



Beyond Separation

Led by Tejananda

About the retreat

Early in life, a deep, unconscious view arises which comes to afflict our whole being. If we could put it in words, it might be “I am separate”. It is a sense of being divided both from our own experience and from others. This sense of separation, even alienation, can be very painful in itself and underlies a great deal of our self-caused dukkha. Yet, it is an illusion - it is not what and how we really are.

Sangharakshita was very clear about this, saying that this delusion “may be there in the form of a belief in a fixed, unchanging self or essence or soul, but that is not there. It never was and it never will be”.

The Buddhist tradition has addressed this self-construct, its consequences and dissolution, in many ways. But all reflect the Buddha’s fundamental teaching of anatta, ‘not-self’. This teaching isn’t suggesting that somehow we don’t really exist. Rather, it is pointing us back to directly seeing and knowing our original undivided nature - what we are and always have been.

Knowing directly that there is no separate self here opens us naturally to seeing that a separate other is not to be found either. Our reality is whole and undivided. With the collapse of this subject-object dichotomy, a great deal of the suffering bound up in this belief dissolves.

We’ll explore non-separation directly on the basis of both integration and positive emotion: calm, embodied, aware presence and unconditional love. From here, we’ll explore our immediate experience directly to see not only how we create and sustain the illusion of separation and a self-other divide but also how this illusion can dissolve, like a mirage or a dream.

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.

You can expect about 5 hours a day of led practice in the shrine room, including interactive teachings and an evening puja. Outside of this there will be plenty of time for open practice. 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.

He now lives in Wrexham while leading and supporting retreats at Vajraloka and other retreat centres in the UK and worldwide. 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.