



GAIA HOUSE

INSIGHT MEDITATION IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITION

spring 2013  
NEWS



## Welcome

Spring is finally with us, and as the trees begin to blossom, we are delighted to be able to announce that the new permanent Directorship for Gaia House will be shared by Siggie Streat and Diana Parratt as 'Co-Directors'.

Siggie has done a superb job for us as Acting Director over the last six months, keeping the many cogs of the organisation turning smoothly, and expertly steering the team through a complex and extended maintenance period after New Year. Diana has been an extremely dedicated Trustee at Gaia House for some time, and whilst we are sorry to lose her wealth of knowledge and experience from the Board, we are absolutely thrilled to have her joining Siggie as Co-Director. We are confident that Gaia House will flourish under Siggie and Diana's joint stewardship.

We re-opened in mid-February after six weeks of rather hectic 'behind the scenes' activity, and

despite some early teething problems the house is now wonderfully warm and cosy as a result of the work that was done! The maintenance team and all our coordinators did an amazing job of overseeing plumbers, electricians, painters and decorators while new pipework and radiators were installed, rooms refurbished, and facilities upgraded. We have also been incredibly fortunate with the generous assistance of numerous work retreatants and local volunteers, and we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who helped.

As we now settle into the rhythm of 2013, forward bookings for retreats are at their highest ever levels. On the one hand this is fantastic news; but it is also becoming clear that as our programme diversifies and demand grows, we need to look at extending our activities further afield in order to sustain and nurture the practice of more yogis than can physically fit into the house itself each year. Whilst our group, personal and work retreats at Gaia House remain at the very heart of what we do, recent meditation days and retreats in nearby local venues have proved a huge success, and one



# Contents

## Regular Articles

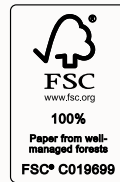
A Yogi Perspective	pg 5
Teachers' News	pg 9
House Life	pg 10
Beyond Gaia House	pg 14
Sitting Groups	pg 18

## Features in this Edition

Co-Directors' Introduction	pg 4
Grace in Receiving by Alan Lewis	pg 6
In Focus - The Next Generation	pg 12
Travelling Lightly to Gaia House	pg 13

## Credits

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All byproducts of the production and printing processes are recycled.

of the Trust's long-term aims is to cultivate a much more ambitious Outreach programme, expanding access to Dharma teachings as widely as possible.

There is another facet to this 'outward' movement as well. Gaia House as an organisation has always been committed to embodying the ethical principles of the Dharma, from fostering a culture of generosity to providing opportunities to give service, to our passion for nature and our efforts to live kindly and gently on this earth. We see a growing number of yogis wishing to make similar commitments in their own lives, especially in exploring the interface between the Dharma and the environment. As we continue to provide the teachings that help individuals find their own peace, compassion and wisdom, we also support everyone in taking those qualities out into the world, and we hope to find more ways to nourish this in future.

**Sarah Hamilton**

Trustee

# OUR NEW CO-DIRECTORS

## introduce themselves...

### Siggi Streat

**Siggi writes:** For the fourth time I will be taking up a role at Gaia House. I arrived as one of the early volunteer managers at the old house in 1985. Some years later I held the reins as House Coordinator while the role for Director was taking shape in 2002, and then stepped in as Acting Director in August 2012 when Andy Power, our previous Director, left.

I feel delighted to be here and have enjoyed the past seven months very much. So many people contribute to creating such an inspiring environment, to supporting each individual on their journey, and in keeping the quiet of the house and the grounds so beautiful.

It has been a period of transition and quite a learning curve picking up on the multiple on-going projects that Andy and the staff had been involved in. During the six-week shutdown in January and February an overhaul of the internal heating system throughout the entire house was the largest project. It is now connected up with the woodchip boiler and solar panels and provides more effective and 'greener' heating. Our deepest gratitude goes to all that have so generously given their time and support to make it possible – just amazing!

Now I am looking forward to sharing the Director role with Diana. We are currently putting together the programme for 2014 and exploring further possibilities for the Dharma to be made available through outreach activities.

I am touched by how Gaia House has grown and developed since my first connection with it. It appears that while the organisation and infrastructure have evolved the silent heart of Gaia House remains wonderfully the same.

