

THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE
10 Day Concentration/Insight Retreat For Experienced Students
Teacher: Venerable Dhammadippa
December 2 - 11, 2023
Hyperslow Retreat Center @ San Geronimo Lodge, Taos, NM

Update on TMH's COVID - 19 Protocol

It is our deep hope that all our 2023 retreats will be held in-person. However, as you all know, it is hard to predict the future. We want to make sure that everyone participating at a TMH retreat will be safe. We will continue to seek guidance from our NM department of health and the CDC as well as from our Board, teachers, and staff. If you apply for one of our 2023 in-person retreats, you will be asked to submit a copy of your vaccination card, agree to wear a mask when in a space with other people, and agree to follow certain guidelines that will help us all stay healthy. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you again for your support of TMH and for your patience and understanding.

INTRODUCTION

In the Buddhist tradition, the liberation from the suffering of worldly existence is impossible without the right discipline, concentration and wisdom. Right discipline/right effort is the condition for right concentration to arise. The combination of right effort and concentration is the condition for the arising of liberating wisdom. The cultivation of these three elements bring one's mind into a state of wholesome unified balance regarding all positive/wholesome mental factors. Liberating wisdom accompanied by the supporting presence correct concentration, accompanied by correct mindfulness and correct effort promotes and allows the process of abandoning all habits that lead to mental suffering.

In the Indian spiritual tradition, correct concentration, *samma samadhi*, is inseparable from wisdom. Venerable Dhammadipa's aim for this retreat is to lead students towards a clear understanding of the science of deep concentration and how to use it for improving the quality of one's meditative experience and one's life overall. Venerable Dhammadipa will offer teachings on how to train the mind in the science of deep concentration accompanied by a step by step discovery of how to balance the mind so as to avoid mental agitation and slackness. With the help of instructions regarding the art of deep concentration, students will be led towards a clearer understanding of one's mind regarding its differentiating and non-differentiating aspects. This clear seeing/knowing of the mind leads towards the integration of the mind as a whole. Consequently the true '*empty nature of mind*' can then be experienced/known.

In the service of explaining the practice of deep concentration, Venerable Dhammadipa's teachings will be based on *The Sutra of Untying The Knots (Sandhinirmocanasutra)* and on the treatise dealing with the stages of the Buddhist yoga (*Yogacarabhumishastra*) from the Sanskrit tradition along with other sources from Pali and Sanskrit.

The retreat will be held in Noble Silence, and will consist of alternate periods of sitting and walking, instructions, *Dhamma* talks, Q & A opportunities, individual practice meetings, and an optional daily 30 minute *Qigong* practice session. The small group size at this *Hermitage* retreat helps to create a more intimate experience and easier access to the teacher.

A scholarship fund has been established to offer partial financial aid to those who would otherwise not be able to attend. *There is no fee for monastics.*

Applications and deposits are requested by **October 21, 2023**. Late applications will be considered on a space available basis. *Space is limited so apply soon!* **Printable forms are at the bottom of this page.**

PREREQUISITES FOR THIS RETREAT

This retreat is for experienced Dharma students who have sat at least two 7 to 10 day retreats or a one-month retreat with a recognized Dharma teacher. Please state the dates for these retreats and name of the teacher that guided each retreat. Please also let us know what you practiced during these retreats.

ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE

Yogis are encouraged to maintain sustained and continuous practice during their participation in this Mountain Hermitage retreat. Teaching support for this retreat will consist of daily morning practice, instruction or reflection or guided sit, small group and one-on-one practice meetings as scheduled by the teacher and group chanting of the Refugees and Precepts, a Dhamma Talk or Q&A each evening, and an optional 30 minute *Qigong* practice.

This Mountain Hermitage retreat offers a unique practice opportunity. In order to benefit from this environment, applicants need to be largely self-sustaining in their practice and be comfortable in unbroken silence and solitude. All participants must be mentally stable and physically able to care for themselves. Everyone must have health insurance or be able to cover their expenses in case of illness or medical emergencies. Any special needs must be discussed and agreed to in advance, as the staff is very small and cannot accommodate high levels of support for any individual.

It is asked that retreatants commit themselves fully to their retreat. All business and family obligations should be taken care of prior to the beginning of the retreat so that practice can be uninterrupted.

TEACHER Venerable Dhammadipa (lay name Tomas Peter Gutman) was born in Czechoslovakia in 1949. Since his graduation from Prague Karl University in 1969, where he studied Chinese Literature and Philosophy, he received various degrees from universities in Jerusalem, Berlin, Paris, and India. In 1986, he went to Japan and studied under Zen Master Harada Serrei Roshi of the Caodong school. He was given a Dharma name Xing-Kong (meaning Nature of Emptiness).

