

Discovering Oneness

Inner and Outer Nature

Silent Nature Meditation Retreat, Summer 2019

Rocky Mountain Ecodharma Retreat Center, Jamestown, Colorado



With David Loy and Johann Robbins

Early Registration Discount Prices End April 30, 2019:

Entire Retreat: Friday, July 19 - Sunday August 4, 17 days from \$950

Week One: Friday, July 19 - Friday July 26, 8 days from \$550

Week Two: Saturday, July 27 - Sunday August 4, 9 days from \$625

Scholarships are Available

Teachers and manager are supported by donations (Dana)

Thanks to a grant from World Wildlife Fund, full scholarships available for activists.

Join either or both weeks in this beautiful mountain setting, which offers a unique opportunity to reconnect with the natural world. The peaks, forests and river naturally work to quiet the mind, while living and practicing together creates connection and support.

Rocky Mountain Ecodharma Retreat Center and the nearby Indian Peaks Wilderness are ideal for a meditation retreat. The area is extraordinarily beautiful, peaceful and pristine, with a wide variety of trails, wildflower-covered meadows, creeks, and peaks.

Inner and Outer Nature Silent Meditation Retreat: One or Two Weeks. We will be in deep nature practice, immersing in the natural world, connecting our inner nature with outer nature, dissolving separation. Each day includes plentiful time for sitting, hiking/walking meditation, as well as instruction in nature meditation, Dharma talks, and individual and group practice discussions. Weather permitting we will be outdoors as much as we can.

This retreat also includes time for solo practice at your choice of locations: the retreat center, nearby campsites, or as far as the adjacent Indian Peaks Wilderness. Solo is a time to relax, heal, connect, and explore: opening deeply to the power and beauty of the environment, with the freedom of solitude. With time and openness, the elements, animals and plants become our Teachers, the land our home, and silence our close companion. There is ample instruction, preparation, support, and flexibility for the solo, so each participant can get the most out of theirs. Everyone chooses their solo site from a variety of locations, sleeping indoors if necessary, but usually camping anywhere from a short walk away to deep in the wilderness. Most past participants have found the solo a highlight of their retreat, sometimes even of their life. Week one has a one night solo, week two has a two night solo.

People attending the entire retreat can stay at the center on a self-retreat basis, or do an additional solo night Friday, July 26.

If you are interested in attending, please read this information carefully. If you have any questions, email retreats@impermanentsangha.org. **To register use the separate registration form.**

Intro to the Retreats

The overall intention is for deep practice and connection in nature, and then integrating that into life. In both weeks spiritual practice will be supported by instruction in mindfulness meditation, with a focus on mindfulness in nature. There will be nightly Dharma talks, exploring how being-in-nature can be part of our spiritual path when grounded in a direct experience of non-separation from the natural world. The emphasis is not on technique so much as developing direct experiential awareness of being/nature, allowing for a new integration of the internal (spiritual) and external (activity). This requires a willingness to reconsider established ways of thinking, practicing and being. There are no prerequisites, and beginning meditators are welcome and will be fully supported.

The Retreat Includes:

- Guidance and instruction for meditation in nature (both sitting and walking) to deepen our experience of connection and oneness in nature, while dissolving the sense of a fixed and separate self
- Sitting and walking in beautiful wild setting
- Free time for meditation or rest
- Evening campfire Dharma talks
- One on ones with the teachers
- One or two night solo (one night the first week, two the second), which can be on the retreat center land, or at nearby Indian Peaks Wilderness
- Delicious vegetarian meals, including all food for the solo
- Your choice of lodging: single room, shared room, dorm, tent site

The first week will include an optional 1½ hour discussion each afternoon on Ecodharma topics (please check out David Loy's new book, *Ecodharma*), including how to make activism a spiritual path. This is an opportunity to extend practice into life, making it relevant to our current environmental and social crises. These sessions are totally optional; those that prefer to remain in silence will be supported to do that as well. If there is interest, we may continue the discussions the second week.

Guidelines

-The retreats are designed to be enjoyable, not rigorous, but participants are expected to have a

- willingness to maintain silence, to help with necessary tasks, and to cooperate with the group structure.
- Some meditation experience is valuable but not required, and beginners are welcome. Complete meditation instructions will be given.
 - Some camping experience (car camping or backpacking) is helpful for the solo, but not required. You can stay as close to the center or as far away as you like; even in your room if need be.
 - Being in good health, able to sit and walk outdoors.
 - Having the necessary clothing and equipment to enjoy being outdoors in a variety of conditions. We will be able to be indoors in bad weather but otherwise will be sitting, eating and walking outdoors.

If you are not sure about any of this, please inquire.

Time and Transportation

Both weeks begin at 4PM on the first day, and end at 1PM after lunch on the last. If you want to carpool from the Denver/Boulder area or the airport, let us know what you need or can offer, and we will help coordinate. If you are flying into Denver the airport is 1 1/2 hours from the center, so you should plan on landing no later than 1:30PM to get to the retreat on time. Flights departing Denver should leave no earlier than 3:30PM, so you can get to the airport on time. Please do not plan on leaving the retreat early.

