

The Spiral Path: study and practice

About the retreat

The Buddha's teaching of dependent arising is the philosophical formulation of his awakening experience. In addition to the well-known series of twelve nidānas or 'links' of dependent arising, that explain the arising of suffering, the Buddha taught a series of further links, described as 'transcendental dependent arising'. These links form what Sangharakshita has called the 'spiral path', leading from faith, ethics and mindfulness, through the joy of meditation, to the development of insight. During this retreat, we will explore the spiral path through study, group discussion and meditation, and engage in the spiral-like opening and freeing of our hearts and minds.

This retreat is suitable for Order members, mitras and friends who are familiar with meditation and the Dharma. Reading Dhivan's book *This Being, That Becomes: the Buddha's teaching on conditionality*, would be good preparation. The study and discussion will be an opportunity to think about the meaning of dependent arising in our own experience, and in meditation to explore its implications further. There will also be ritual and bodywork to exercise body and heart as well the mind.

The programme for the retreat:

Each day will begin with a rising bell at 6.30, followed by a double meditation, so the day begins with spacious silence. After breakfast there will be study and group discussion before lunch. The afternoons will be free for resting and walking. There will be practical workshops and meditation before dinner, and in the evening some ritual and meditation. There will be periods of silence on retreat, including whole days (apart from dharma discussion). The teaching team will offer individual practice reviews.

The retreat team:

Dhivan is the author of *This Being, That Becomes: the Buddha's teaching on conditionality*, Windhorse Publications, 2011. He lives in Bristol and teaches for Bristol University. He is working on another book on the Buddha's teaching of dependent arising. Also on the retreat teaching team will be Nayaka and Vandika.