

What happens on a silent meditation retreat?

On a retreat, we immerse ourselves in silence and simplicity so that we can come closer to life. This allows for a clearer, more intimate relationship with our experience and ourselves. We may begin to notice the ways and patterns in which we distance ourselves from our direct experience. By gently observing these and resting in a less judgmental knowing, we can find our own way of letting go and allowing life to unfold more kindly.

The silence and simplicity of our daily rhythms supports this process by allowing our minds and hearts to become quieter, calmer and more sensitive.

Letting go of the need to think or plan how to care for our bodies or engage our minds allows us to settle more deeply into our lived experience and notice more clearly what is present for us here and now.

The following guidelines will help nourish the stillness within each of us and between us;

- ❖ Speak only to teachers, during individual or group meetings and teachings, or to the residential team in an emergency. Use the notice board for other matters.
- ❖ Support the silence in the hall by arriving on time for meditations and staying until the end.
- ❖ Also be aware of the sounds we make in and around the hall. If shoes, doors, cushions, water bottles, etc. can be handled with awareness and stillness. Please turn off beeping watches or mobile phones.
- ❖ Let go of the need to read or write about our own or others' experiences. Instead, open up to what we are experiencing right now. Please take minimal notes during talks or instructions, if helpful.
- ❖ Enjoy the freshness of moments of relative inner stillness, such as each time we find ourselves here in the present moment.