

No matter what we say as architects or what we claim, architecture, or *the process of constructing buildings*, is an act of destruction.

The strength of architecture is it can enrich our appreciation of nature and empower us to take action to protect it.

In Norway there are tough contemporaneous discussions on protection of the natural environment. This includes restriction of building new huts allowed within 100m of watercourse. Mitigation can be where existing structures are being replaced, where exceptional sustainable design can be demonstrated, and where there is benefit to the community.

This retreat seeks a collaboration between **mindfulness** and **nature** practices. It encourages a personal journey of exploration that will guide you into a closer relationship with self, community, and the environment. Why is nature calming? Because we are genetically programmed to find trees, plants, water, and other nature elements engrossing, we are absorbed by nature scenes and distracted from our pain and discomfort. Why do people retreat to nature? It is a time to disconnect and destress. Time to reset and rejuvenate the senses. A retreat to nature is instinctive for most of us and can be a therapeutic antidote to everyday stress.

Our quest is to find a new balance between construction and nature, and to encourage ecological preservation and enrichment.