### Diana Parratt

**Diana writes:** I'm writing just before starting work as Co-Director of Gaia House at the beginning of April. Siggi and I have been planning how we will work together and have been very encouraged by the positive responses from staff, co-ordinators and teachers to the news of our appointment.

I'm grateful to be able to work in a place that has become increasingly important to me over the past decade. As a regular retreatant I have always felt appreciative of the supportive environment that Gaia House offers. During nearly three years as a Trustee I became aware of how much hard work and generosity from so many people goes into creating that environment.

Gaia House is in good shape (and warmer thanks to the new pipework!). That good shape means we can look ahead to developing what Gaia House offers, to reaching out to a wider range of people and rising to the challenge of operating in an environmentally sustainable way.

A wonderful bonus of being here is that the grounds have become a haven for wildlife. Moments of noticing this help bring me back from my busy thoughts to the present and an appreciation of the ever-changing nature of life.



# A YOGI PERSPECTIVE

**Kestrel O'Conally**

My name is Kestrel O'Conally, and I am 30 years old, from San Francisco, and a psychology doctoral student living in Manchester. For nearly two years, I have benefitted from the Retreatant Support Fund (RSF).



I have been on several retreats, which have all been deeply supportive and life-changing for me.

Living so far from home has been more challenging than I thought! Since I've been in the UK, I've had a severe back injury, the first sign of complications from 28 years with Type 1 Diabetes, and continuing difficulties with depression and anxiety.

A week of silence and spiritual teachings every four to six months has been more than meaningful for me—it has given me meaning. It has transformed the way that I see and live in the world. It has deepened the way that I work with psychotherapy clients, and deepened the way that I speak with friends and strangers.

One of the most profound and beautiful teachings, the practice of loving-kindness, has completely changed the way that I relate to myself.

My attendance at these retreats would have been impossible without the help of the RSF.

With my sincere thanks, and much metta,

**Kestrel O'Conally**

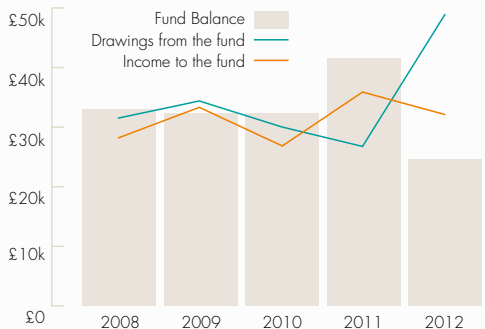
## About the Retreatant Support Fund

Kestrel decided to show her love and appreciation for the RSF by doing a sponsored head-shave on Valentine's Day! (see photo). She raised £380, of which 100% will go to the RSF.

The RSF helps those who are unable to meet the costs of going on retreat at Gaia House. It is financed by donations from other meditators, cancellation fees and the Sponsor Rate. Any retreatant can apply for the RSF and pay just 60% of the standard cost of a group or personal retreat.

However, due to the popularity of the RSF, it is currently being spent faster than it is being replenished (see table below) so we would like to invite you to help us maintain this offering by contributing to the fund if you have the means.

You can make a donation to the RSF on our website at [www.gaiahouse.co.uk/support-us/donation](http://www.gaiahouse.co.uk/support-us/donation) or by sending us a cheque.





# GRACE IN RECEIVING

**Alan Lewis**

“No thanks, I don’t need anything right now...  
was like shutting a door in their face...” Diaphanous Mandala

## I learned a lot about receiving when I was a monk.

I lived as a Buddhist monk without money for 17 years – where everything I consumed (apart from water and toothpaste) actually had to be put into my hands – I couldn’t go shopping for myself, or raid the refrigerator. We could only eat between dawn and noon, and weren’t allowed to store any food. It was an amazing thing – a whole system designed to help you to let go and be with life as it unfolded, and let go of pulling to get this and pushing to get rid of that.

Learning to live monastic life with some understanding and balance took many years, but when it was lived with grace and dignity it was beautiful.

The Buddhist monastic rule was set up this way by the Buddha – so that the monks would always be dependent on the lay-people for their sustenance. We weren’t allowed to grow food either. So the tradition was that every day you’d go out at dawn with your alms bowl, and the villagers would be waiting as you walked silently through their village to drop a small ball of rice into your bowl, or a banana or piece of dried fish, as you passed by. In this way you’d gather enough to eat for the day.

