Guidelines for Silent Retreat

Thank you for joining us on our silent retreat. We hope everyone will have a beautiful and meaningful day. This is a group retreat. Guidelines help us support each other in silence and meditation.

Schedule:

10 am – 10:40	First Session
11 am – 11:40	Second Session
12 noon – 1 pm	Third Session (including group discussion)

Before you arrive

- **Keep normal diet and sleep patterns.** This is not the time to make sudden changes. We will have coffee and tea available between sessions and some light, vegetarian snacks. If you have special dietary requirements, please bring your own snacks and drinks.
- **Wear soft fabrics that will not make noise if you move.** Avoid nylon/down clothing that make a whispering noise.
- **Avoid heavily scented shampoos, perfumes, body washes, and clothing.**
- **Consider leaving your cell phone/smart watch in your car or at home.**

On Site

- **Silence begins after the first session.**
- **"Silence"** means no talking, no whispering, no gesturing, no passing notes, no texting, no posting. If possible, avoid eye contact with one another, while keeping a loving heart and perhaps a gentle smile on your face.

During sessions

40" sessions with 20" instruction and 20" meditation

- **Choose your chair or floor space** at the beginning of the retreat and return to the same spot for each session.
- **Once the actual meditation begins:**
  - Try not to move. Settle into your posture and be as content as you can.
  - Breathe in a normal fashion, softly and gently, so no one can hear you. Avoid sighing and deep breaths.
  - Try not to adjust your clothing.
  - Sometimes, coughing/sneezing/etc is unavoidable. Don't strain to stifle the impulse. If you can, give a soft throat clearing noise first ("ah-hem") before coughing/sneezing.

Between Sessions

- **Remain in silence.**
- Consider taking gentle walks. Try not to stray too far. Definitely do not go into shops.
- Gentle reading or journaling can be helpful. Choose inspirational material.
- Or … Sit in the garden and … Do Nothing. Just breathe and practice being happy.