

**Recognizing Natural Awareness**  
Five Day Online Insight Meditation Retreat  
*With Greg Scharf August 13 - 18, 2021*

**INTRODUCTION**

Meditation can be seen as the process of learning to recognize and trust a natural quality of awareness that is available to all of us in any moment no matter what is happening in our experience. This awareness allow us to open to and connect with the truth of each moment.

As we gain confidence in the mind's ability to recognize this natural awareness we begin to release the burden of trying to control, manipulate, or fix experience so that it meets our ideas of the way it should be, and relax into the truth of the way it actually is.

Clear seeing and wisdom arise naturally and we see directly for ourselves what leads to well-being and freedom and what leads to suffering, both in our own life and in the world around us. Through this process we begin to live our lives from a place of greater balance, integrity, confidence, and connection.

The retreat is open to beginners and experienced practitioners alike and will include meditation instruction, dharma talks, practice meetings with the teacher, and optional mindful movement. Applications and deposits are requested no later than July 30, 2021. Printable forms are at the bottom of this page.

**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.

**TEACHER**

Greg Scharf began meditating in 1992 & has been teaching residential meditation retreats since 2007, including the annual 3 month retreat at the Insight Meditation Society where he serves as a guiding teacher. In his teaching Greg emphasizes the understanding that meditation is fundamentally an exploration of nature and natural processes. He also stresses the critical importance of bringing the qualities of kindness, compassion, and a sense of humor to practice.

Greg has a long-standing relationship with the country & people of Burma (Myanmar) where he trained as a Buddhist monk and where he works with a small humanitarian aid project - particularly targeting education, health-care, and support of Buddhist Nuns. Currently living in the high country of northern Arizona, Greg's love of nature and the outdoors deeply informs both his practice and teaching.

The staff for this online retreat includes the teacher, retreat manager(s), and admin support. *There will be a pre-retreat Orientation & Technical meeting on Thursday, August 12, 2021 from 11am-noon (MDT) which all are required to attend.*

### **ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE**

Yogis are encouraged to maintain sustained and continuous practice during their participation in this Mountain Hermitage online retreat. Teaching support for this retreat will consist of daily morning practice instructions, small group practice meetings, Dhamma Talks; and an optional daily mindful movement session based on QiGong.

The conditions of our home life vary individually and we understand that this will affect the way that each of us enters into a period of retreat. How much available time we have, whether we are living alone or with others, the degree to which we are able to immerse in silence, and responsibilities we may have for others, will all affect the form our retreat takes.

We would like this retreat to support as wide a range of conditions as possible. In this regard, it is possible to take part in the retreat while living in seclusion and solitude, and equally possible to do it while living with one's family and taking care of daily responsibilities. Please do your best to enter as fully into the retreat as your home life will allow.

We will offer a suggested daily schedule, so that those who are able can engage in continuity of practice for the whole day. And, those whose lives at home involve duties & responsibilities that must be attended to can attend while participating in just the teacher-led sessions.

For more information on how to navigate an online retreat, please read the Online Retreat Guidelines Document below.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

The general retreat schedule will consist of events such as Dhamma talks, practice meetings, question and answer sessions, guided sits plus a suggested schedule of sitting and walking practice. The time frame for this retreat will be U.S. Mountain Daylight Time (MDT.) Please check the related time where you will be living during this online retreat. All instructions, guided sits, reflections, Dhamma Talks will be recorded and available during this 5 day online retreat.

*\*There will be a pre-retreat Orientation & Technical meeting on Thursday, August 12, 2021 from 11am-noon (MDT) which all are required to attend.*

## DAILY SCHEDULE

\* Teacher-led sessions are in **bold**. All times are MDT - mountain daylight time

6:45 a.m. Wake up

**7:15 a.m. Sitting meditation**

8:00 a.m. Breakfast

**9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Sitting Meditation with Instructions**

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Individual practice

**10:30 -12:00 Small group practice meetings**

12:00 p.m. Mindful meal & daily activities

2:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Individual practice

**3:00 p.m. optional mindful movement with Greg**

5:30 p.m. Mindful meal & daily activities

**7:15 p.m. Dhamma talk/Reflection**

8:15 - 10:00 p.m. Individual Practice

## FEES

Fees are on a sliding scale to allow you to pay according to your means. Our actual cost for this five day retreat per person is \$ 175. 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 \$ 175 will be gratefully received and treated as a tax-deductible donation.

Sliding Scale Fees:

\$ 125 (low) \$ 175 (actual cost) \$ 275 (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 is no fee for monastics. 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 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 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 are held to be beyond any price and have been offered freely since the time of the Buddha. This retreat is offered in that same spirit.

At the end of the retreat, you will be able 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.

## **USE OF FEES**

Your fees for the retreat will be used to pay for: general retreat & administrative expenses; a small stipend for the retreat manager; and a small parsonage to the teacher to help cover any ongoing home expenses for the duration of the retreat.

## **DEPOSIT**

Please send your deposit with your application. The deposit is: \$125.

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. No monies will be banked until you are accepted on the retreat. The balance of the retreat fee is due at the start 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. *If you would like to pay by credit card, please contact Kathy at [hermitage@mountainhermitage.org](mailto:hermitage@mountainhermitage.org)*

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 July 30, 2021: your deposit will be returned minus a \$25 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after July 31, 2021, 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 \$125 deposit/cancellation fee.

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 July 30, 2021. Late applications will be considered on a space available basis.

Applications can be accepted by mail or e-mail. *If you would like to pay your deposit/retreat fees/dana by credit card, please contact Kathy at hermitage@mountainhermitage.org* Incomplete applications, including those without sufficient deposit, will be returned for completion.

Each application will be carefully reviewed by the teacher. 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 30 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.

### **Printable Documents and Forms**

Introduction (print-friendly version of this page)

Practice Guidelines

Retreat Schedule

Online Retreat Guidelines

Application

Waiver of Liability

Scholarship Application & Information Sheet

Special Flyer