

Green Buddha: Appreciative Mindfulness in Troubled Times

About the Retreat

Smritiratna writes: "We live, it seems, in increasingly troubled times. Yet if we fall prey to fear, hatred, blame and conflict, things only get worse. Somehow we need the resources to find our feet, rise up and meet the challenges we face with courage and confidence, with strength and dignity, with creativity and compassion, with wisdom and the harmonising speech that builds concord and co-operation.

Seeking resources, the Buddhist tradition has much to offer. It offers mindfulness and the practices of consciously appreciating what we love and trust. It offers meditations to work skilfully with our emotional states, so as to move beyond fear into courage, beyond hatred into compassion, beyond habitual old views into insightful new perspectives. This retreat makes such practices readily available within a supportive daily programme which includes meditation, mindfulness, daily discourses and imaginal practices such as mantra, puja and inspirational poetry.

‘Green Buddha’ refers both to the historical Buddha, who spent most of his time living with appreciative awareness in the forests of ancient India ... and to the archetypal Buddha Amoghasiddhi (Green Tara being the female manifestation) who represents the courageous healing and harmonising aspect of Buddhahood, the extraordinary power in humanity (potentially enlightened humanity) for building co-operation and community.”

What can you expect from the daily programme?

Day by day we’ll be exploring the “Four Levels of Awareness”, a systematic mindfulness course that leads us from appreciation of nature and the body, to feelings, emotions & thoughts, to other people, to the contemplation of non-dual reality itself. This course is practice-based, with a minimum of theory.

It is a tried and tested way to tap into our full potential, opening heart and mind so as to gradually become as strong and creative as we can be. The first session will be at 7am, then the day’s theme is presented at 10.30am and 4pm. In the evenings, we usually have something more imaginal involving poetry and mantra, sometimes puja. The retreat will go into communal silence (except for teaching sessions) on Saturday evening and emerge on Thursday.

About the retreat team

Smritiratna has meditated regularly for four decades and led nearly 200 retreats. Śraddhādhārani joined the Triratna Buddhist Order over ten years ago and is widely appreciated as a particularly heartfelt and insightful teacher.