

# Why Everyone Needs To Go On A Retreat!



Everyone needs to go a retreat to pull back for their busy daily routines, to build a temporary community with likeminded people in a fun natural environment and focus on being spiritually renewed and refreshed with a pace that is unhurried and conducive to rest and relaxation in shared experiences.

The following details will clarify each component of the WHY.

## **Dictionary**

Merriam-Webster defines retreat as “a period of group withdrawal for prayer, meditation, study, or instruction under a director.”

- Time consciously set aside for God, a change of focus, a deliberate act of stepping outside of normal routine by withdrawing.
- A biblical example is Jesus fasting in the desert for forty days.
- **Nehemiah 8:13-18** explains the 'Festival of Shelters' or 'Feast of Booths'. The people are told to go and collect branches and make 'tents' on top of their roof tops or in the courtyard and basically worship God and study His Word for 7 days while living in these temporary shelters. Sounds like camp to me...
- **Matthew 5:1** is a good example where Jesus withdraws from the larger crowd to teach something important to the smaller group of disciples.

## **Pull Back**

One of the most powerful aspects of a retreat is the disruption of the ordinary. Often in the daily rhythm of our lives God gets pushed aside, but at a retreat rhythms are intentionally created to connect with God.

- As you withdraw from your regular life, you can pull together all the energy that’s otherwise fanned out and thinned out in multiple directions.
- It is easier to communicate to God with fewer distractions away from your comfortable living space.
- The rush of our everyday lives is non-stop. A retreat is different; your time is fluid and there is no rush - and that leads to a state of being that breeds inspiration and creativity.

## **Community & Shared Experiences**

Genuine community is not a solo affair. It is experienced together by being fully present through shared experiences where you develop memories and common language. This allows bonds to strengthen through worshipping, learning, praying, eating, talking, and playing together.

- This will help to improve relationships and spend quality time with each other.

- Retreats grant you the opportunity to get close to a lot of people that you may not normally be able to get to know otherwise and often enter the part of their lives that are usually kept more private.
- Relationships are built with God and others.
- People able to bond through shared experience, and then reflect back on that time as they mature. Retreats are often rallying points. In community, they can remind each other what God did and said in that time.
- Safety in all ways (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual; **Luke 2:52**)

### **Spiritual Renewed and Refreshed**

Throughout the ages, the Christian tradition has understood retreat to be an important part of spiritual formation. How long has it been since you were quiet before God? Hear what the still small voice of God will speak to you in the quiet of a retreat.

- A place or time to find inspiration. Inspiration, translates as “to breathe into.” So, you allow God to breathe life into your life. A great place for growth.
- To experience a new awareness of the presence of God.
- Many memories and major life commitments are made at retreats.
- Jesus modeled this pattern of celebration and reflection, and it is instructive for people today as well.
- To rest in “alone time” God (solitude) and reflect on how to take the next step in faith
- Results in coming back with a renewed faith and sense of purpose in our spiritual life and encourage a more active and committed faith.

### **Have Fun**

Seriously, we focus so much on accomplishment. Take some down time to go and **PLAY!!** How often do you get to really play?

- S'mores! Who doesn't love a good bonfire?
- And in Muskoka, no less!

### **Natural Environment**

Surrounded by creation allows us to feel the presence of our creator in a way that isn't possible in the city or the rush of our daily lives. As a person of faith, it is important that you appreciate and enjoy the many things God has given you.

- A lot of retreats will offer individuals a great opportunity to explore a new area.