

Metta – The Heart’s Release
Teachers: Gina Sharpe & Marcia Rose
One week: February 7-14, 2014
at San Geronimo Lodge in Taos, New Mexico

INTRODUCTION

Metta is a traditional practice of unconditional loving-kindness or friendship. In Buddhism it is taught and cultivated as a meditation practice and a way of life along with compassion, appreciative or empathetic joy (rejoicing in the happiness and success of others), and equanimity. These practices develop concentration and a steadiness of mind and heart. Fearlessness, self-confidence and self-acceptance are strengthened. As we open to an expansive loving heart, our fundamental interconnectedness to all life is revealed. This retreat is devoted to cultivating these qualities.

This one-week retreat will be held in Noble Silence and will include sitting and walking meditation with instructions, *Dharma* talks and group and individual meetings with the teachers. *Both new and experienced students are welcome.*

PREREQUISITES FOR THIS RETREAT

We invite anyone with a sincere interest in the *Buddha Dhamma* to join us for this retreat. You will need to complete an application for the retreat, and it will be reviewed by the teachers.

Please be sure to fill out the application sections asking for any meditation and retreat experience, as this information will be helpful to the teachers. Where applicable, include details of the retreats, including teachers’ names, dates, location and length of the retreat.

The retreat will be limited to 20 practitioners, so early application is suggested. It is asked that retreatants commit themselves fully to their stay. All business and family obligations should be taken care of prior to arrival so that practice and study can be uninterrupted.

TEACHERS

Gina Sharpe was born in Jamaica and immigrated to New York at the age of 11. She is co-founder of New York Insight Meditation Center where she currently serves as the Guiding Teacher. Trained as a retreat teacher in a joint Teacher Training Program of Spirit Rock Meditation Center and Insight Meditation Society, Gina teaches at various venues around the United States including Spirit Rock, Insight Meditation Society, Vallecitos Mountain Refuge, Mid America Dharma, Garrison Institute, Asia Society, Tibet House, the New York Open Center, the Katonah Yoga Center and a maximum security prison for women. She has been teaching the Dharma since 1995. Prior to retiring from the practice of law, she practiced as a corporate litigator and then as a corporate lawyer, and also served as an executive in the financial field.

Marcia Rose lives in Taos, NM. She is the founding and guiding teacher of *The Mountain Hermitage*. She has been studying and practicing Buddhist teachings and meditation with Asian and Western teachers since 1970, primarily in the *Theravada-Vipassana* (Path of the Elders) tradition. Her own teaching reflects a clear influence from the Burmese *Mahasi Vipassana* and *Pa-Auk* Forest Monastery lineages. Marcia was resident teacher for staff at the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) in Barre, MA from 1991-1995. She continues teaching at IMS as an occasional visiting teacher and is also a regular visiting teacher at The Forest Refuge in Barre, MA. Marcia also teaches *Vipassana*, *Brahma Vihara* and Concentration retreats in other U.S. and international venues, and is

dedicated to offering these ancient and timeless teachings in ways that make them accessible and authentic for contemporary culture.

Besides the teachers, the staff of this one-week *Hermitage* retreat will consist of a resident retreat manager (the point of contact in case of any difficulties) and a retreat cook. There will be three nutritious vegetarian meals per day.

THE RETREAT FACILITY

San Geronimo Lodge is situated among fruit trees along the banks of the *Acequia Madre*, and provides the privacy, quiet, and sense of harmony that is most conducive to intensive practice. There is a beautiful meditation hall and indoor and outdoor walking areas.

The Mountain Hermitage will have exclusive use of San Geronimo Lodge during this one-week retreat. The meditation hall, indoor walking spaces, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms are all within one building. There is one wheelchair-accessible double bedroom to allow for an attendant, if needed.

FEES

Fees are on a sliding scale to allow you to pay according to your means. Our actual cost for the week-long retreat per person is \$685. A portion of our scholarship fund is being allocated for this retreat to allow us to offer the low range on the sliding scale. Please pay as much as you are able, in order to allow others to attend who need to pay less. Any amount above \$685 will be gratefully received and treated as a tax-deductible donation.

Sliding Scale Fees:

\$585 (*low*) \$685 (*actual cost*) \$785 (*benefactor*)

If you need more scholarship support, some additional funds are available. Please fill out a scholarship application form and send it with your application form, specifying how much you feel you are able to pay.

There will be a mix of single and double rooms. Anyone paying below actual cost may be sharing a room. Single rooms will go to the first 10 registrants paying at actual cost or above.

