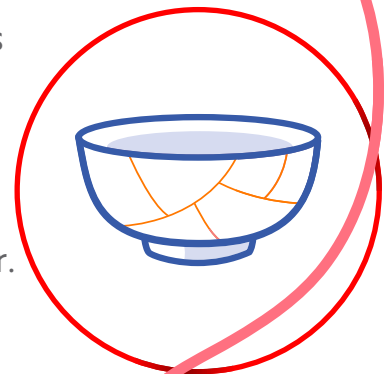
### 3. Our core practices

- 3.1** We create spaces to share life together - listening and being deeply present to each other - in households, workplaces, and other forms of gathering.
- 3.2** We make time to share meals, work, routines, and activities with each other.
- 3.3** We make space for reflection, storytelling, welcome, ritual, and prayer.
- 3.4** We mark and celebrate the events and cycles of life.
- 3.5** Together we exercise our responsibilities and decision-making based on practices of listening and inclusion.
- 3.6** In both our community life and our professional support we strive for greater competence and shared learning. Living and serving in community invites us to know ourselves and each other more truthfully.
- 3.7** Our practices go hand in hand with our values and give expression to our spirituality and search for meaning.



### 4. Our Federation, one and diverse

- 4.1** Each L'Arche community is a network of relationships, bonded to other communities across the global Federation.
- 4.2** L'Arche looks different in different cultures while sharing values and practices. We are engaged in the societies where our communities are located.
- 4.3** There are many ways of being committed to L'Arche, and new models are emerging. Such expressions are grounded in our Charter.
- 4.4** We are all, people with and without intellectual disabilities, engaged in the work of partnership, advocacy, and justice.
- 4.5** We acknowledge both the fruitfulness and brokenness of our story. Learning from our experiences, we strive together for greater integrity, accountability, and solidarity.
- 4.6** Through unity in diversity, strength in fragility, and freedom in interdependence, we discover our belonging.



### 5. Towards a more sustainable world

Together, we commit ourselves to building relationships across differences. This leads to ways of living and being that contribute to a more loving and sustainable world, our common home.

