

Suggestions for Creating Retreat Space at Home

While we wish we could be together in person, the virtual retreat reminds us that we don't need to travel anywhere to experience a weekend of mindfulness. We can experience retreat anytime and in our very own home! Below are some suggestions we offer to help you create the energy of retreat in your home:

Prepare meals ahead –

You may consider planning meals ahead of the retreat so that you can easily transition into the practice of mindful eating without the effort to purchase or prepare your food in the middle of retreat. If we were together in person, we would be eating locally sourced vegan meals, so we encourage you to replicate that experience as much as possible to the benefit of our environment, neighbors, animals, and ourselves.

Minimize interruptions –

Our retreat is an opportunity to distance ourselves from external distractions so we can focus on our breath and being present. We highly encourage you to put your device on silent/do not disturb mode, or ideally to give yourself a break and turn it off.

Be comfortable –

We invite you to dress in loose and comfortable clothing. Please keep in mind that you will be on video and other people will be able to see you.

Create a practice space -

We invite you to create an atmosphere where you will feel safe and nourished by the practice. Think of what room, closet, corner or outdoor space (with internet) you can turn into your personal meditation hall or breathing room. This may or may not involve cleaning your space and removing or covering in creative ways to minimize distractions. You can make it cozy with pillows and blankets. You can even have fun decorating it with candles, incense, inspiring messages, images of nature, or anything else that will contribute to a calm atmosphere that will support you in your practice. You might also like to have a plant near the computer during the retreat to remind you of the elements always present in and around us.

You may want to print out and post gathas (daily reminders/poems) around your home, as we typically do during our retreats. Also keep a journal and something to write with on hand so you can engage in journaling and written reflections.

Tea / chocolate meditation -

We will close with a tea / chocolate meditation. Please join us in this fun and mindful practice by having some tea and chocolate ready.

Honoring our ancestors -

We invite you to create an altar to honor our ancestors nearby. You can place a candle, incense, a plant, an object of nature or items of significance on your altar. We will honor our ancestors during the retreat by placing an item that guides us in our activism on the altar so please have this item nearby.

Practicing with screen time -

In these virtual spaces, we know that being in front of screens can require a different kind of

energy for the body and mind. Please take care of yourself and check in regularly. We invite you to turn off the video when you feel it is needed to rest. You can also close your eyes or look out the window, while still listening and being present.

Technical requirements -

Below are some technical requirements that will allow you to participate in the virtual retreat:

- Please Install the Zoom app on your computer and/or phone before the retreat and check to make sure that your camera, speaker and microphone are working properly. For more support on using Zoom, please visit:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/categories/200101697>

- Stable wifi or mobile internet
- Headphones and microphone (from your phone or computer)