

Finding Freedom Through Insight Meditation

One-Week VipassanaRetreat

With Brian Lesage

February 21 – 28, 2016

San Geronimo Lodge, Taos, New Mexico

INTRODUCTION

Insight meditation is a simple and direct practice based on moment-to-moment awareness, a technique that opens the heart and clears the mind. This will be an opportunity to practice continuous mindfulness in silence throughout the day—in sitting and walking meditation. In the silence we are freed from much of the daily barrage of stimulus that draws our attention outward, letting us delve deeply inward. Learning to be aware of our experience from a place of stillness and equanimity allows us to see more clearly, and as insight deepens, compassion and wisdom can arise.

The retreat is designed for beginners and experienced practitioners alike and will include meditation instruction, dharma talks, teacher interviews and discussion time.

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.

TEACHER

Brian Lesage has practiced Buddhist meditation since 1988 and has taught meditation since 2000. He has studied in the Zen, *Theravada* and Tibetan schools of Buddhism. He was ordained in the *Rinzai* Zen tradition in 1996. His training in *Vipassana* Meditation includes doing extended meditation retreats in Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, and India as well as numerous retreats in the U.S. He leads retreats and teaches meditation courses nationwide. Brian also has a private practice in Somatic Experiencing, which is a naturalistic approach to healing trauma. (You can visit his website for Somatic Experiencing at: www.liberatingawareness.com.)

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 the period of the *One-Month Hermitage*. Retreatants paying at full cost or above will have their own single room and bathroom, while those receiving scholarships or paying at the low end of the scale may possibly be assigned to share a spacious double room with attached bath. Each room, whether used as a single or double, is spacious enough to allow for both sitting and walking meditation for those who wish to practice in a more secluded setting.

The meditation hall, 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.

Information about transportation and what to bring will be sent to those accepted into the retreat in time for making travel arrangements and packing.

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 \$750. 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 \$750 will be gratefully received and treated as a tax-deductible donation.

Sliding Scale Fees:

\$550 (low) \$750 (actual cost) \$950 (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 Columbine Inn 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; and 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 in 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 at this time 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 10, 2015: your deposit will be returned minus a \$50 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received between December 11, 2015 and January 10, 2016: your deposit will be returned minus a \$125 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received between January 11 and February 10, 2016: your deposit will be returned minus a \$200 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after February 10, 2016 (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 10, 2015. 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 the teacher prior to determination of suitability for this type of practice. All applications are processed by date received. We will respond within two 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.