

Mindfulness and the Path to Freedom

About the retreat

For this retreat we will be exploring some of the core principles of Buddhism and meditation. In particular, how the Buddha's clarity on the human condition can bring more meaning, richness and purpose to our lives. The teaching will seek to keep things simple and direct, so practical and relevant to the challenges of modern life in the west.

Often what is taught on secular mindfulness courses derives from Buddhism, but without Buddhist ethical and wisdom teachings. This retreat restores mindfulness practice to its original Buddhist setting - alongside a course in mindfulness, the Buddhist path to freedom will also be outlined. A path that requires appreciative mindfulness and also ethical considerations, meditations and the contemplation of conditionality - how our lives are interconnected with all life, with everything.

Over the course of the retreat you will learn two main meditation practices - the mindfulness of breathing and the metta bhavana (loving kindness). These practices help us develop calm, positive and alert states of mind. We also teach practical ways to help you cope with states of anxiety and reduce distraction.

Central to the Buddha's teachings is the importance of developing body awareness. During the retreat, we will be practising ways of becoming more embodied, both on the meditation cushion and in our everyday lives. Each day we will engage in some light body work or movement activity.

Time on retreat gives an ideal space to experience ourselves differently and bring new fresh perspectives to our lives.

Is there anything special I need to bring?

Loose clothing suitable for meditation. Please also bring a full set of waterproofs and warm clothing as some of the exercises will be outside, by the loch shore.

What can you expect from the programme?

We'll start the day with meditation after rising at 7am. In the mid-morning we explore mindfulness practices - walking, moving, sitting for meditation. We'll also look at ways to integrate body and mind, ways to avoid distractions and ways to unhook from unwelcome thoughts. We will have at least one light movement session per day and in the afternoon there will be a period of free time.

In the evening there'll be short talks or discussion groups and later an introduction to mantra and the opportunity to observe or participate in some simple Buddhist rituals. To help deepen meditation there will also be the opportunity to meet one-to-one with a member of the teaching team to share how you are finding the practices.

There will be periods of silence on the retreat to support reflection. These will normally be overnight but may be extended later in the week to include a whole day without talking except for the teaching sessions and 1:1 meditation reviews.

The retreat will be led by experienced members of the Triratna Buddhist Order. Find out more by reading the retreat leader profiles on our website here:

<https://www.dhanakosa.com/retreats>