This meant that the monks had to live in a way which embodied the teachings of the Buddha – they had to be dignified, serene and calm and exemplify the Buddha’s teachings. Otherwise the lay-people wouldn’t feed them.

So it gradually dawned upon me that these people who came to the monasteries, sometimes every day they would come, sometimes every week or once a month, they did so to connect with their own religious aspiration, to give expression to their own yearning for Truth – however that manifested for them. And one very tangible way they did that was to ask you “Venerable Sir, is there anything you need?”.

Now monks were also not allowed to ask for things - you couldn’t just say “We’ve run out of this, could you get me that?” You had to wait until someone made an invitation. When someone said “is there anything you need?” you were then allowed to indicate what your needs were.

**In truth we lived in great abundance.** People gave so much to the monasteries we almost always had too much stuff – we would give away soap and toothpaste, towels, cleaning products, rice, the things we just had too much of – we’d give it away to hospitals and charities. So it wasn’t often that you needed anything.



In this situation, I noticed that some monks, when asked “Is there anything you need?” they would say, “No, not really, thanks – I don’t really need anything...”. Like most of us they’d been brought up with this feeling that it’s good to be self-sufficient, and not be wasteful. **If you have everything you need, then why ask for more?**

**But to my mind, it didn’t quite work like that. There was something else going on.**

When someone asked that question, they were asking for the opportunity to participate in your life as a monk, and to connect more profoundly to their own spiritual aspiration, through associating with you – who were living the Buddha’s teaching full-time.

So if they asked that question “Is there anything you need?” and you said, “No thanks, I don’t need anything right now...” it was like you were shutting a door in their face, and they’d feel a bit rejected and denied the opportunity to participate in your life as a monk.

So when I saw that, I realised that it wasn’t about me and my needs – it was about something bigger. And my part in this was to enable my life to be used by them as a conduit to the spiritual dimension, and I could be generous myself by always welcoming that gesture and allowing it to be consummated.

In fact there were always things we collectively needed – such as postage stamps, or razor blades. So even if I didn’t need these things myself, I had an answer I could give them: “Well – I could use some stamps, and some razor blades would be very helpful...” and you could see that this is just what they wanted – an opportunity to go off to seek out and buy these little things, and then come back and make their offering. **And if you took the trouble to open that door for them, they would be uplifted and grateful for the opportunity to serve, to give, to connect.**

So whenever I received something in this way, I would always make sure I made use of the thing they had given – even just a little bit – just one postage stamp or a razor

blade – or if I was given a T-shirt, I would wear it once before washing it and putting it into the communal store for someone else to use at some stage. Consummating their act of generosity felt important – so that when they said “How was the T-shirt?” you could honestly say “Oh, it’s really nice, I’ve been wearing it” (rather than pretend or say, “Oh, I just put it into the stores...”).

**It’s interesting – this giving and receiving thing.** I think in Western cultures we so much emphasize our independence and individuality that it gets way out of proportion. We hate the idea of dependence somehow, and yet we are totally interdependent – participating in a constantly changing dynamic matrix of exchanging – giving and receiving all the time. Sure, the mailman gets paid to deliver the mail, and the bank teller gets paid to do her job, but with just a little extra attention these ordinary transactions with people (whether you are the mailman, the bank teller, the mailman’s customer or the bank’s customer) can be beautiful – it just takes attention and a little kindness – and we all know this! But how easily we get into righteousness when things are not up to our expectations... sad really.

**Money itself is just a symbol for human energy** – so when you start to see all these transactions as ways in which we exchange our human energy, then you can consider “How do we lift this up and dignify it, make it beautiful...?”. It doesn’t take much to say a kind word, express appreciation, or acknowledge what we have received from someone, or make it possible for them to help us. When we fail to do this we miss many opportunities.

I lived for a few years in the East, firstly in Japan, then latterly in Thailand and Sri Lanka, and in Eastern cultures they tend much more readily to perceive themselves not so much as individuals first, but as part of something bigger, part of a company, part of a family, part of a club, primarily as belonging, as being plugged into a network – organically.

