



Retreat Programme January – August 2013

The 2013 programme will be developed further so do keep an eye on the website where full details and updates will be posted.

Maenllwyd in Wales remains our main venue, but note that the May retreat is on Dartmoor.

The programme is subject to change (additions, amendments, and cancellations), so please refer to the website at www.w-c-f.org/Q342 for the latest version.

Diary Date: WCF AGM will be held on Saturday 23rd March, at Oddfellows Hall in Bristol

5th – 12th January: Silent Illumination Retreat

Leader: Simon Child. Venue: Maenllwyd, Wales

Silent Illumination is a profound meditation practice which leads to a mind of great calmness and insight, using ancient Chinese Zen methods which are just as applicable to the modern West. This seven-day silent retreat is an opportunity to learn and deepen this practice through intensive meditation, with instruction and personal guidance by individual interviews with an experienced teacher. Whether or not a breakthrough to Enlightenment may occur, establishing a practice gives a firm basis for subsequent ongoing mindfulness in everyday life.

Prior attendance at a 5 day retreat is recommended.

16th – 21st February: Western Zen Retreat

Leader: Jake Lyne. Venue: Maenllwyd, Wales

This retreat designed for Westerners enables the mind to face the major paradox - Who am I? The question is investigated within a framework of silent sitting meditation, alternating with a tested 'Communication Exercise' in which people work in turns with each member of the group to explore this fundamental Koan.

The intensive focus drives each practitioner into a self-presentation that is difficult to experience in other ways. Practitioners are supported through this process by regular personal interviews with the teachers, interviews being offered most days. This method makes use of words to go beyond words and thereby enter the main gate of Chan. The outcome may be a profound journey through the unity of self, and the acceptance of self, to "self at ease". This may possibly lead further to a direct insight into the ground of being. Participants share a rich experience in new self-knowledge, understanding others and the human condition.

Suitable both for beginners and for experienced practitioners.

6th – 13th April: Shattering the Great Doubt

Leader: Simon Child. Venue: Maenllwyd, Wales

The ancient Chinese Zen practices of investigating Huatou and Gongan (Koan) are best practised in a supportive environment such as this intensive 7-day silent Chan retreat. As one becomes deeply absorbed in the practice, mental constructions drop away and one is confronted by a realisation that one does not know the nature of existence and one's fundamental assumptions of life are groundless. Staying with and cultivating this 'doubt', it can become all-consuming 'Great doubt' which may 'shatter', giving a direct insight into reality which may be what is known as an Enlightenment experience.

To progress in these methods requires a sustained focus and so this retreat is open only to those with previous experience of intensive retreat. Prior attendance at a Western Zen Retreat is recommended.

22nd – 29th May: Silent Illumination Retreat

Leader: Jake Lyne. Venue: Bala Brook Retreat Centre, Dartmoor

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Prior attendance at a 5 day retreat is recommended.

29th June – 4th July: This is your Life

Leader: Ken Jones. Venue: Maenllwyd, Wales

Use the ups and downs of your daily life to work towards a profound easefulness with self and others. We shall focus on relationships, sickness, work and other life experiences. To turn muck into gold we shall use talks, meditation, small group work, interviews and liturgy in a warm-hearted and supportive atmosphere. For this "Everyday Buddhism" please visit www.kenjoneszen.com.

Suitable both for beginners and for experienced practitioners.

27th July – 1st August: Western Zen Retreat

Leader: Fiona Nuttall. Venue: Maenllwyd, Wales

This retreat designed for Westerners enables the mind to face the major paradox - Who am I? The question is investigated within a framework of silent sitting meditation, alternating with a tested 'Communication Exercise' in which people work in turns with each member of the group to explore this fundamental Koan.

The intensive focus drives each practitioner into a self-presentation that is difficult to experience in other ways. Practitioners are supported through this process by regular personal interviews with the teachers, interviews being offered most days. This method makes use of words to go beyond words and thereby enter the main gate of Chan. The outcome may be a profound journey through the unity of self, and the acceptance of self, to "self at ease". This may possibly lead further to a direct insight into the ground of being. Participants share a rich experience in new self-knowledge, understanding others and the human condition.

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