

Dances of the Heart

Dance, movement and meditation

About the retreat

This retreat will take an embodied approach to the traditional Buddhist practice of the Brahma Viharas – the cultivation of loving kindness, compassion, joyful resonance and equanimity.

The invitation is to step into this mandala of the heart - to meet and know these qualities in our bodies and in our dance. We'll be learning how we can deeply resource ourselves through meditation and movement to embody and cultivate these qualities in our lives.

The dance sessions will usually be with music and will involve guided exploration, exercises and time to follow your own experience in movement. Some exercises may include hands-on touch, this will always be explained in advance and non-contact options offered.

This is a Going Deeper retreat, for people who have done an introductory retreat or have been attending a local Buddhist centre and are familiar with the Metta Bhavana and Mindfulness of Breathing meditation practices. No experience of dance or movement is required, only a willingness to explore your experience of movement in the body you are living in.

What can you expect from the programme?

We'll rise by 7am and start our day with meditation before breakfast. The mid-morning session from 10.15am-1pm will be our main movement session, with a warm up, guided exercises and time to explore your own dance.

After lunch there will be free time in the afternoon until around 4pm where we will have a teaching and meditation session. After dinner at 6pm we'll have a simple evening of meditation, chanting and ritual.

There will be periods of silence during the retreat, often overnight and for periods of the day and up to 1-2 full days.

What to bring with you

Loose, comfortable clothes for movement practice and a water bottle. Layers of clothes can be good for warming up and cooling down. You can dance in bare feet or dance shoes/trainers (not outdoor use shoes - to protect the floor in the dance space). We may also move outside on the lawn, bare feet or outdoor shoes suitable there.

For local walks a waterproof jacket and walking shoes or boots. Swimming gear and towel if you would like to swim in the loch. A notebook can be useful, for journalling and reflection.

About the retreat team

Subhanaya works at Dhanakosa and was ordained in 2021. Time in nature, in the water and wild places, is an important part of her spiritual and embodiment practice. Dance and movement, primarily 5Rhythms and Open Floor, have been a major part of her life and practice journey for the last 10 years. She qualified in 2024 to teach Open Floor Movement Practice. Find out more here: www.subhanayadance.com

Moksadhi (she/her) first encountered Buddhism in Nepal in 2012 and has been following the Buddhist path ever since. Her passions lie in exploring external and internal aspects of wilderness. Her practice follows an embodied approach to finding qualities of spaciousness, wildness and freedom in both meditation and movement. Moksadhi was ordained into the Triratna Buddhist Order in 2019. She is currently training to become a yoga teacher with Bodhiyoga and regularly leads retreats at Dhanakosa.

Jane “I have been dancing most of my life. I trained in classical ballet and later as a 5Rhythms teacher (2001) and an Open Floor teacher (2017). I remain passionately curious about movement practice and consider myself a movement practitioner first and foremost. I have been meditating for 25 years and as well as being a movement teacher I am qualified to teach Mindfulness after training with Tara Brach and Jack Kornfield. Most recently I have been teaching retreats combining trauma informed mindfulness, Open Floor movement practice, inquiry and art. For more see my website: www.innerdancer.net ”