And when you are part of something larger than you, you are more aware of having duties and responsibilities towards others, and because others perceive you as belonging, there is a sense of their reciprocal commitment to you which you are held by and supported by. And they seem to have so much joy and fun in groups – always teasing each other in a very affectionate and friendly way and helping one another. Being in a group of Thais, sometimes it felt like they were acting as one organism – **a bit like watching starlings swirling as they fly in formation – it was amazing to see human beings just doing this together, energetically connected, silently flowing with what was happening, rather than the hard-edged Western way** of “Who are you to tell Me what to do?”. Of course it wasn’t always like that, and Westerners can harmonise too – it’s not so black and white. But giving and receiving are the fundamental things we do with each other all the time, and nobody much talks about how receiving can be beautiful too.

So I would go out on the morning alms-round in Sri Lanka and Thailand, and it really affected me. As I walked at dawn, barefoot, enveloped in my saffron robes, eyes downcast, going along the empty city streets, stopping here and there as people came up wanting to put things into my bowl, it was a very moving experience to be able to touch the lives of these people in such a beautiful way.

**Receiving with grace is beautiful. It allows an opportunity to someone who wants to give, and it blesses both the giver and receiver, and in some small way it beautifies the world.**

*Alan Lewis spent 17 years as a Theravadin Buddhist monk and disrobed in December 2000. He now runs a computer business and also a website [www.zenmoments.org](http://www.zenmoments.org). He teaches retreats at Gaia House and is our IT consultant.*





# TEACHERS' NEWS

Catherine McGee

## Teacher Council meeting

At our teacher meeting in January we focused on three specific areas where we see the need for further development at Gaia House:

### Diversity

We would like to find ways to support a greater diversity of people to come to Gaia House. We strongly believe that this would enrich and benefit everyone.

### Supporting and nourishing students...

...in life, outside retreat, by developing and supporting relevant new forms for teaching and practice.

### Responses to climate change

We support Gaia Houses' firm commitment to sustainability, caring for the environment and responding to climate change issues.

We have made recommendations on sustainability to the Gaia House Trustees and are looking forward to meeting with them soon, to discuss how we go forward together.

## International teacher meeting

The Gaia House Teacher Council is part of a wider international teacher Sangha we refer to as the "Insight Meditation" tradition. It includes many of the teachers who teach at Gaia House and others whose talks you may have heard on Dharmaseed.org. This year the teacher Sangha will be meeting at our sister centre, Spirit Rock Meditation Center in California, in June. The previous one was at Gaia House in 2009.

The Buddha encouraged the Sangha to meet 'frequently and in harmony' for the health and long life of the teachings.

I find that being part of this international group, supported by these meetings, brings many benefits, including a widening and deepening of our shared Dharma perspectives.

Exploring our life includes looking at both our mind and the world, which the Dharma recognises as arising together. One major issue of our time is the impact of human activity on our ecosystem. The Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change 'The Time to Act is Now', identifies the roots of the issue in human ignorance, the consequences in terms of the harm and suffering of human and other species, and the need for action.

In one part of the meeting, we will engage in a process of considering how we can bring the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha Dharma to respond to climate change and its impact. I have been collaborating with James Baraz from Spirit Rock (author of *Awakening Joy*), Chris Cullen, and others, on this topic, as part of the planning team for the meeting.

In our tradition, teaching is offered in response to a request to the teacher. So, we would like to invite you to be part of this process by adding your name to a letter written by some members of the Gaia House Sangha, requesting teaching and leadership on this topic, which will be presented at the meeting. This way, your voice, your care and concern for beings and your appreciation for the teachings can be a tangible support in this process.

If you would like to add your voice to support and encourage the teachers please go to <http://www.oxfordgaiahousetreats.co.uk/petition-requesting-teaching-and-leadership/>

With metta,  
Catherine McGee  
Member of Teacher Council

# HOUSE LIFE

## Life mosaic

### By Juha Penttila

I sit here, wondering where to start, how to begin to describe life in this community. I would like to remain truthful and present the reality of my experiences in the following pieces, without the romantic glaze of fantasy.

I have, over the past two years, had the privilege of living in community with a variety of magical animals. The raven who loved being contrary for one, and the cat who would not stop meowing. We've lived and worked together, weaving a communal fabric out of our hearts, to receive and hold all those who came to stay, and they wove with us, holding us in turn. Oh, and if you're wondering about those magical animals, and the details of who was who, the roles rotate and we all take turns being fox, badger, owl and wolf. (This is an Aesopian take on Anatta).

