

Home/On-Line Retreat hosted by Kevala Retreat:

Wednesday January 25th through Sunday 29th (three sessions daily)

Divine, Immeasurable Abodes (*brahma-vihāras*)

Through kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity our hearts release from clinging and suffering. These “godly homes” — along with gratitude, forgiveness, trust, and respect — are wholesome cultivations to meet the fear, anger and loneliness that sometimes arrive as our companions as well. Cultivation of the Brahmaviharas is a vital expression of our commitment to Dhamma in a human realm that can feel perilous and divided. By opening ourselves beyond self-centered fixations we embody the better world everyone deserves.

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

Retreat Overview and Parameters

Buddhist tradition honors qualities of the heart that inspire us to behave better, bring well-being and joy, and foster release from egoism. The *brahma-vihāras* (divine abodes, godly dwellings) are a prominent set of such qualities: kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity. The more deeply we embody these qualities, the more we live divinely. The *brahma-vihāras* inform our attitudes towards and relationships with others, including people who are superficially much different from us. We further expand them to include all forms of life. Cultivating these beautiful attitudes and heart qualities brings richness and depth to our spiritual life. The *brahma-vihāras* are also described as immeasurable and boundless releases of the heart. Their expansion of our normal senses of self beyond ordinary bounds dissolves the knot of egoism that suffers.

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, allows for flexibility with your daily responsibilities, and fosters sangha. Some of you will block off the five days to a full retreat regimen; others will engage in more meditation and contemplation than usual while still taking care of “things.”

Participants are expected to follow the entire retreat, participate with all the guided meditations and talks live or by recording, practice with each day's guided meditation and instruction, meditate on one's own, and reflect with the retreat teachings each day.

Schedule

We'll start with a brief **Introduction**, and then **Guided Meditation**, at **7:00 am on Wednesday January 25th** (all times Central) and will keep the following schedule of Online Zoom Sessions through **Sunday January 29th afternoon**:

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| 7:00 am | Guided Meditation: brief introduction, 40 minute practice, and questions. |
| 2:00 pm | Practice discussion (Q/A) |
| 7:00 pm | Evening explication of the <i>Brahma-Vihāras</i> and Noble Path |

If your work and family schedule allows, 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 each day's practice of the *brahma-vihāras*.

Meditate as able, in addition to the daily guided meditation. 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. Be very careful with so-called “news,” which it seldom is. 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 *brahma-vihāras*. 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 registration fee (below) is required and therefore different from *dāna*. Making these retreats possible, maintaining Kevala Retreat for contemplative practice, and our other activities require lots of work and resources. Hence, our dependence on *dāna*. Like many others, we at Kevala Retreat are facing income uncertainty during these times and your generosity is greatly appreciated. (We also recognize that many of you are also facing financial uncertainty.)

Registration: Please [complete this on-line form](#) (specifying “Brahma-Viharas 2023”) and send [\\$100 registration fee following the information here](#). This fee is to encourage commitment to full participation. Nobody will be refused because of inability to pay this fee. Please email us [if you cannot afford the fee](#) so that we can make other arrangements.

Preparation: An email will be sent a few days before the retreat with Zoom details, further guidelines, reminders and suggestions for your participation.

We hope you can join us in renewing these beautiful and vital heart qualities early in the New Year.

Santikaro & Jo Marie

[Ask questions here](#)