

Ecodharma Summer Camp 2018

Inner and Outer Nature

Silent Meditation Retreat

Sat July 21-Sun July 29

Empowering Activism

Ecodharma Retreat/Workshop

Sun July 29-Sun Aug 5

Rocky Mountain Ecodharma Retreat Center, Jamestown, Colorado



With Johann Robbins, David Loy, and Guest Teachers

Either Session: From \$600 early discount by April 30, \$650 after.

Both Sessions: From \$1050 early discount by April 30, \$1150 after.

Regular scholarships available

Teachers and manager are supported by donations (Dana)

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

Join either or both weeks of Ecodharma Summer Camp 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.

Session 1: Silent Meditation Retreat: Inner and Outer Nature. The first nine days are 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 the retreat center or in the adjacent Indian Peaks Wilderness. It 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 Teacher, 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 two-night solo site from a variety of locations, from a short walk away to deep in the wilderness. Most past participants have found solo practice a highlight of their retreat experience, sometimes even of their life.

Session 2: Ecodharma Retreat/Workshop: Empowering Activism. The second eight days are a combination retreat workshop, exploring the ways spiritual practice can nourish an ecological and social consciousness based on wisdom and compassion rather than anxiety and anger. Mornings are silent, and include mindfulness meditation in nature (instruction is provided and beginners are welcome), both sitting and walking. The afternoons and evenings will be a combination of presentations, discussions, sharing, and exercises, often in small groups, with additional time for reflection and integration as necessary. The focus will be on awakening authentic direct experience and responsiveness to the state of the planet, and using that to empower and support an awakened activism that you can take back into your life.

These are very challenging times. National environmental policy is upside down, and the problems worsen. Many people are experiencing anger, fear, frustration and weariness, sometimes with a loss of purpose, apathy or even despair. The truth of *Dukkha* (stress, suffering) is hard to miss. And we have our path. By connecting with each other and the natural world, we can see more deeply, support ourselves more sustainably and tap into new sources of energy and inspiration.

This retreat/workshop is not a forum for policy discussion, strategic problem solving, or organization building. It is a deep exploration of what is meaningful and nourishing in your life, and how to strengthen your connection, inwardly and outwardly, with spirit and nature. This will help you become more engaged and motivated, better prepared to face challenges with compassion and wisdom, and inspired to find creative, non-dualistic strategies for working with issues and people as they are.

Doing Either or Both Sessions. While you are welcome to do either or both sessions as planned, we will also support a limited number of people that want the full 16-day silent meditation retreat to stay for the second session, but not participate in the workshop (talking) components. Please note on your registration if you want to do that. A second solo is also an option for those people. Each session is limited to 27 participants.

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.

Here are a few of the comments from past participants (there are many more at impermanentasangha.org):

“Johann and Impermanent Sangha are offering cutting edge Dharma through a form that feeds body and soul. They are taking mindfulness practice into a new era that is at once ground-breaking and timeless, heart opening and mind blowing. I am so grateful for those ten magical days; I'm looking forward to where Impermanent Sangha's wonderful approach to Dharma practice goes next.”

-Lou Leonard, Washington DC

“With Johann and David’s steady hands at the helm, the group felt like an organism, supporting its members in a web of respect and compassion. When it came time for the solo, enough space had been created for me to enter fully into being at one with the Earth and all beings. Time was suspended. It was the high point of the retreat. The retreat opened me up to unabashed love of Earth in concrete terms because of the opportunity to engage in spiritual practices in a wilderness area of great beauty. The Dharma talks led the way, gently suggesting guidance for the journey. A feeling emerged that I could face into the harsh reality of climate change and environmental degradation, because I had touched base with my love of the Earth and all beings. When you love truly, madly, deeply, it is possible to be present and face into calamity and to take action. This retreat gave new purpose to my life, and I am so grateful to all who made it possible.”

-Jody Hall, Ashfield, MA

“The retreat with Johann Robbins and David Loy was a remarkable experience on all fronts. It was a remarkable meditation retreat, a remarkable wilderness experience, a remarkable Dharma teaching and a remarkable way to build sangha. After returning I am quickly becoming an eco-sattva.”

-Much love, Jon Aaron, New York, NY

“My experience with Johann, David and staff was fantastic and life changing. I still carry the peace, teachings and a new found eco Dharma in my heart. I totally recommend this to anybody.”

-Kerstin, Boulder, CO

“I know how distracted I get living my busy life, with so much technology at my fingertips I forget where I came from. After experiencing the wilderness retreat with Impermanent Sangha I see how incredibly divorced we are from the Earth. No wonder we are in a global climate crisis. It is important to take time to experience and remember who we truly are by living under the rhythm of the sky and stars, be in silence, meditate, and remember there is no "me" or "you" without the beauty, cycles, weather and abundance of nature. If Ecodharma is a place you want to explore, these retreats are well organized, safe, and the teachers clear and insightful.”

- Alice, Bozeman, MT

Intro to Ecodharma Summer Camp

Our overall intention is to support deep practice and connection in nature, and how to bring that connection into making change in the world skillfully. In both sessions 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 honest self-awareness, and a willingness to reconsider established ways of thinking, doing and being. Other than this there are no prerequisites to either session, and beginners are welcome and will be fully supported.