Realism, what is that even? There are endless ways of seeing community life and the unfolding of events here at Gaia, from the daily grind to more sublime interpretations of living together.

The kitchen is freezing on this early winter morning, the floor tiles and stainless steel cabinets appear to be radiating cold into the space as my breath condenses in the air. I feel averse to it all, because - my thoughts are interrupted by the entrance of the kitchen yogi, who smiles and carries on with their work. I am brought back from my complaining. The blue gas flame is beginning to make the water boil now. It is time to add the oats.

These fragments are just a handful of leaves in a forest, to borrow a metaphor.

Some coordinators are converging in reception, playful insults are being traded. I'm trying to balance on the back two legs of a chair, reviewing what I need to say in the opening talk. Today everyone is light and energised by the opening day buzz.

Flirt and innuendo are in the air as spring is arriving. It is a good opening day, the plumbing has not blown up, the walking room is not flooding and the fire-alarms have not gone off.

The multiplicity of it all, the richness of community life is what I am hoping to convey (in 500 hundred words or less, Charlotte, I'm trying).

I sit talking with a friend of how we've travelled through a number of communities here, each arrival changing the social mosaic in subtle ways through their own presence.



I'm not sure what naive assumptions I had of a life of service, but whatever they were, they have now been replaced by a growing trust in human imperfection.

I do not mean anything particularly pessimistic by this. My time here has been good. No, not good, but a full and beautiful spectrum of light and dark. Given choice, I'm grateful for it all.

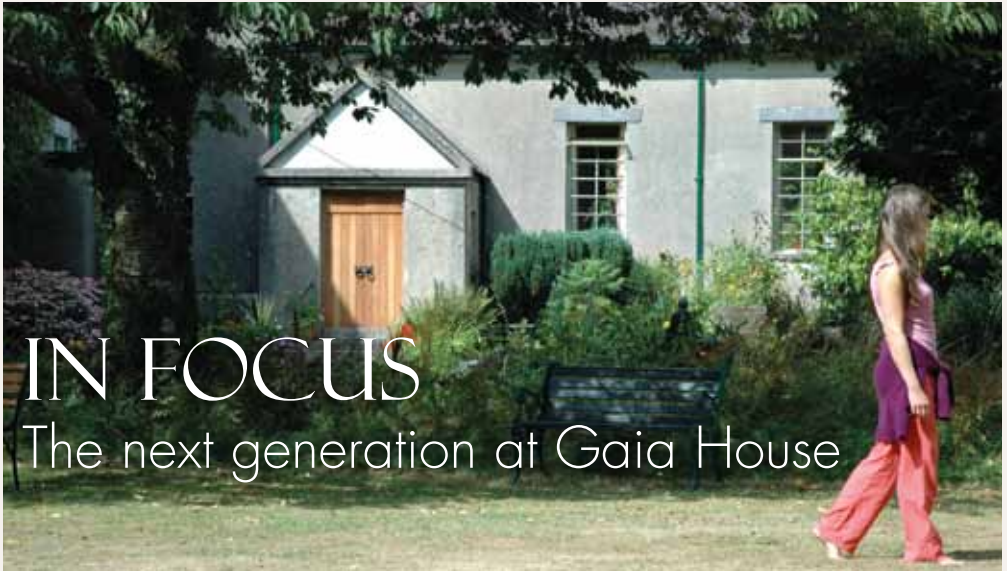


Pictured Left to Right - Top to Bottom: Mark Oylund, Michael Swan, Jane Knight, Brian Watson, Lucy Bennetts, Susanne O'Brien, Juha Penttila, Ramiro Ortega.

## Coordinator round-up

Spring is here – or is it? Although it is now British summer time according to the clocks, there is ice on the pond and snow up north. Even though the seasons are confused, our cycle of coordinators - and the good work they do – rolls on. Juha Penttila hangs up his apron in the kitchen after two years of offering delicious food and his support in the running of the house and taking care of retreatants. He is returning to Finland where he will pick up on his studies on religion in Helsinki. Trish King also left Gaia House at Christmas after dedicated service and kindness in reception and beyond. After a trip to Mexico, she has settled nearby and has already helped us out as a volunteer following staff illness. With gratitude to Trish and Juha, who have offered great service during these past times.

