

Dance of Awareness

Dance, movement and meditation

About the retreat

This retreat will take an embodied approach to the traditional Buddhist teaching of the four foundations of mindfulness – of body, feelings, thoughts and awareness – known as the Sattipatthana.

We'll practice slowing down and sensing into the subtle details of arising experience in movement and meditation, weaving between and combining these two aspects of practice – movement and stillness – to explore and deepen qualities of presence and aliveness.

Developing mindfulness of these aspects of unfolding experience grows our ability to embrace life fully – the painful and the beautiful – and to loosen fixed or limiting views of ourselves and others.

Subhanaya and Jane are Open Floor Movement Practice teachers, a free-form dance practice which is informed by and complementary to Buddhist teachings. They will share the movement teaching, weaving Open Floor with the Sattipatthana and guided by their own depth of experience, and love of exploring, in both movement and meditation.

The dance sessions will usually be with music and will involve guided exploration, exercises and time to follow your own experience in movement. Some exercises may include hands-on touch, this will always be explained in advance and non-contact options offered.

This is a Going Deeper retreat, for people who have done an introductory retreat or have been attending a local Buddhist centre and are familiar with the Metta Bhavana and Mindfulness of Breathing meditation practices. No experience of dance or movement is required, only a willingness to explore your experience of movement in the body you are living in.

Before the retreat – useful resources

- Find out more about Open Floor and what to expect in a session on Subhanaya's website [here](#).
- If you would like to try an Open Floor class before the retreat you can find international and online listings [here](#).
- [Metta Bhavana](#) and [Mindfulness of Breathing](#) – more information and guided practices

What can you expect from the programme?

We'll usually rise at 6.30am and start our day with meditation before breakfast. The mid-morning session from 10.15am-1pm will include teaching and movement, with a warm up, guided exercises and time to explore your own dance.

After lunch there will be free time in the afternoon until around 4pm where we will have a teaching and meditation/movement session. After dinner at 6pm we'll have a simple evening of meditation, chanting and ritual.

There will be periods of silence during the retreat, often overnight, for periods of the day and up to 3 full days.

What to bring with you

Loose, comfortable clothes for movement practice and a water bottle. Layers of clothes can be good for warming up and cooling down. You can dance in bare feet or dance shoes/trainers (not outdoor use shoes - to protect the floor in the dance space). We may also move outside on the lawn, bare feet or outdoor shoes suitable there.

For local walks a waterproof jacket and walking shoes or boots. Swimming gear and towel if you would like to swim in the loch. A notebook can be useful, for journalling and reflection.

About the retreat team

Subhanaya works at Dhanakosa and was ordained in 2021. Time in nature, in the water and wild places, is an important part of her spiritual and embodiment practice. Dance and movement, primarily 5Rhythms and Open Floor, have been a major part of her life and practice journey for the last 10 years. She qualified in 2024 to teach Open Floor Movement Practice. Find out more here: www.subhanayadance.com

Jane "I have been dancing most of my life. I trained in classical ballet and later as a 5Rhythms teacher (2001) and an Open Floor teacher (2017). I remain passionately curious about movement practice and consider myself a movement practitioner first and foremost. I have been meditating for 25 years and as well as being a movement teacher I am qualified to teach Mindfulness after training with Tara Brach and Jack Kornfield. Most recently I have been teaching retreats combining trauma informed mindfulness, Open Floor movement practice, inquiry and art. For more see my website: www.innerdancer.net "

Maitrivira has supported retreats at Dhanakosa for over 20 years. He brings a heartfelt and embodied approach to his teaching and a love of poetry and ritual. He is also a Focusing practitioner and has many years' experience of conscious dance and movement.