

Zen Self-Awareness Retreat: Retreat Days in Auschwitz-Birkenau
"Touching The Wound Of Auschwitz Poetically"
Our practice: Deep Understanding - Grieving and Forgiveness - Transforming Violence

Ways and Methods: Fixed periods of silence (ZaZen in the seminar house, "in the field")
Meditative communication: in a circle(council), in pairs (dyade), through intuitive writing, reading aloud and "healing resonance", during ceremonies, prayer and singing (inter- and trans-denominational, secular-humanistic). - Introduction into Zen-practice and Writing from the Heart will be carefully given.

Duration of trip: 4-25 to 5-3, 2025 (Friday to Saturday)
4-26 to 4-28, 2025 Krakow: *Internal preparation*

Shabbat visit in the evening.

Two guided tours/sightseeing offers (The Jewish Krakow, the open and the hidden ghetto, the beautiful Krakow ...individual time..., Council, writing.

On Sunday at pm: Distribution of seminar documents, questions and answers.

Early dinner together.

Krakow retreat: Why? Those arriving by train or plane must travel via Krakow. If you want to understand the catastrophe, you cannot avoid Krakow, its beauty and its catastrophe. Both also affected and affect our Polish sisters and brothers, whom we are learning to understand more deeply. You will not regret it, we have discussed it at length. Please try to arrive as early as possible on Friday (by 3 pm) so that we can go to the Shabbat celebration together and have a kosher dinner.



Chart 1 friend, peacemaker and writer Regina Dittus

Hotel Krakow: We will reserve a number of single and double rooms up to November 15 and compile a list of cheap hostels for you. You then book your accommodation yourself. On **Monday, April 28, we will leave at 7:00 a.m. in the direction of Auschwitz I.**

Total costs: 1200 € (without Krakow costs. Included: Travel package, accommodation/full board at the Center for "Dialogue and Prayer" in Oswiecim (near Birkenau), transfer costs, *minus registration fee*, entrance fees). We have been informed that the costs at the seminar house will be slightly increased, so please understand if the subject comes up again. We will be as transparent as possible about EVERYTHING that concerns you and us as a group. – Clear guidelines, particularly on and how welcoming conflicts - will help all of us.

[Center for Dialogue and Prayer Oświęcim](#)

Info/ Registration: Monika (seminar leader): m.winkelmann-schreiben@web.de
Registration fee: 250 € Sparkasse Köln/Bonn IBAN DE55 3705 0198 0032 9013 40 or PAYPAL
Registration deadline: until January 1, 2025 (thereafter clarification by telephone)
Cancellation: We recommend to book travel cancellation insurance.
Responsibility: Our journey ('modern pilgrimage') takes place at your own risk.
Language(s): We recommend having a mini pocket book for Polish with you and learning the ten most important vocabulary words. People will love you. But you learn words anyway.
The retreat can be bilingual or multilingual! So far, everyone in the group speaks English, and we also offer Italian, Spanish (Monika) and Dutch (Teresa). So, friends, if you feel addressed, take the plunge! The more international, the more peace!!! And we need that more than ever right now.

Recommended reading: So far by Sabine Bode: "Kriegskinder" and "Kriegsenkel". Both are highly recommended. And Dr. Manfred Deselears (from whom I borrowed the title of the event): Touching the Wound of Auschwitz. (I have another list in the making.) – For English speaking participants I recommend the book „Were you never haunted by your conscience, Rudolf Höss?“, by *Father Manfred Deselears*. Read any book on the subject by *Dan Bar-On*, psychotherapist, group-leader, book-author, peacemaker.

Pre- and post-meetings online/onland: The three pre- and one post-meeting of our first Auschwitz pilgrimage of the Zen group with Monika proved successful from my and our point of view. We grew together as a group and into the topic that frightened and disturbed us. Monika is a trained and long-time expert in self-awareness groups (after Ruth Cohn and others and a long-time Zen practitioner) and naturally applies her knowledge and experience of Auschwitz (it will be her 8th trip there). *Safety and trust (-building)* are the key words of any well run group, and where we are going, dysfunctionality was the rule! These meetings are voluntary and run on a donation basis. Buddhists give the Buddha's teachings generously, i.e. from the heart, and appeal to the generosity of the recipients. A whole book could be written about this.
The **1st pre-meeting** will take place either in the second half of November or in December (approx. from 11.12.). I will send out a doodle list soon. If friends from US are going to participate, we will give preference to the appointments in the evening.

Readings: Regina Pietsch, Teresa and Monika held a first reading of a selection of their texts written before and in Auschwitz in Limburgerhof/Pfalz in July this year. It was a great experience for us, but above all for our deeply moved guests, who got talking to each other in a council immediately after the reading.

We will have our second reading in Bonn in December, hopefully on December 18 (you will hear about it) and will definitely continue with it. – *Looking forward for at least a bi-lingual reading online after the retreat!*

Essays on our upcoming trip with a bibliography plus one on this year's pilgrimage (May 15-26, 2024, with Krakow) with the corresponding photo documentation are also still in the waiting loop. I sometimes need a long time to pre-digest something before it finds words.

I greet you with all my heart and can hardly find words for my trust, my love for you and our 'sacred project', which is just now revealing its meaningfulness like an acupuncture needle in the right place.

Your's, gratefully, Monika