Newly arrived from time in India is Lucy Bennetts, who takes over in the kitchen. As well as having worked as a support worker, she has already had a taste of life in the kitchen, having volunteered as a cook here in her pre-coordinator life. Michael Swan arrived before Christmas to take over in reception, and brings a wealth of skills from past work, which has included group facilitation work, clinical psychology and clowning. Welcome to both Lucy and Michael.



# IN FOCUS

## The next generation at Gaia House

At Gaia House we are keen to enable everyone to have the opportunity to come on retreat and experience the benefits that a retreat can bring to daily life; including relationships, work or study, and emotional wellbeing.

With all the pressures put on the young, learning meditation and mindfulness on retreat provide very practical tools which help reduce stress and anxiety, and build self-compassion and emotional resilience. However, we recognise that there are a number of barriers which prevent

some younger people from being able to participate in retreats.

With these in mind, we hold a Young Persons' Retreat once a year so that those aged 16-25 can experience retreat life together with others of their own age. We also offer a 70% reduction off all our retreats for young people.

If you would like to support us in helping young people to come on retreat, please consider making a donation to the Retreatant Support Fund (see page 5).

### **Young Person's Retreat (16-25): A Path of Wisdom and Compassion**

**Jake Dartington & Kirsten Kratz**

**Sat 25th - Mon 27th May 2013**

**Cost: £34 including food and  
accommodation**

In this retreat we will explore our potential to bring wise and compassionate responses to each moment in our lives. Through sitting and walking meditation, we will learn ways to respond creatively and with increasing wisdom to the obstacles and habits that appear to obscure these qualities.

Our exploration will be supported by meditation instructions, Dharma talks and meetings with the teachers.

*"I have learnt a lot about myself and the practice and this weekend has altogether been a joyful experience."*

YP Retreatant 2011

*"I have had such a wonderful weekend. I have never felt so welcome and comfortable as I have here these past few days. The silence has been so healing for me. I have learnt a great deal which I will extend to use further in my life."*

YP Retreatant 2012

# TRAVELLING LIGHTLY

## to Gaia House

As part of our commitment to greening Gaia House, we have been taking steps to help people get to Gaia House with minimal car use in recent years.

One initiative has involved working with a local company, 'D & M Taxis', to facilitate the sharing of taxis between Newton Abbot, our local town, and Gaia House. The invitation is to book your taxi in advance, and Dave, our guy at D & M, will put you in a taxi share with others arriving around the same time if possible. We've found that this has reduced the number of taxis coming and going here, as well as saving people money. Information about booking a taxi can be found on our 'getting here' page on the Gaia House website, or the website of the taxi company, [www.dmtaxisnewtonabbot.co.uk](http://www.dmtaxisnewtonabbot.co.uk). I'm sure Dave won't mind me mentioning that there is also a friendly local bus from Newton Abbot to nearby Denbury, from where it is a short enjoyable walk. And for those travelling lightly, there is also a beautiful walk from Newton Abbot through forest and fields to Gaia House. Details can be found on the website.

It's pretty easy to get to Gaia House by public transport as Newton Abbot is well served by trains and the National Express coach service.

You can also catch a low-cost Megabus service to Exeter, from where it is a train or bus ride to Newton Abbot, but if you need to bring your car, we would really love to encourage the use of our lift share board, which can also be found in the 'getting here' section of our website. Lift share boards work best when lots of people use them and you simply need to post a message offering a lift or asking for a lift. The lift share board has a facility for people to email you in response to your message. You will also find a reminder about the lift share board on confirmation letters now, so please do take the plunge. As well as saving money (most people are willing to share the cost of petrol if offered a lift), it's a brilliant opportunity to meet others and share experiences of being on retreat. Or sit together in silence!

You never know, you may even start a sitting group together. If you have any questions about the lift share board or travelling to Gaia House in as 'green' as way as possible, we'd be happy to help; please contact us on 01626 335256 or [email info@gaiahouse.co.uk](mailto:info@gaiahouse.co.uk).



