

# Dhyana and Insight

Led by Tejananda

## About the retreat

*“Quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states... one suffuses, fills, and permeates one’s entire body with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion, so that there is no part of one’s whole body that is not pervaded by it.” AN 5.28*

On this retreat, Tejananda will be offering embodied approaches to dhyāna (jhana) that people have found to be helpful and effective. This may well involve questioning both our own views and approaches, as well as some of what the tradition has to say about dhyāna.

Dhyāna is far more than samatha, or mental calm. Recognising the liberative potential of the first dhyana was the key to the Buddha’s own awakening and he taught dhyāna as inseparable from insight. Only later did the tradition come to regard the dhyānas as ‘just’ states of concentration.

The dhyānas are, rather, states of deep, embodied mental unity, integrated with awareness of the foundations of mindfulness (satipatthana) and the factors of awakening (bojjhanga). Dhyāna is where insight takes place.

In practice, we’ll ask, ‘what, in our experience, is actually helpful?’ By becoming alive to the energetic immediacy of body experience, resources for entering dhyāna can be discovered as already present – just waiting to be noticed. We’ll explore this in direct experience and delve into the relationship between body, dhyāna and liberative insight.

This retreat is suitable for people with at least six months regular meditation practice and who have attended at least one full week retreat before. You can expect there to be around 20-24 retreatants on this retreat.

## Is there anything special I need to bring?

Loose, comfortable clothing for meditation.

## What can you expect from the programme?

This is a silent meditation retreat. Participants should expect to go into silence on the first full day, and come out of silence on the last full day.

The retreat day starts at 6.30am with meditation. You can expect about 5 – 6 hours a day in the shrine room, mostly in sitting practice (broken into 40 minute periods) but also including some interactive teachings and evening puja. There will also be opportunities for meditation reviews.

## About the retreat team

Tejananda has been practising meditation and dharma since the mid-70s. He was ordained by Sangharakshita in 1980 after which he participated in the setting-up of the FWBO Bristol centre and was centre chair for six years. After several years working for the Karuna Trust in Oxford, he joined the team at Vajraloka in 1995. His book, 'The Buddhist Path to Awakening' was published by Windhorse around that time.

Since then he has been leading and supporting retreats at Vajraloka and other retreat centres in the UK and worldwide. Although no longer living at Vajraloka, he remains part of the wider Vajraloka mandala and is deeply committed to Vajraloka's long-standing objective of helping create conditions for people to take their dharma and meditation practice deeper.

[Tejananda's website](#) lists all of his forthcoming retreats, both in-person and online.

Tejananda will be supported on this retreat by other experienced meditation teachers.