Please note that the center is at 8500 feet, similar to most Colorado ski towns. If you are concerned about acclimating from sea level, you might consider a day or two in the Denver/Boulder area before the retreat.

Contact

You will be out of contact with no Internet access or cell phone service during the retreat. Please complete all personal business before you arrive. The staff will have the ability to make and receive emergency calls on your behalf, but the phone is not available for personal use.

Approximate Daily Schedule

We awaken at first light, hot water and coffee are readied, and we sit outside. Then breakfast and lunch food are put out and everyone eats, and packs their lunch. Daily activities include sitting, walking, and hiking meditation, meditation instructions, and support including one on one and small group practice discussions. After dinner there is meditation, followed by a campfire dharma talk, and then bedtime or optional practice when it gets dark.

Silence

Every effort is made to support a deep and fruitful retreat, and noble silence is a valuable part of the process. With exceptions for Dharma talks and other modes of support, and the optional discussion groups the first week, we will be in silence.

Cost and Dana

The cost of the retreat is set as low as possible and only covers expenses: renting the center, food, cooks, insurance, and staff travel. The teachers and manager aren't paid, and are supported with Dana.

Early Bird Prices: Add \$100 per week to prices below for registering after April 30, 2019.

	Entire Retreat 7/19-8/4	First Week 7/19-7/26	Second Week 7/27-8/4
Dorm (3-4 Beds)	\$950	\$550	\$625
Double Room (2 Beds)	\$1050	\$600	\$675
Camp Site	\$1050	\$600	\$675
Couple Room (1 Bed)	\$1050	\$600	\$675
Private Single Room	\$1650	\$875	\$975

It is our intention that cost not be an impediment to practice, and scholarships of up to \$300 for first week and \$350 for second week are available for shared rooms or camping. To apply for a scholarship, include a note explaining your circumstances and the amount requested, along with the registration

form and the remaining amount you need to pay. Your deposit check is not cashed unless a scholarship is approved.

If you are a dedicated full time activist leader and need a scholarship, you may be eligible for the World Wildlife Fund special scholarship, which can cover up to 100% of the retreat cost. Please get an application from our Web site.

None of this cost share goes to Johann, David or Alice, who are solely supported through the Dana (generosity) of the participants. In the tradition of the Buddha, teachings are offered without a set fee, keeping costs as low as possible, so no one is excluded due to finances. In turn, we ask that your donation be as generous as possible within your means. Please bring a check or cash. We are grateful for your support.

Helper (Yogi) Jobs

Some of the work necessary to support the group (mostly around meal preparation and cleanup) will be handled by participants during the retreat. You will be able to choose your yogi job, and will keep it throughout the retreat. Most participants find serving others in this way quite enjoyable, and a great opportunity for practice in action.

Food and Meals

Three simple, healthy and delicious vegetarian meals a day will be provided from dinner the first day through lunch of the last, including solo food which does not require cooking. If you want a snack between meals, or supplemental protein such as jerky or packaged fish, you can bring a small quantity of packaged unrefrigerated food. You can also bring **dry** beverage mixes (no bottles or cans, please) such as electrolyte sports drinks, or other powdered mixes. A variety of teas are available all the time, and coffee will be made before and during breakfast, along with milk and sweeteners. There is no refrigerator space available for personal food, so please do not bring anything that needs refrigeration (medicine excepted). Excessive snacks are unnecessary: if you need a boost, a little gorp or an energy bar is sufficient for most people.

To simplify lunch, on most days we will be putting together our own lunches from an assortment of food set out next to the breakfast table. Please bring a plastic container or two with tight fitting lids to carry your lunch.

Special Needs

Figuring menus and quantities, shopping, organizing, and cooking are complex and crucial tasks for a retreat. We provide simple, wholesome, natural, predominantly organic meals. We will accommodate common and real food allergies such as gluten, soy or dairy, but not preferences. Make sure to include on the registration form full details of any special allergy or health needs you have, and we will contact you if they require discussion.

Teachers and Guides

Impermanent Sangha staff are all highly experienced and skilled in creating a safe, meaningful, and enjoyable retreat, and are deeply committed to supporting Ecodharma practice in nature.

Johann Robbins, Teacher and Guide, started backpacking as a teenager, and deepened his spiritual journey on many solo wilderness trips in his teens and twenties. His passion is facilitating spiritual practice in nature: he has guided and taught wilderness retreats and workshops in various traditions for over 25 years, including as a Vision Quest guide in the late 1990s. Johann founded Impermanent Sangha in 2002 and has led dozens of Ecodharma and nature meditation retreats, including backpacking, camping, canoeing and rafting. Johann founded Rocky Mountain Ecodharma Retreat Center and is its Executive Director.

Johann teaches Mindfulness Meditation, also known as Insight or Vipassana, with a modern secular approach. He has been meditating since 1974 and was asked to teach in 2008. He completed the two-year CDL teacher training program at Spirit Rock in 2012. His primary teachers include Shinzen Young and Eric Kolvig (who also helped found Impermanent Sangha and taught wilderness retreats for many years before his retirement).

