



# Spring rain on still waters:

## Contemplating the five Skandhas

### About the retreat

The five skandhas are a description of human experience often evoked in both early and later Buddhism to point to the nature of reality through reflection. When tackled experientially this list, that at first glance seems rather dry and abstract, becomes rich and wondrous. And, has the power to lead us to deep transformation. On this retreat we will take a three levels of wisdom approach to the topic; using study to conceptually understand our topic just enough to support reflection, then diving into our direct experience we will familiarise ourselves sufficiently to support deeper meditation, enabling us to witness the unfolding of experience with a new sense of freedom.

The Skandhas are of course a description of the whole of our experience so as well as a substantial amount of time in the shrine room we will be encouraging an integrated and wholistic approach to practice specifically including periods of meditation and reflection outdoors where the full and sensuous experience of nature can gently lead us deeper.

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

Please bring warm clothes, outdoor footwear and waterproofs, as we will be doing some retreat sessions outdoors.

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

The retreat day will start with a double meditation before breakfast (most meditation sessions will be about 40 minutes). After breakfast there will normally be a short seminar session, followed by a period of reflection and further meditation including a lead introduction to meditative reflection on the five skandhas. There will also be some ritual practice each day as well as opportunities for group exploration. Optional Chi Gung sessions will also help ground our experience and retreat reviews will give opportunity for personal guidance.

You can expect there to be some periods of silence every day to support going deeper, and a block of three to four days of silence in the middle of the retreat. You can also expect there to be four to five hours of meditation and ritual each day some of which is likely to be outdoors.

### About the team

Nayaka and Subhanaya both live and work at Dhanakosa and regularly lead and support retreats. We will be joined by Vanavasin.