

Home/On-Line Retreat c/o Kevala Retreat:

Thursday June 25th through Sunday June 28th (two sessions daily)

Divine, Immeasurable Abodes (*brahma-vihāras*)

Retreat Overview and Parameters

In this At Home retreat, or at other safe accommodation, teaching will take place online, via [Zoom](#). You will need to [download and install the Zoom app](#) to participate. (If you are new to Zoom, we can provide a practice session to help you can get comfortable with Zoom.) This will be my fourth On-Line Retreat since the Covid-19 pandemic has upended many aspects of our lives. This evolving format can support you in deepening your at-home practice, responding to the contingencies of the situations we are in, and fostering sangha during physical distancing. This "retreat" involves two sessions per day to allow for work and other activities between them.

Participants are expected to follow the entire retreat, listen to all the guided meditations and talks live or by recording, practice with each day's guided meditation, and reflect on the role of these "heart releases" in times of pandemic, social strife, and widespread fear.

Schedule: We'll start with a brief **Introduction**, and then **Guided Meditation**, at **7:00 am on Thursday June 25th** (all times Central) and will keep the following schedule of Online Zoom Sessions through Sunday 28th evening:

7 am Guided Meditation: brief introduction, 40 minute practice, and questions.

7 pm Evening explication of the *brahma-vihāras* and noble path

If your work and family schedule allows, please treat these four 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 practice of the *brahma-vihāras*.

Meditate as able, in addition to the daily guided meditation. Add **walking meditation, yoga, or qigong** as able.

Noble 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 *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. However, 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 with which you can learn.

Dāna: Santikaro's time and teaching are offered on [a donation basis, as are all sharings from Kevala Retreat](#). 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 as also facing financial uncertainty.)

Preparation: On Tuesday June 23rd, we will send an email with Zoom connection details and further suggestions for your participation.

Santikaro

thematic description

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 sense of self beyond bounds dissolves the knot of egoism that suffers.

This retreat will explore the *brahma-vihāras* through morning guided meditations and evening talks that connect them with other Buddhist teachings. You can send questions to Santikaro via the chat function in Zoom or by email.

Also, please use this retreat to take extra opportunities for sitting and walking meditation in whatever space you have chosen for this online retreat. While this pandemic persists and co-exists with other crises, we will create a sangha of similarly intentioned friends who support each other, even online.

A couple days before the retreat begins, Santikaro will send necessary Zoom information for joining the meetings.

To [register, email Santikaro with your intention and commitment](#) to follow this retreat.