

DEEP SPRING CENTER

FOR MEDITATION AND SPIRITUAL INQUIRY

Letting Go Into the Infinite Emrich Conference Center Brighton, MI June 18-20 or June 18-24, 2010

Thank you for your registration for the upcoming meditation retreat with Barbara Brodsky, Aaron, John Orr and Peg Tappe.

The retreat will be held at the Emrich Conference Center, 7380 Teahen Road, a short distance southwest of Brighton, Michigan. The emergency contact number during the retreat is 734-834-6078 where you can leave a message.

Check in at the retreat will begin at 4:00 pm on **Saturday**, June 18. You will have a room assigned and can unpack prior to dinner. Retreat guidelines will be presented and dinner will be served at 5:30 pm. This will be the only opportunity for social interaction until breaking of the Noble Silence on Monday (for the three day retreatants) or Friday (for those staying the week). The retreat program and Noble Silence are scheduled to begin at 7:00 pm on Saturday. The evening program ends each evening at about 9:30 pm. The retreat will end after the evening program on **Monday**, June 20 for those attending the three-day retreat. The retreat will end at 1PM on Friday, June 24 for those staying the week.

If you cannot arrive before the program begins at 7:00 pm on Friday, please keep in mind that the Noble Silence will have begun before you arrive. Please quietly enter the meditation hall, the tall red building in the center of the group of buildings near the parking lot. Your room assignment will be posted in the dining room area in building one. Your registration should all be paid prior to the retreat, so there is no reason to "formally" check in. Hugh Danville and Sandy Norton will be the Retreat Managers. Leave a note in the manger basket if you have questions or problems. Contact the manager verbally only if there is an urgent situation.

Noble Silence

What is Noble Silence? When you arrive there will be time set aside for registration, unpacking, supper, and conversation. With the beginning of the opening talk, the retreat becomes a place of silence. Meditation students are asked not to talk, except with the teachers or with one another in appropriate ways in small group meetings. If there are cases of emergency or questions concerning the retreat schedule or process, you may talk with the retreat manager. In order to keep your concentration on the practice, it is requested that you do not read, write, or find other activities that would keep your mind busy. An exception is limited journal writing. Quieting the body and the voice also helps to quiet the mind and create a space in which you can observe the mind.

Another aspect of silence is watching our movements, endeavoring to use mindfulness as we walk, shower, open and close doors, do our work assignments, so as to have minimal impact on others and the environment.

Noble Silence also fosters a sense of aloneness, even in a retreat full of people. It is important for you to resist urges to social contact by note, glance, or whisper in order to benefit most fully from this opportunity, as well as to respect the silence of others. We can learn a lot by watching the impulse to talk or make other contact and seeing what motivates that impulse. At first the thought of silence may be a bit frightening, but with more practice it will become a warm haven. The silence is broken at the end of the retreat to allow people to visit and share their experiences.

Work Assignments

There will be work assignments during the retreat. Sign up when you arrive. There will also be an opportunity to work in the Emrich garden. An important aspect of the retreat is the practice of bringing complete mindfulness to our "normal" experiences. Assisting with meals and other tasks offers a chance to practice this.

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Retreat Basics

Sheets, towels and pillows are provided. Everyone except those coming by plane will need to bring blankets. Don't forget personal toiletries, hangers (they should fit in luggage for those traveling), bug spray, sun screen, rain gear and a water bottle. Dress comfortably. Bring a bathing suit and towel if you plan to swim, hiking boots for walks and comfortable clothes for yoga (optional). Only the main rooms are air conditioned (and not much of that), so you may want to bring a fan for your bedroom. You may want a light shawl when sitting in the meditation hall in the early morning. Emrich Center has extensive grounds which you may wish to use during walking periods.

There will be two people in most rooms. If you have special room requirements, please let the registrar or the managers know so they can do their best to accommodate your request. Camping is an option, especially on the weekend when we will have the larger number of people. Let the managers know if you plan to camp. If you are tenting, you will be assigned a room in case of increment weather.

Meals will be provided by Emrich. Vegetarian options will be available at each meal. Coffee, tea, water and snacks will be available at all times. There may be a small amount of refrigerator space available should you need to keep something cold.

We will be living in relatively close quarters at the retreat, especially in the meditation hall and dining area. Please refrain from bringing incense, scented candles, scented toiletries, aftershave and perfumes because of allergies. There is no smoking inside the buildings. Unscented candles are permitted only in the meditation hall – not in the sleeping rooms.

Meditation Essentials

You should bring your own meditation cushions or whatever you use during meditation. A few cushions will be available for you to borrow. Note that formal meditation cushions are not necessary. A folded blanket for the floor and a firm cushion on which to sit are adequate. Some chairs are available, but you will probably be more comfortable if you bring along what you know works for you. Each day will include periods of sitting and walking meditation. Instructions will be given for those relatively new to meditation. A community altar will be located in the meditation hall. You are welcome to bring anything you would like to have on the altar (for example, pictures or totems). Please take personal items home with you when you depart.

DSC Bookstore

The Deep Spring Center has a bookstore which provides a wide variety of meditation and Buddhist books. Many find that books are a powerful reinforcement to deepening meditation practice. However, if you choose to purchase books, you are strongly encouraged to stay present with meditation practice during the retreat and to postpone the reading of your new books until you return home.

Dana Offering

The retreat fee covers the cost of the retreat center rental, meals, teacher accommodation and transportation, advertising and some scholarship aid. In the tradition of offering these teachings freely, the instructors receive no payment from the retreat fee. They offer themselves to the retreat on a "Dana" basis. Dana is a Pali word which translated means "the spirit of generosity that is rooted in love and compassion for all beings."

Dana baskets are available during the retreat for donations for the teachers. They appreciate your support for their teachings. Since the time of Buddha this interdependency has existed between those who offer the teachings and those who receive them. The instructors feel that it is a beautiful tradition and appreciate the spirit of trust and generosity it engenders.

If you have any questions or concerns, I can be reached by phone at (734) 369-2628 or by e-mail at retreat@deepspring.org.

We wish you an excellent retreat!

DeepSpring Retreat Registrar

How to Reach the Emrich Conference Center

7380 Teahen Road,

Brighton, MI

Here is a hand drawn map which may work for you. Others may find that mapquest.com provides better details.