# BEYOND GAIA HOUSE

## London Insight Meditation

12 May	Catherine McGee – Day Retreat
26 May	Zohar Lavie and Nathan Glyde – Earthcare Day with SanghaSeva
1-2 June	Anne Michel and Bhante Sukhacitto – Insight Dialogue Weekend
16 June	Martine Batchelor – Day Retreat
22 June	John Peacock – Dhammapada Study Day
14 July	Jake Dartington – Young Peoples’ Day Retreat (aged 16-35)
28 July	Yanai Postelnik – Day Retreat
10 August	Kirsten Kratz – Day Retreat
31 August -1 September	Akincano – Weekend Retreat (come for either or both days)
12 September onwards	Caroline Jones – Six Week Insight Meditation Course
15 September	Ajahn Sucitto – Day Retreat
21-22 September	Noah Levine and Pablo Das – Weekend Retreat (come for either or both days)
5-6 October	Yanai Postelnik – Anger and Reconciliation Weekend Workshop
9 October	Leigh Brasington – Jhana evening
19 October	John Peacock and Chris Cullen – Day Retreat for mindfulness teachers
27 October	Bhante Bodhidhamma – Day Retreat

New events are added all the time, please register on our website to receive email updates.

There is a network of sitting groups in and around London informally linked with us, including study groups with particular themes.

Teachers offer personal interviews in London throughout the year. Register on our website to receive email updates on these and all other events.

### CONTACT DETAILS:

[enquiries@londoninsight.org](mailto:enquiries@londoninsight.org) | 07954 472771 | [www.londoninsight.org](http://www.londoninsight.org)  
[www.facebook.com/londoninsight](https://www.facebook.com/londoninsight) | Twitter: @londoninsight

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# Regional Retreats

## CAMBRIDGE

15 June Martine Batchelor  
7 Sept Rob Burbea  
19 Oct Yanai Postelnik  
Venue: Friends Meeting House,  
Jesus Lane, Cambridge  
Time: 10am–5pm, doors open at 9:30am.  
Info: [www.cambridgedayretreats.wordpress.com](http://www.cambridgedayretreats.wordpress.com)

## OXFORD

1 June Chris Cullen  
Sat 6 July Kirsten Kratz  
Sat 28 Sept Ajahn Sucitto  
Sat 26 Oct Bhante Bodhidhamma  
Venue: Headington Parish Hall  
Time: 10am–5pm, registration  
from 9.15am  
Cost: £10 (£5 concessions)  
Contact: Brigid or David on  
01608 811940  
Info: [www.oxfordgaiahouseretreats.co.uk](http://www.oxfordgaiahouseretreats.co.uk)

## BRIGHTON

26 May Bhante Bodhidhamma  
26 -27 Oct Leigh Brasington  
Info: Bodhi Garden, [www.bodhigarden.org](http://www.bodhigarden.org)

## BRISTOL

11 May Kirsten Kratz, Bearing  
Witness – Opening to Truth  
29 June Ajahn Kovida, Awareness  
and Insight  
14 Sept Rob Burbea, Releasing the  
Self – Freeing its Demons  
30 Nov Bhante Bodhidhamma,  
Mahasi Day Retreat  
Contact: Jill Bird 0117 9551360 or  
Julia Wallond [julia.wallond@yahoo.com](mailto:julia.wallond@yahoo.com)  
Info: [www.bristolmeditation.org.uk/  
day-retreats](http://www.bristolmeditation.org.uk/day-retreats)

## SHEFFIELD

13 April Sangha afternoon, 1-5pm,  
Shirley House, Psalter  
Lane, S11 8YL  
18 May Sangha afternoon, 1-5pm,  
Shirley House, Psalter  
Lane, S11 8YL  
28- 30 June Residential retreat in  
the Peak District with  
Yanai Postelnik.  
21 - 22 Sept Interconnectedness retreat  
with Zohar Lavie.  
Info: [www.sheffieldinsightmeditation.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldinsightmeditation.org.uk)

# BEYOND GAIA HOUSE

## Retreats, Teachings and Workshops

### **BuddhaDharmaSangha Summer Camp**

*17 – 25 August, Dartmoor National Park*

**Yanai Postelnik, Brad Richecoeur,  
Catherine McGee and  
Kirsten Kratz**

An opportunity to practise Dharma in the time honoured way of the Buddha – in the beauty of nature, together with a like-minded Sangha. We combine Insight Meditation, Qigong and Inquiry with the transformational quality of nature and being together in both silence and conversation. There is space for formal practice and discussion groups, as well as time to enjoy being in nature and hanging out with others, walks on the moor, nights around the campfire, star gazing, songs, stories and... more!

