



In Spacious Awareness, Wisdom Unfolds

About the retreat

In meditation we may try to concentrate on the breath or cultivate metta but it is common to get absent-minded, often distracted by thoughts and emotions. The priority in mindfulness practice is to attend to what is right there in immediate experience. Even very intense feelings can be held in a broad and spacious awareness that lets us experience them without reacting. An attentive non-reactive mindfulness helps feelings to be understood and integrated. This 'spacious awareness' also provides the basis for compassionate wisdom, hence our title. The Buddha recommended a four part sequence of attending - the four foundations of mindfulness - and on this retreat we'll be training in this, contemplating body, feelings, moods and thoughts as a way to catch a glimpse of a whole new way of being, indicated by the Buddha's 'Four Noble Truths'.

Is there anything special I need to bring?

Bring whatever you need for comfortable meditation - loose clothes for example. And bring a full set of waterproofs and boots so you can roam about in the beautiful surroundings whatever the Scottish weather - often cold and wet.

What can you expect from the programme?

The retreat day starts at 6.30am with a rising bell then a meditation at 7.00am. There'll be about six meditation sittings each day lasting some 30-40 minutes. There will also be a little tuition in Qi Gong. Each day there'll also be one or two short explanatory talks and each evening will end with Buddhist devotional practice - puja or mantra.

There will be periods of silence on the retreat so we can attend more fully to immediate experience. Three or four days in the middle of the retreat will be held without conversation except for teachings and 1:1 practice reviews.

About the retreat team

Smritiratna has been meditating regularly for thirty years and has taken a special interest in mindfulness practice. He'll be teaching with the help of two other experienced Order Members so that retreatants can receive regular personal tuition through 1:1 practice reviews.