

In Buddhism the eight worldly winds represent pairs of opposites, which keep us imprisoned within a very limited world view. They are compelling forces of the heart-mind which keep us continuously preoccupied by trying to achieve one end of the spectrum while desperately trying to avoid the other. These eight worldly concerns – or dhammas as they are called in the Pali language – are generally driven by unconscious beliefs, basic instincts and social norms about what might fulfill us or by the fear of being affected by its opposite.

These eight are: Gain and loss; praise and blame; fame and disrepute; happiness and unhappiness.

In contrast, during this retreat, we will be cultivating the refuges of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Applied practically the Buddha represents the direct knowing faculty within each and everyone of us and can lead us to direct insight into our true nature.

Dhamma is the timeless awareness to be cultivated immediately and steadily through meditation, and represents the wisdom that enables us to reflect upon our experiences instead of being caught up within them.

Sangha is the field of likeminded practitioners, who are dedicated to not being bound by these worldly tendencies. Such wise people respond rather than react to the endless spin of the virtual reality of these worldly dhammas by seeing them clearly for what they are: Merely unsubstantial winds which sometimes blow this way, sometimes that way. Futile trying to build one's self worth on them or invest any emotional energy in things which are beyond our control.