



Calming the Restless Mind

Insight Meditation 3-Day Retreat

Thursday, April 25th, to Sunday, April 28th, 2019

Cost: \$290 by Check - \$300 by PayPal

Led by Howard Cohn

Sponsored by Insight Meditation Houston

at

The Margaret Austin Center, Chappell Hill, Texas



Howie Cohn has led the Mission Dharma meditation group in San Francisco for over 25 years. He has practiced meditation since 1972, has led Vipassana retreats since 1985, and is a senior teacher at the renowned Spirit Rock Meditation Center.

Widely admired for his kindheartedness and warm sense of humor, Howie has studied with many Asian and western teachers of several traditions, including Theravada, Zen, Dzogchen and Advaita Vedanta, and has been strongly influenced by the Indian master H.W.L. Poonja. He has done postgraduate work in East/West Psychology and has a private counseling practice.

Calming the Restless Mind

Everyone wants to be calm and peaceful. Much of our restlessness and agitation stems from an untrained mind and lack of clear perception of what's happening in our mind and body moment by moment. During this residential retreat we will train our hearts and minds to find a calm abiding in the present moment. *How will we accomplish this?*

We will follow the Buddha's teachings on the *Four Foundations of Mindfulness*; being mindful and sensitive to our bodies, beginning with the sensations of breathing and expanding to include

all other types of physical sensations. We will learn to feel pleasure more fully without trying to make it last and learn to accommodate inevitable unpleasant experiences without being afraid or reactive to them. We will develop the skill of recognizing and working with our moods and emotions and learn how to relate to our thoughts more wisely rather than be so easily carried away by them.

Settling the mind into the body, noticing and caring about the flow of experience, our hearts can settle, and we can all realize that the peace and ease we are looking for in our lives is the natural peace and ease of our own nature.

Insight meditation, which has been practiced in Asia for 2,500 years, develops concentration and awareness through focusing the attention on the breath, thoughts, and emotions. It allows one to see the conditioning of the mind and live more fully in the present moment. This weekend we will come together to practice a natural and direct way of being, supported by the awareness practices of Buddhist meditation. Retreats are held in noble silence with alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation.

Cost: The fee is \$290 by check and \$300 by PayPal and covers only the operating costs of the retreat, including fees to the Margaret Austin Center, the cook, and teacher travel. *It does not include any teacher compensation, as the tradition dictates that the teachings of the Buddha be freely given.* Participants customarily give good will donations (dana) to the teacher at the end of the retreat.

Registration: Registration instructions can be found on our website. To find the registration information, go to insighthouston.org and click on the retreats tab on the left-hand side. You can register online, or you can fill out a form and mail it in with a check made payable to “Insight Meditation Houston” to:

Insight Meditation Houston
1530 Heights Blvd., Apt. 1
Houston, Texas 77008

****The registration must be completed by April 16th, 2019.***

Payment: Whether they be by check or electronic means, *payments should be received within 10 days of the time that the reservation is made.* If no payment is received by that time, the registrants will be transferred to a wait list. These policies will be stated in the registration materials posted on the website.

Scholarships: A very limited number of partial scholarships are available. The application must be received by March 31st, 2019. You may find the details and an application on the website on the retreats page at insighthouston.org

The retreat will begin with a light meal at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 25th, followed by the formal opening at 8:15 p.m. The retreat will end after lunch on Sunday, April 28th. Each day starts with easy yoga and includes instruction in meditation, a dharma talk, a work period (vegetable chopping, floor sweeping, etc.) and a rest period. Group or individual interviews with the instructor are held during the weekend. *Though based in Buddhist teachings, the retreat is non-sectarian and complements any spiritual or religious practice.*

Cancellation Policy

While we understand that things can change once plans are made, it is necessary for us, as a sangha, to enforce the cancellation policy unconditionally, and *exceptions to the following cannot be made.*

*A month or more prior to Retreat: **Full Refund less \$15 processing fee***

*3-4 Weeks Prior: **75% Refund***

*2-3 Weeks Prior: **50% Refund***

*1-2 Weeks Prior: **25% Refund***

*Less than a week Prior: **No Refund***

Accommodations

All meals (vegetarian) will be provided. Separate bunkhouse sleeping accommodations are provided for men and women; each of the bunkhouses has two complete bathrooms. A limited number of handicap-accessible spots are available on a first-come-first-serve basis. You may bring a tent if you wish to camp on the grounds. You will need to bring a sitting cushion, pad, and bench for meditation. Folding chairs are also available. In addition, you will need sheets, pillow, blanket, towels, toiletries, a flashlight, and earplugs, if you're a light sleeper.

We strongly encourage participants to reside at the Margaret Austin Center. Under special circumstances, however, permission will be granted to stay off campus. Requests, with an explanation of reasons, should be included in the "Special Comments" section of the on-line retreat application. Participants staying outside the Center are expected to participate in the full day's schedule and to remain in retreat mode, keeping silence, in their off-site accommodations.

Noble Silence

During the retreat, you will be requested not to speak to your fellow retreatants. When the teacher gives lectures he may allow you to speak to ask questions. "Thinking" about what to say often brings tension because we want to choose the right words to project a positive self-image to others and of seeking their recognition and approval. Silence helps us focus on present moment experiences and helps us maintain the meditative state for longer periods of time.

Retreat Etiquette

Please do not wear scented products or fragrances, such as scented shampoo, lotion, shaving cream, perfume, cosmetics, or any product containing fragrance while you are at the center. Do not use your cell phone to call, text or email during the retreat. Use the telephone number at the Center (800-836-4757) for emergency calls.

Directions to Margaret Austin Center are below!

Directions to the Margaret Austin Center

- The Center is located about 65 miles from downtown Houston. The drive time is about one hour and twenty minutes.
- Travel Hwy 290 West through the town of Hempstead. Stay on Hwy 290.
- 2.5 miles beyond the Brazos River, turn left onto TRACKSIDE ROAD. Your first landmark is the Brazos River. Then you will see a large white stone sign saying “Welcome to Washington County.” The Chappell Hill Meat Market is your next landmark, on your right. Not too far after that, you will see “Log Homes” on your left, including three model homes. Get in the left lane. There are three left-turn turn-ins: one at the bottom of the hill where the log homes are, and two at the top of the hill. Take the second turn-in at the top of the hill, and that’s Trackside Road (there is a small green sign on the right of the highway, but it’s hard to see).
- If you reach a traffic light (Chappell Hill), you’ve passed the turnoff to Trackside Road. Turn around and go back 1.8 miles from the light back toward Houston to Trackside Road.
- On Trackside Road, go 1.6 miles to the gate of the Margaret Austin Center. The road winds. At 1.6 miles, it makes a 90-degree turn to your left; the Center is right in front of you, on the right-hand side of the road.

Questions

If you have any questions, please send an email to: meditationhouston@gmail.com