

5 harmful and dangerous ways to retreat in darkness

from Andrew Durham's book, [hygienic darkroom retreat format > warning](#)

warning

There are five harmful and dangerous ways to retreat in darkness. I learned about them the hard way and am paying the price to this day. The only possible point of my enduring them was so I could warn you. These are little gateways to hell. I sincerely wish for you heed my words and to avoid such suffering.

Fortunately, avoiding it is easy once you know. I will just list them here and point you to longer discussions of them elsewhere in the book. Just say no to:

1. Mini-retreating even one minute behind schedule. See [mini-retreat format > retreat > mini-retreat](#)
2. Ending a retreat without transition days. See [4-day retreat format > retreat > 4-day retreat](#) and [protocol > post-retreat](#).
3. Doing many 4-day retreats rather than quickly advancing to 8-day, medium, and long retreats. Very serious no-no, folks. Again, see 4-day retreat above and [hygiene > false capacity](#). There, I have understated the matter simply because it cannot be overstated.
4. Sub-standard darkrooms. We become vulnerable in darkness. We are fools to tolerate the irritations of poor design and construction: noise, low air-quality, discomfort, cold drafts, etc. See chapters 7-11 for how to build or judge a darkroom suitable for hygienic retreats. Which few people operate. It's time to build world-class darkrooms.
5. Retreating with poor support:
 - o insufficient support
 - o inexperienced, ignorant, or indifferent support
 - o supporters or uninvolved people who are hostile to you or to retreating itself. Say no to abusive relationships.
6. I know I said five dangerous ways, but maybe there are more. And worse. Why find out? There is no penalty for following the guidelines. Until you have gotten somewhere and know what you are doing, stick to the tried and true. Err conservatively. Be reckless about some other part of your life. The most amazing thing you ever do is bound to have rough edges if handled incorrectly. Don't pet pigs backwards, either.

Ok, now you know, so you are safe. Back to the many wonders of hygienic darkroom retreating.