The Mountain Hermitage will gratefully receive donations to our scholarship fund to enable those in financial need to attend this retreat. Donations are tax-deductible and should be marked 'Scholarship Fund'.

DANA

The retreat fees only cover basic expenses and operating costs. The teachers offer the *Buddha Dhamma* without any set fee, and totally depends on *DANA* – on the generosity of their students and benefactors – for the support of their daily life needs.

DANA, an ancient *Pali* word meaning generosity, giving, or gift, is central to the 2,600-year-old tradition of Buddhism. The teachings of the Buddha have been offered freely since the time of the Buddha. There was and is no way to put a price on the teachings of the truth – they are valuable beyond any fee one could set.

At the end of the retreat, envelopes will be provided for you to offer *Dana* to the teachers. Giving to the teacher from the heart, whatever feels appropriate, is the practice of *Dana*. You may also wish to offer *Dana* to the staff or to the *Hermitage* itself to support operating expenses or future scholarships.

Another way to support the *Hermitage* is to donate all or part of the cost of a meal during the retreat.

USE OF FEES

Your fees for the retreat will be used to pay for: rental of the San Geronimo Lodge and attached expenses; other general retreat expenses; a retreat cook; a small stipend for the retreat manager; a small parsonage to the teachers to help cover ongoing home expenses for the duration of the retreat; teacher transportation.

DEPOSIT

Please send your deposit with your application. The deposit is: \$275.

The deposit will not be banked until your registration is confirmed and will be applied to the total fee for those accepted to attend. The deposit will be returned in full to those not accepted, or to those who are on a waiting list at the time that the retreat begins.

PAYMENTS

The full deposit must accompany your application, even if you are requesting scholarship funds. No monies will be banked until you are accepted on the retreat. The balance of the retreat fee is due when you arrive for the retreat, or you can mail the balance to us in advance. If possible, we appreciate you paying the full fee (deposit plus balance) at the time of application or on acceptance, as this improves our efficiency. However this is not necessary.

Please pay by check or money order in US funds, drawn on a US bank. We cannot accept foreign cash or bank drafts, but we can accept international money orders in US dollars. *Sorry, but we are unable to accept credit cards.*

Checks/money orders should be made payable to *THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE*.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation fees apply to all confirmed registrations.

Cancellations received on or before December 7, 2013: your deposit will be returned minus a \$50 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received between December 7, 2013 and January 7, 2014: your deposit will be returned minus a \$125 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received between January 7 and January 28, 2014: your deposit will be returned minus a \$200 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after January 28, 2014 (including non- attendance at the retreat): your deposit cannot be refunded. If you have already paid the balance, then that balance will be refunded minus the \$275 cancellation fee/deposit.

CANCELLATION FEES WILL BE APPLIED TO *THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE* SCHOLARSHIP FUND (after the cost of the retreat is covered).

In the event of specific, unusual emergency circumstances, the cancellation policy can be discussed with *The Mountain Hermitage* Office Manager after the retreat is concluded.

If you attend the retreat but for some reason decide on your own to leave early, the deposit and balance you have paid cannot be refunded to you.

APPLICATION

Anyone interested in attending the retreat must have read this document. Then, complete the Application Form and Waiver of Liability, attach your deposit, and mail to: *The Mountain Hermitage*, PO Box 807, Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557.

Applications and deposits are requested by December 7, 2013. Late applications will be considered on a space available basis. Applications will be accepted only by mail, not by phone, fax, or e-mail, because they must be accompanied by the appropriate deposit. Incomplete registrations, including those without sufficient deposit, will be returned for completion.

Each application will be carefully reviewed. In some cases, a personal or phone interview will be conducted with one of the teachers prior to determination of suitability for this type of practice. All applications are processed by date received. We will respond within four weeks from receipt of your application.

If your application is not accepted for this retreat, your deposit will be returned.

WAIT LIST

Places are limited to 20 practitioners, so early application is advised. Once the retreat is full, you will be notified and placed on a wait list, and we will contact you if a place opens up. If it does not, then your deposit will be returned.

If you are placed on the wait list and you then cancel your registration before a space has become available, your deposit will be returned.

If you are placed on a wait list and are unable to attend the retreat, please let us know immediately. As long as your name remains on a list, we assume you wish to attend. If a space becomes available, we will automatically confirm your registration. Once you are confirmed for a retreat, you are liable for applicable cancellation fees if you subsequently cancel.