Contact Brad Richecoeur 01364 644040,  
bradr@qigong-southwest.co.uk or  
www.qigong-southwest.co.uk

### **A Path of Peace and Happiness**

*21 – 23 June, South Downs, near Eastbourne*

**Yanai Postelnik**

A silent residential retreat which will include some contemplative walking in the beauty of the Seven Sisters Country Park nature reserve.

Gayles Retreat, Tel: 07721 023 845  
info@retreattogayles.co.uk  
www.retreattogayles.co.uk

### **Opening to Truth – Cultivating Compassion**

*27 – 29 September, South Downs,  
near Eastbourne*

**Kirsten Kratz**

A retreat with a focus on opening ourselves, of developing our attention and care and enhancing our relationship with our lives.

Gayles Retreat, Tel: 07721 023 845  
info@retreattogayles.co.uk  
www.retreattogayles.co.uk

### **Uncovering the Radiant Heart**

*28 – 30 June, in the Peak District,  
near Sheffield.*

**Yanai Postelnik**

A silent residential retreat suitable for beginners and experienced practitioners.

Contact Sheffield Insight Meditation  
www.sheffieldinsightmeditation.org.uk

## GIFT TOKENS

Would you like to offer the  
'gift of Dharma'  
to someone in your life?

Contact reception to order  
personalised gift tokens;  
info@gaiahouse.co.uk / 01626 333613



## **SanghaSeva Retreats**

### **Earth Care Day**

*26 May, London*

#### **Nathan Glyde and Zohar Lavie**

A day of working and practising together, expressing our care and love for our planet.

We will be working in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park, a 33-acre woodland in a disused 19th-century cemetery, doing some habitat conservation work. The day will be framed by periods of meditation and contemplation, and will hopefully be an opportunity to meet and connect with like-minded people. This day will be run jointly by SanghaSeva and London Insight.

### **Interconnectedness Weekends**

*22 - 23 June, Brighton*

*20 - 21 September, Sheffield*

#### **Zohar Lavie**

These non-residential weekends consist of a day of silent meditation practice followed by a day of meditation in action: working while practising. Bringing positive action and spiritual practice together gives us a chance to express our care and love for our planet, while also offering an opportunity to meet and connect with like-minded people. The weekends are run jointly by SanghaSeva and BodhiTree Brighton in June, and SanghaSeva and Sheffield Insight in September.

### **Earth Care Work Retreat**

*26 August - 2 September, Devon*

#### **Nathan Glyde and Zohar Lavie**

Connecting to life and the community of all beings through the experience of working with the land. We will be working with the small South Devon charity Trees for Health and the Sharpham Estate, caring for young trees.

### **Being Peace**

*13 - 27 October, Israel and Palestine*

#### **Nathan Glyde and Zohar Lavie**

Working for peace as a spiritual expression and a spiritual practice. We will be supporting Palestinian farmers and working with Israeli and Palestinian human rights activists.

### **The Power of Love**

Retreats at:

#### **Anandwan Leprosy Community, India**

*2-9 December 2013 Silent meditation*

*11 December 2013 - 2 January 2014  
Work and meditation*

#### **Nathan Glyde and Zohar Lavie**

Living and working in a vibrant community of the abled-disabled while exploring our own hearts and what connects us to each other.

# Sitting Groups

A network of meditation groups has developed throughout the UK and beyond, often set up by people who have spent time at Gaia House and wish to remain connected with this retreat centre and their experiences here.

If you run a sitting meditation group and your name and details are not featured here, please let us know and we can add you to this list and our website. Please also email [comms@gaiahouse.co.uk](mailto:comms@gaiahouse.co.uk) to inform us of any changes to your group's current information.

## AVON & SOMERSET

**BATH** Bath Buddhist Group  
[www.bathbuddhists.co.uk](http://www.bathbuddhists.co.uk)

**BRISTOL** Jill Bird or Julia Wallond  
0117 9551360 Jill Bird  
0797 704 503 [julia.wallond@yahoo.com](mailto:julia.wallond@yahoo.com)

**BRISTOL** enquires@bristolchan.co.uk  
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**FROME** Steve Small  
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