

Twenty-one questions you've always wanted to ask about women's retreats

(but didn't know whom to ask)

Whether you're a first time retreat participant, a wanna-be or a veteran of many retreats, these FAQs are for you. But if, by chance, you have questions that aren't answered here, just [email](#) or call 919-309-9300.

1. What exactly is a retreat?

A retreat is time that you take for yourself, far from the concerns and routine of daily life. It can be a renewal of your spirit, a place to challenge yourself, a place to be alone or a place to be surrounded and accepted by like-minded ADD-ish women. And it can be a little bit of all of these.

Linda's ADDiva retreats are a combination of transformational and vacation-spa retreats. Transformational because they literally change lives: vacation/spa because you are absolutely pampered! No dishes, no laundry, no meals to prepare. And since they are open only to women with ADHD (aka ADDivas), they are also a place of reassurance, support and even a little education thrown in for good measure

2. Why go on an ADDiva retreat anyway?

Many ADD women find ourselves taking care of everyone else – that eternal caregiver role – that we neglect the urgent call to connect with ourselves. People and Situations insistently cry: “Feed Me!” And we oblige. It's easy to lose yourself.

Your ADHD might be a Big Problem in your relationship or at your job. You need a place to be you, in all your ADD-ish glory! Besides, taking time for you isn't a luxury. It's a necessity. Recharging your batteries allows you to go back to the People and Situations in our lives with renewed energy. Or perhaps it's time for a change. Big. Or small.

3. What can a retreat do for me?

It carves out some time to simply BE instead of DO-DO-DO. And it allows you to take off your ADDiva mask without fear of judgment or disapproval. We all GET IT; we walk in your shoes, too. But sometimes, an ADDiva like you needs to simply take a walk with no particular destination. You may need a chance to breathe deeply and let your shoulders sag, releasing the tension you hold there.

It allows you the rare opportunity to find yourself again. And that can change your life forever.

4. But I can do all that at home. Why spend good money on an ADDiva retreat? I have a coach and a therapist!

How wonderful that you have support at home where you can revitalize regularly! But Sea Change 2012 is a little different. It is continued renewal 24/7. That's why the retreats are residential (to get you out of your day-to-day environment) and span at least five days and nights (you need to time let go of that other world).

"My experience of ADDiva retreats for myself and for the women who attend is that it takes a day or two to really get comfortable in this new space, the retreat center, your bedroom, the other women. Then it takes a couple of days to come back to yourself, allow yourself to realize that there's nowhere to go, no phone calls to make, no alarm clocks for work.

*The last few days of a retreat are when the real transformation happens.
Those are the magical days!"*

--Linda Roggli

5. What do you DO all day long? Is it weird stuff?

Not unless you consider hugs and acknowledgment and deep connection "really weird." But no, we don't walk over coals or jump into icy water or use mirrors in revealing ways (one retreat participant asked about that one!). It's mostly being together in a circle, spending time alone and with the group and gaining a strong new ADDiva support system.

Each retreat has its own unique flow, but generally, the first couple of days we participate in some exercises and processes that allow everyone to settle in and get acquainted. As the week goes on, the retreat gets more personal. Women share their stories, write, paint, dance, sing, laugh, cry.

6. Oh, no! I'm not a writer or a dancer. I can't paint! I'll embarrass myself.

*You can't do this "wrong." Let me say that again: "**You cannot do this retreat "wrong."**"*

These retreats are all about acknowledging you for being exactly who you are, not about shaming you. Whether you (think you) sing off key, (think you) have two left feet and (think you) can't pick up a paintbrush you are loved and supported. No worries.

7. What if I don't want to participate in some activities?

Your fullest retreat experience will be realized if you participate in the entire program. The ADDiva retreat builds on activities from one day to the next. If you sit out an activity, you may miss exactly what you came to

know/see/do. I do ask that you attend every group session. You may "sit out" the boat ride or even the massage (but why would you?).

That said, retreats are YOUR renewal time. What you do during the retreat should fit what you need most. If what you desperately need is time alone, consider a personal retreat instead of a guided retreat. There are retreat centers that often accept individual retreatants.

8. I am just getting through divorce/moving/losing my job/death in the family. I may cry. A lot.

Tears (a lot of them). Laughter (a lot of it). Silence. Raucous noise.

Tenderness. Anger. Sadness. Delight. Joy. They're all part of the ADDiva retreat experience. And you won't offend a soul.

"...who can tell when the well is really dry? Months?

Years? Trustworthy women show up over and over, without a trace of resentment, ready to hug, bear witness, sit quietly, as we reweave, tear out and reweave again."

--from GirlTalk, copyright 2003 by Linda Roggli

9. I'm really shy. I'm afraid I won't fit in.

You may feel shy at first, but the warmth and welcome of the group will put you at ease almost immediately. And there is plenty of time for solitude, so you have time to be quiet and calm. Renewal alone is important, too.

The focus of all ADDiva retreats is 100% positive acknowledgment; you'll be celebrated for exactly who you are—shy or extroverted. And Linda makes sure that everyone is heard, if they choose to be. There is no domination of the conversation or process by one person or group. The Standards of Presence, which are the foundation of the ADDiva retreat, honor each person fully and openly.

10. I won't know anyone else, which makes me a little nervous and unsettled.

Completely understandable. We are all a bit nervous at the prospect of meeting a roomful of new people, especially far from home, having spent money to attend. "Did I make the right choice?" we ask ourselves. Psychologists call that post cognitive dissonance – second-guessing ourselves.