In 1987, with the encouragement of Venerable Athurugiriye Nyanavimala Mahathera, Venerable Wijayasoma Mahathera, and Venerable Dikwelle Mahinda, he ordained as a monk in Meetirigala and was given a Dharma name as Dhammadipa (island of Buddhism or Dharma). He received the full Theravada Bhiksu ordination in Sri Lanka where he practiced meditation under the guidance of his preceptor, Venerable Nanarama Mahathera. In 1989, he received the Three Fold ordination as a Mahayana Monk in Hsi Lai Temple, Los Angeles and began Dharma teaching in US, Germany and Taiwan.

In 1996, Venerable went to Myanmar to practice meditation with the contemporary master Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw, and was recognized by the Sayadaw to be first of the Sayadaw's Western disciples qualified to teach meditation. He has since been teaching Samatha (tranquil mental states) and Vipassana (direct seeing of the Dharma) meditation at monasteries and universities worldwide.

Venerable Dhammadipa speaks Czech, French, German, English, Russian, and fluent Chinese. He reads and translates Buddhist texts from Pali and Sanskrit. Over the years Venerable has presented dharma teachings and led meditation retreats around Europe, North America, Taiwan and mainland China, India and Southeast Asia.

Venerable teaches that knowledge of the Buddhist way should be applied in practice and verified first hand through direct experience. One should make a great vow to tread the way and realize the dharma for the benefit of all sentient beings. For more information about Venerable Dhammadipa, please click this link to his website: <https://www.dhammadipa.cz/en/recordings-texts/>

The staff of this 10 Day retreat will consist of the teacher, a retreat manager (the point of contact in case of any difficulties), a cook, and an administrative person.

POSSIBLE DAILY SCHEDULE

The general retreat schedule will consist of alternate periods of sitting and walking, instructions, Dhamma talks, Q & A opportunities, individual practice meetings and an optional daily 30 minute *Qigong* practice session

6:00 a.m. – Group sit and Metta chant

6:30 a.m. – Breakfast

7:15 a.m. – Work period

8:15 a.m. -Refuges & Precepts – Group sit – Instructions or Dhamma reflection

9:15 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Walk & sit alternate hours- Practice interviews as scheduled

12:00 Noon – Lunch

1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Walk & sit alternate hours, optional 30 minute *Qigong* practice session

5:30 p.m. – Tea

6:30 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. Sit & walk

7:15 p.m. – Dhamma talk, guided meditation, or Q & A as scheduled

8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. Walk or sit

THE RETREAT FACILITY

[Hyperslow Retreat @ San Geronimo Lodge \(HSG\)](#), Taos, NM is situated among fruit trees along the banks of the Acequia Madres, and provides the privacy, quiet, and sense of harmony that is most conducive to intensive practice. There are beautiful indoor and outdoor areas suitable for sitting and walking meditation. It is situated at 7000 ft elevation on 2 1/2 acres of private naturally serene and beautiful land.

The Mountain Hermitage will have the exclusive use of HSG during this ten day retreat. Each room is spacious enough to allow for both sitting and walking meditation for those who wish to practice in a more secluded setting. The walking labyrinth is still there!

The meditation hall, bedrooms, walking spaces, dining room, and kitchen are all within one building. There are two ADA compliant bedrooms with enough beds 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 this ten day retreat per person is **\$1250**. 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 the actual cost will be gratefully received and treated as a tax-deductible donation.

Sliding Scale Fees:

\$1050 (low) \$1250 (actual cost) \$1560 (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. TMH is able to offer up to half the actual cost of this retreat in scholarship aid for a few individuals. *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'.

USE OF FEES

Your fees for the retreat will be used to pay for: rental of the Lodge and attached expenses; other general retreat expenses; a retreat cook; a small stipend for the retreat manager; a small parsonage to the teacher to help cover ongoing home expenses for the duration of the retreat; teacher, cook, and manager transportation. As you well know, transportation and rental costs have increased over the past 2 years. We have done our best to keep the retreat fees as low as possible without jeopardizing our and our teachers' financial health and well-being. Thank you for your understanding

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 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.

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 depend on 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.

MEAL DANA

All Mountain Hermitage retreats offer participants an opportunity to offer Dana to specifically help cover the cost of meals during the retreat - for an entire day or for individual meals. The suggested amount for each of these will be posted at the retreat next to the Meal Dana basket.

HOW TO MAKE AN OFFERING

At the end of the retreat, Dana envelopes will be provided. Cash or checks on US funds may be used. All Dana checks should be made out to The Mountain Hermitage. The Mountain Hermitage is a 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 tax-deductible. If you would like to offer Dana by credit card, please ask the Retreat Manager for more information during the retreat. OR ask Kathy at hermitage@mountainhermitage.org

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. If you would like to pay by credit card, please contact Kathy at 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 October 21, 2023: your deposit will be returned minus a \$25 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after October 22, 2023, 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 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 **October 21, 2023**. 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 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 15 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

Introduction (print-friendly version of this page)

Practice Guidelines

Application

Waiver of Liability

Scholarship Application & Information Sheet

Special Flyer