

**THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE 2 Week Samatha-Vipassana Retreat  
for Experienced Student ONLINE  
with Marcia Rose & teaching assistant Kristina Bare  
February 16 - March 2, 2022**

**PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

*The Mountain Hermitage* offers a uniquely supportive space of solitude and silence for qualified individuals who wish to undertake longer periods of intensive meditation practice. This online 2-week Samatha-Vipassana retreat will be for experienced students. Please see the listed prerequisites below. We will begin the retreat with attending to and strengthening our capacity for a clear focused attention via some Anapansati teachings and practice. We will then move into Vipassana/Insight teachings and practices via attending to the 4 domains/foundations of mindfulness through a general overview of the teachings and the engagement in practice with this perspective...along with some specific mindfulness based insight teachings and practices that will be offered along the way. As the two weeks unfold we will bring attention back to the Anapanasati practice at times to continue strengthening and deepening our capacity for a clear and focused attention to what is presenting itself in our ongoing body/mind/heart continuum.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR *THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE* PRACTITIONERS:**

- Adherence to the ethical guidelines of the Five Precepts (see below).
- A commitment to use all activities of the day as opportunities for practice
- Maintenance of silence by refraining from verbal and written communication
- Sustained and continuous practice
- A commitment to being fully at *The Mountain Hermitage*, with no outside activities
- Participation in at least 3 - 4 interviews during the fourteen days.

*All practitioners applying for this two-week retreat must have sat three or more 5-10 day retreats.*

**ETHICAL GUIDELINES:**

We ask that you abide by the five traditional Buddhist precepts for lay practitioners while at *The Mountain Hermitage*:

1. I undertake the training to refrain from harming living creatures. I undertake the training to practice compassionate action.
2. I undertake the training to refrain from taking that which is not given. I undertake the training to practice contentment.

3. I undertake the training to refrain from sexual activity. I undertake the training to practice responsibility in all my relationships.
4. I undertake the training to refrain from harmful speech. I undertake the training to practice noble silence.
5. I undertake the training to refrain from the use of intoxicants. I undertake the training to care for my body and my mind.

If you are interested in taking the eight traditional precepts for lay people (the above plus three more) while practicing at *The Hermitage*, this can be discussed with the teacher(s) at the time of the retreat.

### **NOBLE SILENCE:**

After our Pre-retreat Zoom Technicalities Meeting on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 from 11am-noon (NM time-MST), you will enter the silent space of the intensive retreat environment. Yogis are also asked not to read, write, or keep a journal – short notes for the interviews are okay.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD:**

The experience of being at *The Mountain Hermitage* is a rare opportunity for silence and solitude. In support of this, all personal and business obligations should be taken care of prior to arrival, so that communication with the outside world can be kept to an absolute minimum. We ask that retreatants refrain from the use of telephones, cell phones, computers, and from sending or receiving e-mail or text messages EXCEPT for what is necessary to do an Online retreat! However, given the long-term nature of the 2-Week *ONLINE Samatha-Vipassana Retreat* exceptional circumstances may arise when non-retreat related communication is necessary. In this case, contact the Retreat Manager(s). Even in those times, please remember that wise restraint is an integral part of practice.

### **SUGGESTED DAILY SCHEDULE**

The general retreat schedule will consist of group events such as talks and group sits, plus a suggested schedule of alternate hours of sitting and walking. Retreatants may choose to follow the suggested schedule or tailor it to suit personal needs in consultation with the teacher. The times below are NM time (MST)

5:30 a.m. Group sit with chanting

6:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:15 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. Group sit with short *Dhamma* Reflection

9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Walk and sit alternate hours or personal schedule

9:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Individual practice meetings as scheduled

12:15 p.m. Lunch

2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Sit and walk alternate hours or personal schedule

5:00 p.m. Tea

6:15 p.m. - 7:15 p.m. Sit and walk alternate half-hours or personal schedule

7:15 p.m. *Dhamma* talks or guided meditations as scheduled (refuges/precepts are chanted)

before the talks)

8:30 - 10:00 p.m. Walk & Sit alternating or personal schedule

## **DANA**

*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.

The early teachers received no payment for their instruction. In Buddhist countries, traditionally, it has always been understood that the lay community, through their voluntary generosity (their *dana*), provide physical support - the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and medicine - for the monks and nuns. In turn they were/are offered guidance and teachings in their own practice by this monastic sangha. This practice of *dana* has been a very significant pillar in keeping the *Dhamma* (teachings) alive. The generosity of the laity towards the practical support of the monastic community since ancient times, is what has kept the *Dhamma* spreading through the world. Western teachers have continued this tradition of offering the teachings freely. In our culture, where no real training exists in living generously, it is a new practice for us in both offering and receiving the *Dhamma*.

*Dana* is not only a practical matter; it also plays a crucial role in the spiritual life of a *Dhamma* practitioner. Generosity is the first of the ten *paramis*, or qualities of character, to be perfected in spiritual life. The very act of giving is of immeasurable benefit to the giver, for it opens the heart, lessens self-absorption, and serves the well-being of others.

*The Mountain Hermitage* fees for this retreat only cover basic expenses and operating costs. The teacher(s) offer the Buddha *Dhamma* without any set fee, and totally depend of the generosity of students for the support of their daily life needs. 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.

HOW TO MAKE AN OFFERING: At the end of the retreat, the retreat manager(s) will let you know the best way to offer *dana*. You will be able to make a *dana* offering by mailing TMH checks on US funds or by offering *dana* using your credit card on our online donation platform Network for Good. All *dana* checks should be made out to The Mountain Hermitage. The Mountain Hermitage is 501(c)(3) tax-deductible charitable organization. All *dana* offered to The Mountain Hermitage for use in supporting the teacher, scholarships & general expenses are tax deductible. Donations to staff are not.

## **MEDICAL ISSUES:**

All participants must be mentally stable and physically able to care for themselves. Everyone must have health insurance or be able to cover his/her own expenses in case of illness or medical emergencies. Any special needs must be discussed with *The Mountain Hermitage* Office Manager and the Retreat Manager and agreed to in advance. Given the length of the retreat and the possibility of a participant becoming ill, we recommend that retreatants are prepared to treat a variety of non-urgent common illnesses at home. Should medical needs or emergencies arise, the Retreat Manager can offer assistance online.