

# The Mountain Hermitage

## *A Study Retreat with Venerable Dhammadinna*

Topic: Bodhicitta for Practitioners of Metta (Loving Kindness)

June 30 - July 7, 2017 at the

Columbine Inn, Taos Ski Valley, New Mexico

### **INTRODUCTION**

This retreat will focus on the study of *bodhicitta* for practitioners of *metta* (loving kindness meditation.) The Buddha taught *metta* meditation to quell fear and anger, to promote harmonious relationships, and to purify the mind in concentration. The benefits of this practice touch every aspect of our lives.

We will draw from a handful of sources for our study, including *suttas* from the *Pali* canon and teachings from the Tibetan tradition on *bodhichitta*, the awakened heart. We'll also give attention to Western neuropsychology. Each of these contributes a distinctive strand of meaning to the fabric of this practice.

This retreat will teach various techniques for cultivating loving kindness in sitting, walking and guided meditation. Students can relax and sit comfortably in chairs or on cushions; no special posture is required. There will be meditation instruction in the mornings, and lecture/discussion in the afternoons and evenings. A period of very gentle body awareness exercises performed lying down will be offered as an enhancement for the sitting and walking. This retreat is suitable for practitioners at all levels of experience, including those new to meditation and to the retreat experience.

### **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 teacher.

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

The retreat will be limited to 16 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

**Venerable Dhammadinna** began her study and practice of meditation at IMS in Barre in 1980 while studying biology at the University of Massachusetts. Upon receiving her degree in 1983 she took robes with the great ascetic Burmese meditation master Ven. Taungpulu Sayadaw at his forest monastery near Santa Cruz, California. In 1984 she returned to IMS for a retreat with Ven. U Pandita Sayadaw and stayed for an extended period of practice, culminating in a three-month retreat with the Indian meditation master Dipa Ma. Soon thereafter Ven. Dhammadinna joined Ven. Taungpulu Sayadaw in Burma and for the next few years lived a traditional monastic life, practicing meditation and joining the daily almsrounds in the villages. After Sayadaw's death she was invited to join the community of Ajahn Buddhadasa in South Thailand and help teach the monthly retreats. Ajahn Buddhadasa's progressive outlook on *Dharma*, his creativity, and his openness toward women as practitioners and teachers made this period of study, practice, and teaching especially meaningful. In 2000 Ven. Dhammadinna met His Holiness the Dalai Lama and he accepted her as a personal student. This began an exciting time experiencing the cross-fertilizing power of the *Theravada* and *Mahayana* traditions. In 2006 she was invited to Seattle where she co-founded Bodhiheart Sangha with Tenzin Jesse. Ven. Dhammadinna is deeply committed to the practices of samatha and vipassana meditation shared by both the *Theravada* and *Mahayana*.

*Besides the teacher, 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

The Columbine Inn, in Taos Ski Valley, is a comfortable timber-frame lodge situated among tall pines at 9200 feet elevation in northern New Mexico's beautiful Sangre de Cristo Mts. The Mountain Hermitage will have exclusive use of the Columbine Inn during the period of this one-month retreat, enabling us to provide the privacy, quiet, and sense of harmony most conducive to intensive practice.

There is a lovely meditation hall, indoor and outdoor walking areas, and full dining room. All of the rooms at the Columbine Inn include a private toilet and shower. Many of the rooms are spacious enough to allow for sitting and walking meditation for those wishing to practice in a more secluded setting.

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 \$877.

A portion of our scholarship funds is being allocated for this retreat to allow us to continue 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 \$TBD will be gratefully received and treated as a tax-deductible donation.

**\$677 (low)   \$877 (actual cost)   \$1096 (benefactor)**

If you need more scholarship support, additional funds may be 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 teacher offers the *Buddha Dhamma* without any set fee, and totally depends on *DANA* – on the generosity of their students and benefactors – for the support of her 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 teacher. 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 Study 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 stipend to the teacher 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.

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 May 29, 2017: your deposit will be returned minus a \$100 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after May 30, 2017, 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).

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 as soon as possible. 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 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 16 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.