Your retreat experience will be even richer if you don't know anyone else. When you bring along a friend, you risk trying to maintain your image in her eyes. And for heavens sake, don't bring along a friend who doesn't know and love the real you – that would be silly (not to mention self defeating!). When you come to an ADDiva retreat, come with the expectation that that you'll have NO expectations – no need to hang onto your old way to thinking or being, no need to maintain the façade. Linda's processes break the ice quickly and allow you to feel comfortable in a short time.

11. A friend of mine went to an ADDiva retreat and loved it, but how can I be sure I'll have the same experience?

That depends entirely on you. You create your own experience, you know. If you come in with an attitude of "OK, prove that this works!" you'll probably leave disappointed – only because you haven't allowed yourself to open up full to the possibilities available to you. You've spent precious energy fighting the miraculous changes that can happen at Sea Change. As a matter of fact, let's set the record straight right now: you get from an ADDiva retreat exactly what you give. Arrive full of excitement and intention to change your life and that is precisely what will happen!

12. My husband/partner thinks the whole thing is silly. He/she thinks I should just stay at home and talk to him instead of a bunch of other women!

Which is why we won't be inviting spouses to our women's retreats! Or perhaps we should invite them for exactly the same reason! Seriously, many husbands or partners don't understand the necessity of spending time with other women who are supportive and acknowledging.

Family members and even friends can fall into a rut in the way they think about and talk to you. The point of a retreat is to decide whether the old patterns are still working for you. If you bring along the person who created the pattern with you, it's not so easy to look at the patterns. Ditto for talking to husbands or mothers or friends or even therapists (nothing wrong with therapists, mind you).

13. What will the rest of my family do without me?

To paraphrase an old disco song: "They Will Survive!" Unquestionably, they will be fine without you for a week. Yes, it's a challenge to find a child care provider or fill the freezer with casseroles. But it's possible; your family may be a lot more resourceful than you believe. There are husbands, partners and children who rustle up dinner, take dirty shirts to the cleaners, wash their underwear and actually appreciate you MORE when you return. It's a lot like taking a vacation from work – you work ahead a little bit before you leave and then you catch up after you return.

14. Will I be really isolated? Will I be able to stay in touch with my family?

A retreat is separated from the world a bit, but it's not isolation. To the degree that you choose to be in touch, you can be. However, Linda strongly

recommends that you check in only once a day at the most. If you can stand it, wait two or three days before talking to the people you left at home. And do NOT call the office! You're on retreat!

15. I really don't think I can afford it right now.

Spending \$2000 or more on a retreat can seem daunting (or not, when you consider it includes food and your room AND the retreat) but the real question is: can you afford NOT to be at the retreat that is calling your name?

How much does your ADHD cost you right now? Linda estimated that over the years, hers cost more than \$200,000! Going to Sea Change might actually SAVE you money in the long run!

And what price tag would you put on becoming the woman you know you were meant to be? What's the price of freedom? And more importantly: when WILL you be able to afford it?

Women have concocted creative solutions to finding money to attend the retreat. One woman took out a loan for her airline ticket and rental car. Another one got a windfall from her Social Security payments at the last minute. Set your intention and allow the Universe to unfold its mysteries to you. And stay open to extraordinary possibilities.

16. What if I want to leave early? Will I get a refund?

You may choose to leave early, although Linda strongly discourages it. The very thing you're looking for might be in the next process or the next session or the next day. But you are a adult woman. You make your own choices. And no, there is no refund for leaving early.

17. I don't want to drive from the airport. Is local transportation or a carpool provided?

The price of the Sea Change retreat does not include transportation. However, there is usually someone flying in who is willing to share a rental car. We can match you up when the time draws near.

18. I have special nutrition and dietary needs. Can you provide food just for me?

Absolutely! We accommodate almost any special diet (vegetarian, no gluten, no dairy) and we adjust our menus to your needs. If there is something special you like, you can certainly bring it along. Never fear – you won't go hungry!

19. I have mobility problems. I can't walk far and need a wheelchair. Can I still attend?

Yes, the ADDiva Sea Change retreat is wheelchair accessible with an elevator that stops at all floors and a smooth deck that will allow an expansive view of the beach. The one thing we can't do is get you down to the sand (but we'll bring some up to you!).

20. I don't know quite how to ask this without sounding ... well, strange. But here goes: it's an all-women's retreat. Does that mean it's for lesbians?

It's about time you asked that question! Let's clear the air! Any woman - ANY WOMAN is welcome to attend the ADDiva retreat. And yes, lesbian women have been at the retreats, but it's not a lesbian retreat.

For Pete's sake - self-development and personal growth are for EVERYONE. So, if you are gay, you're welcome. If you're not gay, you're welcome. But if you have strong feelings against either one of those two, better find another retreat.

21. What are the right reasons to go on a retreat?

To find yourself. To love ADD-ish self more. To replant your dreams. To connect with other ADDivas. To tie a knot in the end of your rope so you can hang on a little longer. To expand your view of yourself and the world. To rest, renew, reinvigorate your life All of them are "right answers."

22. Bonus question:

What are the right reasons for going on a retreat for YOU? List them on a piece of paper:

1

2

3

4

5

6 (if you already have six more reasons to attend this retreat.. get yourself over to <http://addivaretreats.com> and **REGISTER!**)