

Be Still & Know - Practices in Silence and Discernment
Silent Retreat with Swami Sankarananda
Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago - Lemont, IL

August 21 - 23, 2026

Welcome

This silent retreat is open to all sincere seekers of truth. To support your inner journey, we provide and maintain a dedicated sacred space. We ask all participants to fully honor the silence during scheduled times and to remain within the embrace of the retreat center for the duration of the retreat, allowing the immersion to do its work.

Retreat Intention

While we often define silence simply as the absence of sound, this retreat invites you to discover a deeper truth. Beyond the mere extraction of sound lies the "Silence in the Cave of the Heart," a positive, living presence of absolute Peace, Fullness, and Joy at your center. Our purpose this weekend is to guide you past the desire to simply get away, and instead help you explore this profound Silence, cultivate a deep relationship with it that you can trust, and carry it forward into your daily life. This Silence is your Home; our intention is to help you to remain Home no matter what happens in your busy life.

Retreat Overview

Deepen your connection to the Divine through silence, meditation, chanting, Yoga Asana, and the timeless teachings of the great Yogis. Swami Sankarananda will serve as your primary guide, sharing wisdom that illuminates the path from fear into a life of abiding peace, love, and joy.

This experience is designed to be profound yet accessible. Whether you are new to silent retreats or seeking a supportive environment for deeper reflection, you will leave with a stronger relationship to Silence and practical tools to dive within.

- [Click here](#) to learn more about Swami Sankarananda
- [Watch a short video](#) overview of the Retreat Goals & Practices

Main Gathering Places

All scheduled events will take place on the Temple grounds with the primary gathering space in the Rathi Auditorium.

Participants are encouraged to be outdoors during personal time.

Meals

Simple, vegetarian meals will be provided by the Temple at a fixed cost of \$30 for the three meals (or \$10 individually if you are not taking all three). This includes two meals Saturday and one Sunday morning. Please bring cash for this, we will request it when you register. Tea and light snacks will be available throughout the day for retreatants.

Sleeping Arrangements

This will be a commuter only retreat. Participants will be responsible for co-ordinating their own accommodations and transport for the retreat. During the retreat days all necessities will be provided for participants at HTGC, including restrooms and changing areas.

Seva (Selfless Service)

As part of deepening our yogic awareness, we will share in *Seva* (selfless service) throughout the weekend. On Friday night, we will discuss the various opportunities to help—such as meal prep or tidying. Sharing these simple tasks is an essential, grounding aspect of our community experience.

Spiritual Counseling

Individual counseling sessions with Swami are available for those interested in personal guidance. We encourage you to make use of this opportunity; scheduling sheets will be provided on-site.

Guidelines

Silence is to be maintained during most portions of the retreat, except for chanting and discussion with the teacher. Silence should also be maintained at home and during commuting time from Friday evening through Sunday at 3PM.

If anyone does not feel well or needs to discuss anything, they should let Swami Ji know.

All communication devices (phones, computers, etc) should be left at home or turned off during the retreat. Please let someone back home know that you will be in a silent retreat. If need be, they may contact Swami at (234) 262-1086. We strongly recommend that you detach from your device for the weekend, and that all commuting participants maintain their silence throughout the weekend.

What to Bring

- Toothbrush/toothpaste
 - Your own personal water bottle. In reverence to our Mother Earth, we will do our best to avoid disposable dishware. We wish this minimalist concept to invite you deeper into a simple, yogic lifestyle.
 - Loose, breathable clothing for yoga classes are recommended
 - Sunscreen, bug spray, any necessities for long outdoor time
 - Yoga mat
 - Meditation cushion / floor chair
 - Any medications you are taking
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Retreat Schedule

Attendance at all sessions is encouraged to maintain the collective energy.

Friday, Aug. 21

- **3:00-6:00 PM:** Arrival & Check-In
- **6:00 PM:** Dinner and Cleanup
- **7:00 PM:** Opening Prayer, Introductions, Retreat Overview
- **7:30 PM:** Satsang (silence begins) - Silent Meditation, Chanting, Dharma Talk
- **10:00 PM:** Lights Out

Saturday, Aug. 22

- **5:30 AM:** Wake up bell
- **6:00 AM:** Satsang - Silent Meditation, Chanting, Dharma Talk
- **8:00 AM:** Yoga Asana / Pranayama Class
- **10:00 AM:** Brunch
- **11:00 AM:** Discernment Workshop

- **12:30 PM:** Individual Sadhana
 - Spiritual Counseling with Swamiji, Seva, Self-guided practice (rest, meditate, journal, etc.)
- **4:30-6:00 PM:** Gentle Yoga Class (Yoga Nidra on Sunday)
- **6:00 PM:** Dinner
- **7:00 PM:** Peace Chanting
- **7:30 PM:** Satsang - Silent Meditation, Chanting, Dharma Talk
- **10:00 PM:** Lights Out

Sunday, Aug. 23

- **5:30 AM:** Wake up bell
- **6:00 AM:** Satsang - Silent Meditation, Chanting, Dharma Talk
- **8:00 AM:** Yoga Asana / Pranayama Class
- **10:00 AM:** Brunch
- **11:00 AM:** Discernment Workshop
- **12:00 Noon:** Peace Walk
- **1:00 PM:** Closing Discussions, Prayers and Arati
 - Practice of Silence Ends. Share your insights & experiences of the weekend!
- **2:00 PM:** Program Ends