David Loy, Teacher, comes from both the Japanese Zen tradition and Insight. He began Zen practice in Hawaii in 1971 with Yamada Koun and Robert Aitken, and continued with Koun-roshi in Japan, where he lived for almost twenty years. He was authorized to teach in 1988 and has led retreats and workshops nationally and internationally in places such as Spirit Rock, Barre Center for Buddhist Studies, Cambridge Insight Center, Terre d'Eveil in Paris, and Dharma Gate University in Budapest. David recently received an honorary PhD from Carleton College, his alma mater, for his contributions to socially engaged Buddhism.

David's spiritual journey began when he lived in a remote valley on Molokai, Hawaii. There he fell in love with backpacking, meditating in nature, and solo wilderness retreats. David is a well-known writer, whose books and articles have been translated into many languages. His latest book, *Ecodharma*, has just been published. He is also co-editor of *A Buddhist Response to the Climate Emergency* and has written many articles and blogs on Buddhism, ecology, and activism. He is especially interested in the parallels between what Buddhism teaches about our personal predicament, and our collective ecological predicament today. David's writings, podcasts, and videos are available at davidloy.org and at ecobuddhism.org. This will be his fifth year teaching with Impermanent Sangha.

Alice Robbins, Retreat Manager, has been with Impermanent Sangha every year since the retreats began in 2002, and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience. She manages the retreat, and helps provide wonderful meals as well. Alice first started meditating in 1998, and is an experienced and avid boater, licensed river guide, camper and hiker, with a deep affinity for nature practice. She is a "recovering" attorney, having retired from law, and now practices family law mediation.

What to Bring

The most important thing you can bring is a flexible attitude, ready to accept cheerfully the surprises that weather and circumstances may present. It helps a lot, too, if your clothing and equipment are suitable. **If you are unsure what to take with you, ask us. If in doubt, bring it, as there is no place to purchase gear nearby.**

Please do not bring a radio, music player, iPod, laptop, books, axe, alcohol or illegal drugs. Think about whether you really need a camera; is it consistent with the intentions of a retreat?

Daytime temperatures are usually in the 70s or low 80's, at night in the 50s. We are in the mountains, so there is always a chance of cold, rain, hail, and wind, though those tend to be brief. While the intention is to be outside, we can go indoors if weather makes it necessary, excepting when on solo.

PACKING LIST

The following is a list of typical essentials; you are welcome to fine-tune it.

For Solo, and Campers:

Tent (1 per person for the solo, even if you are a couple) small backpacking tents are ideal.

Sleeping bag: minimum 3-season.

Sheet, pillow and pillowcase for comfort while camping. You cannot take bedding from the lodge.

Sleeping pad.

One gallon empty water jug for solo.

Water filter or purifier, or enough purification pills for the 1 or 2 night solo.

A small backpacking stove and fuel is OPTIONAL for the solo. You do not need it. The solo food provided does not require cooking, but you can bring a small stove to heat up food, tea, coffee, etc. if you want. Note that airlines do not allow camping stove fuel canisters at all.

Backpack for solo (large enough for tent, sleeping bag, food, clothing and gear). Or you can camp close by and walk your gear to your site.

Bear canister or bear bag for solo food: if you have one bring it. There are some at the lodge to borrow as well, and we can rent more if needed.

Camp towel for solo

Small first aid kit

For Retreat:

Packable chair: Crazy Creek, Thermarest or similar packable chair for taking on hikes to sit. There are carpet pads at the lodge to use for this as well.

Water bottles: Two 1 liter.
Insulated coffee/tea mug with lid
Small tupperware-type container(s) with a tight lid for packing lunches
Daypack or large waist pack
Sunscreen and lip balm
Hat (wide brim, for the sun)
Sunglasses
Insect repellent
Mosquito head net
Headlamp/flashlight (plus batteries)
Watch (necessary)
Emergency whistle (necessary)
Small notebook and pen
Hiking shoes or boots, broken-in before the retreat
Other comfortable shoes for short walks
Slippers for indoors, shoes are not allowed inside the lodge
Long-sleeve and/or short-sleeve shirts: (2-3) fast-drying, non-cotton
Shorts: fast drying, non-cotton
Pants: fast drying, non-cotton
Bandana
Bathing suit (optional, for the creek)
Rain pants
Hiking Socks: 3-4 pair synthetic or wool
Underwear
T-shirts or shirts: (2), soft cotton, long or short sleeve
Warm underlayer, shirts (2) and pants (1), warm-when-wet fabric such as smartwool or capilene, etc.
Parka: waterproof and windproof shell jacket
Warm layer for under the parka, such as a fleece jacket

The retreat center provides pillows, sheets and blankets for all indoor lodging (not for camping). Towels are provided for everyone. There are no laundry machines. The meditation hall has plenty of zafus, zabutons and chairs, but feel free to bring any props and cushions you need.

PERSONAL:

Check or Cash for Teacher/Staff Dana
Notebook and Pen
Toiletries, sunscreen, etc: biodegradable and scent-free please
Medication(s)
Small amount of snacks and drink mixes (see above)
Small simple camera (maybe)
Personal first-aid needs
Scissors/nail cutter/nail file
Extra sunglasses/eyeglasses and hat