Session 1: July 21-29, Inner and Outer Nature: Silent Meditation Retreat, Includes:

- Guidance and instruction for meditation in nature (both sitting and walking)
- Sitting and walking in beautiful wild setting
- Free time for meditation or rest
- Evening campfire Dharma talks
- One on ones with the teachers
- Two night solo, can be close by, or optional vehicle transport to wilderness boundary and adjacent backcountry solo sites
- Delicious vegetarian meals
- Your choice of lodging: single room, shared room, dorm, tent site

Session 2: July 29-Aug 5, Empowering Activism: Ecodharma Retreat/Workshop, Includes:

- Guidance and instruction for meditation in nature (both sitting and walking)
- Silent mornings for sitting and walking meditation
- Afternoon and evening workshops sessions, including small group breakouts and experiential exercises, to support and deepen activism as a spiritual path
- Evening talks and question/answer around the campfire
- One on ones with the teachers
- Delicious vegetarian meals
- Your choice of lodging: single room, shared room, dorm, tent site

We will support a limited number of people that want a full 16-day silent meditation retreat to stay for the second session, but not have to participate in the afternoon workshop schedule. Please note that on your registration. You could do a second solo if you wanted. Of course anyone can stay the whole time and do both sessions as planned.

Guidelines

- The retreats are designed to be enjoyable, not rigorous, but participants are expected to have a willingness to maintain silence during daily quiet periods, to help with necessary tasks, and to cooperate with the group structure and the requests of the teachers.
- Some meditation experience is valuable but not required, and beginners are welcome. Mindfulness in nature meditation instructions will be given.
- Some camping experience (car camping or backpacking) is helpful for the Session 1 solo, but not required. You can stay as close to the center or as far away as you like.
- 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 if there are storms)

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

Time and Transportation

Both sessions 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, let us know what you need or can offer, and we will help coordinate. If you are flying into Denver, CO the airport is 1 1/2 hours from the center, so you should plan on landing no later than 1:30PM so you can get to the center on time. Flights leaving Denver need to be after 3:30PM on your departure day, so you can get back to the airport on time.

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 your 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 so we can begin the retreat together. 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 then we meditate outdoors. Then there is breakfast, and also lunch food is put out and everyone packs a lunch. Session 1 daily activities include sitting, walking, and hiking meditation, with instruction; and time for questions, and support, including one on one and small group practice discussions. After dinner there is a meditation, followed by a campfire talk, and then to bed when the sky is dark. Session 2 mornings will be similar, but afternoons and evenings will be mostly interactive, using a variety of beautiful places on the land.

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, Session 1 will be in silence, and Session 2 will have silent nights and mornings.

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 Discount is Shown: Add \$50 per session to costs below for registering May 1 or later.

The first rate is for either session, 8 or 9 days, the second rate is for both sessions, all 16 days.

Dorm (3-5 people): \$600/\$1050.

Double Room (same sex, 2 people) or Camp Site: \$650/\$1150. Name roommate on the application if you have a preference. Camping is limited.

Couple Room: \$650/\$1150 per person, shared double bed. Please name roommate on application.

Private Single Room: \$800/\$1450.

It is our intention that cost not be an impediment to practice, and half scholarships of up to \$300 per session are available for shared rooms or camping. To apply for a scholarship, send a brief letter 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 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 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. Some people appreciate a guideline: a similar 8 or 9 day nature retreat with fully paid staff would cost \$1200-\$1600: please donate as much of the difference as you can. Please bring a check or cash. We are grateful for your support.

Helper (Yogi) Jobs

During the retreat everyone will have a short yogi job. Some of the work that is necessary to support the group, mostly involving meal preparation and cleanup, will be handled by participants. You will be able to choose a job, and will keep it throughout the retreat. Most participants find serving others in this way quite enjoyable, and a great opportunity to engage.

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. If you require 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 hold 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 nature retreat, and are deeply committed to supporting Ecodharma practice in the wild.

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 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. He is 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 your intentions?

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, except the Session 1 solo.

PACKING LIST

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

For Session 1 solo, and for all campers:

Tent (1 per person for privacy, 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 them from the lodge.

Sleeping pad.

One gallon empty water jug.

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

A small backpacking stove and fuel is OPTIONAL for the solo. You do not need it. All solo food is provided and it does not require cooking, but you can bring a small stove to heat up food, tea, coffee, etc. if you want.

Backpack for solo (large enough for tent, sleeping bag, 2 days of food, clothing and gear). Or you can camp close by and walk your gear to your site.

Bear canister for solo food: if you have one bring it. There are some at the lodge to borrow.
Camp towel for solo.

For All:

Chair: Crazy Creek, Thermarest or similar, or a lightweight camp chair for taking with you outside.
Water bottles: Two 1 liter.
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 trip: blisters are painful!
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 has pillows, sheets and blankets for all beds, but not for camping. Towels are provided for everyone.

PERSONAL:

Check or Cash for Teacher/Staff Dana
Notebook and Pen
Toiletries: biodegradable and scent-free, please, including sunscreen
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