

Home/On-Line Retreat hosted by Kevala Retreat:

Wednesday April 28th through Sunday May 2nd (three sessions daily)

Four Ennobling Realities (*ariya-sacca*): an introduction to the fundamental teachings

The Ariya-Sacca are the noble truths with which the Buddha introduced and framed his awakened understanding. Our understanding of them builds the Right View that guides our practice of life, meditation, and Dhamma. These realities ennoble our lives by leading us out from the suffering of craving and clinging into the freedom and peace of a Dhamma-centered life. In this retreat, we will contemplate important suttas (discourses of the Buddha) that illuminate the Ariya-Sacca. Our time together will emphasize mindful reading, careful reflection, and skillful speech. Silent meditation is an important foundation for this study.

[Register for retreat here](#) *** [Ask a question here](#)

Retreat Overview and Parameters

The four *ariya-sacca* are central to the Buddha's awakening and teaching. Everything he taught illuminates one or another of the four. As understanding of them develops, so does right view, which guides the noble path. Thus, they provide a most excellent framework for organizing our study and inquiry of Buddha-Dhamma.

This retreat will foster a spirit of mindful inquiry into daily experience, meditative experience, and the original teachings of the Buddha concerning *ariyasacca*.

- ❖ What is the nature of dukkha (distress, suffering)? How do we experience it? How do we recognize it?
- ❖ From where does dukkha arise? What did the Buddha mean by 'craving' and 'clinging'? Must we give up all wants and desires?
- ❖ Why is the 'end of dukkha' a fitting aim in our practice? How do we touch it? What sort of reality is it? Where is it discovered?
- ❖ How can the early Path teachings help us see our way out of dukkha and live the middle way?

Mindfulness and investigation are the first two factors of awakening, which means that studying the *ariya-sacca* requires paying attention to them. With help from wise teachings, we cultivate clear, informed thinking to help foster the clear seeing of insight. Without a good grounding in Dhamma teachings we tend to interpret experience in the terms and concepts of our dominant culture, including certain experiences we misinterpret as insight. Given that our cultural beliefs and attitudes, both dominant and alternative, are not necessarily in harmony with the path leading to the end of

dukkha, such misinterpretations can obstruct liberation, usually by fostering some form of clinging. Yet we must learn through direct personal experience. A healthy dialog between our personal experience and the Buddha's original teaching can be a powerful way to deepen both practical experience and our understanding of Buddha-Dhamma, and also foster a balance that helps us avoid the pitfalls of over-reliance on either of them.

In this **At Home retreat**, teaching will take place **Online via Zoom**. You will need to download and install the Zoom app to participate. This format supports you in deepening your at-home practice, responding to the contingencies of the situation we are in, and fostering sangha while taking wise Covid-19 precautions.

Participants are expected to follow the entire retreat, participate with all the group sessions live or by recording, practice with each day's questions for reflection, and meditate on one's own.

Schedule

We'll start with a **Guided Meditation at 7:00 am on Wednesday April 28th** (all times Central) and will keep the following schedule of Online Zoom Sessions through **Sunday May 2nd 4:00 pm**:

- 7:00 am** **Optional Silent Meditation**: log in for sitting in sangha
- 10:30 am** **Sutta of the Day**: we will closely examine a primary teaching on *ariya-sacca*
- 2:30 pm** **Discussion** with Q/A on practicing with the day's teaching
- 7:00 pm** **Talk** linking the day's teaching with related themes

If your work and family schedules allow, please treat these five days as a special time for greater attention to meditation, silence, and slowing down. If you have family and work commitments, inform them with our daily inquiry of the *ariya-sacca*.

Meditate on your own. Add **walking meditation, yoga, or qigong** as able.

Noble Speech, Listening, & Silence: within the realities of your living situation, abstain from speech as much as possible, especially trivial and frivolous speech, as well as worry-perpetuating, complaining, and blaming speech. To the extent possible, stay off the internet and don't check email. If you must use devices, create realistic guidelines for yourself to wisely limit net browsing and email activity.

The retreat is your own responsibility. The online sessions are meant to support whatever you need to do each day, according to your circumstances, while keeping a focus on the Dhamma of the *ariya-sacca*. Please stay within the spirit of retreat.

All the sessions will be recorded. You will have access to the recordings within a few hours of each session and the audio portion will be available after the retreat, also.

An important aspect of Home Retreat, such as this one, is developing a practice that fits with your own home and life realities. That requires some flexibility. During Covid-19 many people have discovered that having to stay at home isn't enough to meditate regularly. They are finding that



discipline and structure are important. This retreat offers some structure to support your learning and practice.

Dāna: Santikaro's time and teaching are offered on [a donation basis, as are all sharings from Kevala Retreat](#). **The retreat is not “free”**; rather, you are asked to fully participate in the support of Kevala’s work , and in continuing this time-tested method of perpetuating Dhamma teachings. While the amount is up to you, the reciprocal practice of dāna is a required commitment for participating in this retreat. In Dhamma terms, dāna practice is not a marketplace transaction. The amount that represents generous practice will be different for each person. Those with more means are necessarily supporting access to the Dhamma for others with less means. All gifts, both gifts of teaching & practice, and gifts of funds and labor that support them, are gifts to the larger body of Dhamma and Sangha. Together we all keep the wheel of Dhamma in motion.

Registration: Please [complete this registration form on the Kevala Retreat website](#).

Preparation: We will email the first few sutta readings on Saturday April 24th, so that you can start the retreat prepared. We will send an email with Zoom details and further guidelines and suggestions for your participation on Monday April 26th.

We hope you can join us in this life changing inquiry.

Santikaro & Jo Marie

[Ask questions here](#)

