

Madison Vipassana Inc

Uncovering the Wise and Compassionate Heart

Residential retreat with Myoshin & Edwin Kelley

March 20-26, 2010

St. Anthony Retreat Center

300 East 4th Street, Marathon, WI 54448
(715) 443-2236

Directions

Directions to St. Anthony Retreat Center are on their webpage at www.sarcenter.com/location.shtml. Carpooling from Madison will be facilitated. Each participant will have a single room.

What to Bring

Clothing: Bring loose-fitting, comfortable clothing for sitting, and warm outer wear for outdoor walking. You may want a blanket to put over your shoulders or on your lap while meditating.

Essentials: You should bring personal items such as shampoo, toothbrush, etc. Towels and bed linen will be provided. The rooms have alarm clocks. Please avoid the use of perfumes or any strong smelling soaps or cosmetics as some people may be allergic them.

Meditation cushion, zabuton or blanket, or bench. We have a few meditation cushions and blankets, but we encourage you to bring your own. Chairs will be available for those not wishing to sit on the floor.

Arrival

Please arrive to register and settle in between 3:00 and 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 20. An evening meal will be offered at 5:00 p.m. and an orientation for those new to retreats at 6 p.m. The formal retreat will begin after the meal and orientation session. The retreat will end on Friday, March 26, after the noon meal.

Orientation

There will be a brief orientation period at 6:00 p.m. for those who are attending their first vipassana retreat. People attending a retreat for the first time sometimes find themselves uncomfortable with the silent format and the lack of interchange with the other retreatants. If this is your first retreat, we recommend and encourage you to attend this session as it provides a chance to learn about what to expect and to ask questions.

Meals

Meals will be vegetarian. Dinner will be served on the first evening. Breakfast, lunch and light evening meal will be served on each full day. Breakfast and lunch will be served on the final day. Noble silence will end before lunch on the final day so that people will have an opportunity to meet and share experiences during lunch.

Questions

Prior to the retreat call Julie Meyer at 608-231-1558, during the retreat talk to the retreat manager.

Retreat schedule

The schedule of retreat activities will be posted and will involve meditation instruction, 45 minute periods of sitting meditation alternating with periods of walking meditation, talks by the teacher and interviews with the teacher. We ask that you follow the schedule as closely as possible to get the maximum benefit

from the retreat. There is usually a period of rest after each meal. You are free to use this time to shower, sleep, and exercise or continue sitting practice.

Noble Silence

In keeping with Buddhist traditions, the retreat will be held in silence, except where it is absolutely necessary to speak. This will help minimize distractions so that each person can conserve energy for the work of meditation. As a part of noble silence we also suggest that you refrain from reading, writing and the use of any other media during the retreat. Please plan not to make or receive phone calls during the retreat except for emergencies.

Interviews

Interviews with the teacher will be scheduled during the retreat. These will group interviews. There may be a limited amount of time scheduled for individual interviews, depending on the number of people who attend the retreat. These interviews will provide participants with opportunity to ask questions, obtain guidance, support and clarification regarding the meditation process.

Five Training Precepts

We ask that you observe the tradition and the spirit of the Five Training Precepts during the time of the retreat. It is a way of maintaining a basic purity of body, speech and mind.

Non-harming: Honoring and respecting all sentient beings (including insects), and not acting out of hatred or aversion in such a way as to cause harm to any living being.

Non-stealing: not taking that which is not freely given, respecting the property of all beings.

Refraining from false or harmful speech: Speaking only what is true and useful, speaking wisely, responsibly, and appropriately. In the context of this retreat this involves keeping noble silence.

Refraining from sexual misconduct: In the context of this retreat, this means refraining from all sexual activity.

Refraining from the use of intoxicants: Abstaining from the use of alcohol or other non-prescription drugs. Please continue to take necessary prescription drugs as usual. A retreat is NOT the time try going without medications that have been prescribed for your well-being.

Dana

In the Pali language, which was spoken at the time of the Buddha, *dana* means “generosity” or “gift giving”. It is intrinsic to the 2500 year Buddhist tradition that the teachings are considered priceless and are thus offered freely by the teacher as a form of *dana*. The early teachers, who were monks or nuns received no payment for their instruction. In turn, the lay community saw to it that the basic needs of food clothing and shelter were provided for the teachers.

Beyond this practical dimension, *dana* also plays a crucial role in spiritual life. It is the first of the ten *paramis* or qualities of character to be perfected in many lifetimes. When the Buddha would give a discourse to lay people he would almost always begin with the importance of generosity. The act of giving itself is of immeasurable benefit to the giver, for it opens the heart, diminishing one’s self-absorption, and places value on the well-being of others. The simple gesture of offering a flower, a kind thought or a simple meal is in itself a sincere form of practice. The size or value of the gift is not important.

Continuing this tradition today, the teachers do not ask for any payment for leading a retreat. They are supported by voluntary contributions from the retreat participants. The fee you paid for this retreat covers the cost of the room, meals, use of the facility, organizational costs, and the teacher’s transportation, room and meals. At the end of the retreat there will be an opportunity to offer *dana* to the teacher. There is no suggested amount, each person gives what is comfortable. Please remember that as we depend on the teachers they depend on us.