

# Men's Solstice Retreat:

## Appreciative Awareness



### **About the Retreat**

This retreat gives a precious opportunity to come together and form a community of practice over the winter period, with an emphasis on reflection, meditation, shared communication and ritual.

The retreat themes are mindfulness and appreciation. In combination they are transformative, creating a spacious clarity that warms the heart. On this year's retreat, Smritiratna will share teachings from his 24 years deepening into both qualities, during his time living in a forest cabin above Loch Voil.

In meditation, we will explore awareness of nature, of the body, feelings, emotions and thoughts, then kindly awareness of people and finally insight meditation into the true nature of mind.

### **Is there anything special I need to bring?**

Bring loose, comfortable clothes for meditation. We suggest bringing a full set of waterproofs (jacket and trousers) and walking boots so you can explore the beautiful surroundings whatever the Scottish weather - often cold and wet at this time of year.

### **What can I expect from the programme?**

The retreat day starts at 6.30am with a rising bell then a meditation at 7.00. There'll be up to six meditation sittings a day, each lasting up to 40 minutes. Each day there'll also be one or two short explanatory talks and the day will end with Buddhist devotional practice - puja or mantra.

There will be long periods of silence on the retreat so we can attend more fully to immediate experience. Several days will be without conversation except for teachings and 1:1 practice reviews.

During the retreat we'll hold a celebration of the solstice, and while the retreat runs over December 25th, we will not be celebrating Christmas as such.

### **About the retreat team**

Smritiratna has meditated regularly for over forty years and led nearly 200 retreats. He will be joined by an experienced team. Retreatants will receive regular meditation mentoring through 1:1 practice reviews.