

Ten-Day Spring Hermitage Retreat for Experienced Students

With Marcia Rose & teaching assistant Kristina Baré

March 26 - April 5, 2023

Hyperslow Retreat @ San Geronimo Lodge, Taos, New Mexico

TMH's COVID - 19 Protocol

It is our deep hope that our 2023 retreats will continue to 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 any of our 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 until Day 6 testing, and agree to follow certain guidelines that will help us all stay healthy. If this should change before the start of the retreat, we will let you know. 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

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 10-day retreat will offer the opportunity for *Vipassana/Insight*, *Brahma Vihara* (Loving-Kindness, Compassion, Appreciative Joy, and Equanimity) practice, and *Samatha/Concentration* in the lineage of Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw. In consultation with the teachers, students will decide upon a course of practice that may be directed specifically toward *Vipassana*, *Brahma Vihara* or *Samatha* practice or some combination of the three.

The Mountain Hermitage will offer this 10-day Hermitage retreat at Hyperslow Retreat @ San Geronimo Lodge, Taos, NM from March 26 -April 5, 2023, and invites experienced practitioners to join us for this period. A scholarship fund has been established to offer financial aid to those who would otherwise not be able to attend. Applications and deposits are requested as soon as possible.

The Mountain Hermitage Guiding Teacher Marcia Rose is the lead teacher for this retreat. Kristina Baré is the teaching assistant for this retreat. This retreat will have only 14 participants, thus creating a more overall intimate retreat environment along with relatively easy access to the teachers. It is highly recommended that you apply early.

We will all observe the 5 precepts for lay practitioners. Those who would like to explore practice via observing 8 precepts are very welcome to do so. Please discuss this with the teachers. There will be daily evening Dhamma Talks and/or guided sits as well as shorter morning reflections and/or practice instructions most mornings at the after-breakfast group sit.

Marcia will offer one-on-one practice meetings every couple of days for each student. Kristina will also be available for on-on-one practice meetings throughout the retreat. Some students may choose to sit more independently at times in their rooms and/or in the meditation hall. This option can be discussed with the teachers during practice meetings.

Printable forms are at the bottom of this page.

PREREQUISITES FOR THIS RETREAT

This 10-day Hermitage retreat will be for experienced students. Practitioners wishing to join us for this retreat must have sat three or more 7-10 day retreats.

These retreats must have been led by a recognized teacher. Details of the qualifying retreats, including teachers' names, dates, locations, and length of the retreats, must be documented on the application form. Please make sure to include any meditation and retreat experience as well, as this information will be helpful to the teachers.

If you have questions about your qualifications, email Kathy at hermitage@mountainhermitage.org

The retreat will be limited to 14 practitioners, so early application is suggested.

ABOUT THIS MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE RETREAT

“There was an understanding by staff and teachers of the combination of structure, freedom, and deep/simple teaching supportive of the practice of liberation.”

–Hermitage Retreatant

This Hermitage retreat is designed to offer experienced meditators the opportunity for more independent, less structured practice for an extended period of time. There is no fixed retreat schedule during this Hermitage retreat time. The guidelines for each individual's practice are worked out in consultation with the teacher & assistant teacher. The program will provide a combination of independent practice with the opportunity to train with the guiding teacher & assistant teacher in varying aspects of mindfulness, loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, equanimity, and concentration practice. This will contribute to a comprehensive deepening of practice and understanding. Yogis are expected to maintain sustained and continuous practice during their time at this retreat. Teaching support will consist of 3-4 practice meetings per week, 3-4 Dhamma talks each week, and 1-2 guided sits per week. Before each Dhamma talk there will be a renewed yogi group commitment to the refuges and precepts. Yogis will undertake one hour of work meditation daily.

The Mountain Hermitage 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 stay. All business and family obligations should be taken care of prior to arrival so that practice can be uninterrupted.

TEACHERS

Marcia Rose is the founding and guiding teacher of *The Mountain Hermitage* and founding teacher of Taos Mountain Sangha. She has been studying and practicing Buddhist teachings and meditation with Asian and Western teachers since 1970, primarily in the *Theravada-Vipassana* (Path of the Elders) tradition. Her own teaching reflects a clear influence from the Burmese Mahasi *Vipassana* and Pa-Auk Forest Monastery lineages with authorization from Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw to teach *Samatha* and *Jhanas* in his lineage. She has also studied and practiced in

the *Dzogchen* Tibetan Buddhist tradition with Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, and Tsoknyi Rinpoche. Marcia was resident teacher for staff at the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) in Barre, MA from 1991-1995. She has been one of the teachers for the annual three-month retreat at IMS, as well as a visiting teacher at IMS for other retreats and a regular visiting teacher at The Forest Refuge in Barre, MA. Marcia has taught *Vipassana*, *Concentration*, *Brahma Vihara*, and *Creative Process* retreats in various U.S. and international venues for over 30 years, and is dedicated to offering these ancient and timeless teachings in ways that make them accessible and authentic for contemporary culture.

Kristina Baré will be Marcia's teaching assistant during this retreat. Kristina is a trauma psychologist and deep dharma practitioner. She has practiced *Vipassana* meditation in the *Mahasi Sayadaw* tradition for the last 12 years. In 2019/2020 she spent altogether 3.5 months in silent retreat practice at the Forest Refuge and then another 3 months in self-retreat under the guidance of her teacher Marcia Rose. Through 2019-20 she primarily practiced in the *Pa Auk Sayadaw* tradition with a focus on *Anapanasati* and the *Brahma Viharas*: loving-kindness, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity. She is being mentored by Marcia Rose, Tempel Smith, Bonnie Duran, Guy and Sally Armstrong to share the *Dharma*.

The staff of this ten-day retreat will consist of the teachers, retreat manager, (the point of contact in case of any difficulties), and a retreat cook. There will be 3 delicious and nutritious vegetarian meals a day. Please let Kathy (hermitage@mountainhermitage.org) know if you have specific dietary restrictions or needs.

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 three-week 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 wheelchair accessible 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.

SUGGESTED DAILY SCHEDULE

The general retreat schedule will consist of group events such as meals and Dharma talks plus a suggested schedule of alternate hours of sitting and walking. There will also be one-on-one practice meetings, guided sits, and reflections. Retreatants may choose to follow the suggested schedule or tailor it to fit personal needs in consultation with the teachers.

5:30 a.m. Group sit with chanting
6:30 a.m. Breakfast
7:15 a.m. Work period
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

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 \$1409. 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 \$1409 will be gratefully received and treated as a tax-deductible donation.

Sliding Scale Fees: \$1309 - 1509

If you need scholarship support, a little 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.

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 teachers to help cover ongoing home expenses for the duration of the retreat; teachers, 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) offers the *Buddha Dhamma* without any set fee, and depend on the generosity of their 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 and/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 offered 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: \$200.

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 pay 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 March 18, 2023: your deposit will be returned minus a \$25 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after March 19, 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 \$200 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 **as soon as possible**. Applications will be accepted by mail and email. If you email your application, please let Kathy know how you would like to pay your deposit/fees.

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 may 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 as soon as possible 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 14 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) - Scholarship Application and Information Sheet
- Practice Guidelines - Retreat Flyer
- Application
- Waiver of Liability