

4th Annual Korea Meditation Retreat

- Gongju, Korea.

10 Days - July 10-20, 2012

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Daily Schedule

Below is the general daily schedule. There will be some modifications on day 1 for orientation, day 4 or day 5 for sacred mountain meditation hike, and day 10 for closing ceremony after breakfast.

04:30am***	Wake Up (***=Monastery bell)
05:00am	Guided Meditation & Lovingkindness meditation.
05:45am	Sundao with Sun-Raising morning meditation practice.
08:00am	Breakfast
09:30am***	
12:00	Lectures, Presentations, & Meditation.
12:30pm	Lunch
03:00pm***	
05:30pm	Sundao with Afternoon Meditation Practice.
06:00pm	Dinner
07:30pm	Evening Practice, Mindful sharing, Meditation
08:00pm	Dharma Talk.
09:30pm	Prepare for Bed
10:00pm***	Lights Out

Basic Guidelines

It is rare for westerners to have the opportunity to participate in a traditional Asian-style monastic retreat, so some of these guidelines may seem strange or you may question the reason for some of them. This retreat is considered a time to go deep within, and pay attention to our inner selves much more than the outer world. For this reason, we wish to limit distractions to make your practice easier and more profound. At the beginning it may seem strange or awkward, but you will very quickly notice the difference within yourself and embrace the sacred space you have created inside.

During the retreat, all participants are required to observe some basic guidelines. They are for the benefit of everyone. They are a very important part of getting you to the right frame of mind for meditation. They are also necessary because you will be staying on monastic grounds. Please remember that these guidelines are for you, so you may get the most out of this rare opportunity. They are not simply to enforce arbitrary rules. The guidelines are:

- 1. The retreat is held in silence.** "Silence is better than holiness." Bodhidharma sat silently in Sorim for nine years. Silence deepens our practice, and benefits ourselves and others. If your job does not require talking, keeping silence will help you.
- 2. Be on time for all practice periods, programs, and meals.** Always go to the practice room punctually. Do not leave the practice room during a practice period or classes unless you are going or returning from an interview or the restroom.
- 3. Walking meditation is a continuation of mindfulness meditation.** You may leave the practice room for walking meditation when necessary. When re-entering the practice room, do so quietly at your proper place in the line.

4. **Everyone must come to all practice periods.** If you are sick and cannot attend, please notify the teacher before the practice period you must miss.
5. **Everyone must come to all meals.** They are a part of the practice. Even if you are fasting, please come and share some tea.
6. **If you have questions, please ask the staff or other teachers,** rather than asking other students.
7. **No outside communication will be permitted during the retreat.** Making phone calls, sending or receiving mail is not allowed during the retreat. Mobile phones, personal computers, and other communication equipment may not be used. In case of an emergency, please notify the program director.
8. **The teacher will control the opening and closing of windows and lights in the dharma room.** If you have a problem or question, let them know.
9. **Please wear modest clothing.** Do not wear short pants, and cover your belly with proper shirts during the retreat. Do not wear hats in the practice room.
10. **Drinking alcohol and/or smoking is not permitted on the center premises.**
11. **Upon meeting another person, greet each other with hands together in prayer position and bow slightly.**
12. **Practice means “appropriate response in any situation with mindfulness and full attentiveness.”**
13. **Remain within the physical boundaries of the retreat center.**
14. **If any of the above rules are consistently broken by a participant, the person may be asked to leave the retreat.**

Honor the Buddhist Eight Precepts

1. Intend not to take away any breath (Do not harm). For this reason, a vegetarian diet is offered.
2. Intend to never take away what isn't given freely (Do not steal)
3. Intend to keep one's mind and body free from sexual activity
4. Intend not to harm others by speech.
5. Intend not to harm one's consciousness with substances that intoxicate and lead to carelessness. (No alcohol, drugs, smoking, etc.)
6. Intend not to eat between meal times. (*This helps us not to indulge the senses*)
7. Intend not to dance, sing, play or listen to music, watch shows, wear garlands or ornaments, or beautify oneself with perfumes and cosmetics. (*The spirit behind this precept is to not indulge the senses or distract the ego with external things. This would take away from the sacred space you have created for your deep spiritual work. It is also recommended that perfume, make-up, and jewelry be not used, as this is not necessary during this kind of retreat. Of course cleanliness is important, so the use of soaps, shampoos, toothpaste, deodorant, etc., are ok.*)
8. Intend not to sleep or sit on luxurious beds and seats. (*This precept might seem strange! Again, it speaks to the issue of not wishing to comfort or distract the ego so that we can do our deep inner work. Sometimes, sitting on the floor for 10 days can teach us a lot about ourselves! ☺*)

This is the moral code for those who seek normalcy, plus lightness and simplicity in living.

Meditation is a way to train and cultivate the mind, to develop concentration, mindfulness, and awareness. We will offer calmness or concentration meditation as well as mindfulness meditation. Sundao (or “Mindfulness with Breath” - the meditation method taught at the retreat) covers both

concentration and insight meditation. Meditation takes energy and commitment, determination and discipline. Doing a 10-day retreat is—especially for beginners—not easy. We have to adjust our bodies and minds to the retreat settings.

- We have to get up early and adjust to less sleep
- We have to adjust to the schedule, which everyone is asked to follow completely.
- We have to live on vegetarian meals every day.
- We have to deal with bodily discomfort
- We may have to experience a lot of ‘ups and downs’ during the retreat, which is natural during this letting-go process.

Body and mind are not used to these very different circumstances and they may react with discomfort, restlessness, boredom, doubt or with feelings of exhaustion. For these reasons, the daily schedule is not that challenging, tailored for beginners. However, it will take three or four days to adjust to all these new circumstances. After that, you should be able to float within your new environment without having to fight and struggle against too much discomfort.

The Sundao method and/or yoga postures and exercises practiced during this retreat are generally appropriate for students of all levels. However, if you have any physical concerns, spinal issues, blood pressure issues, or any issues that may require you to modify postures, please speak to Master Yu or one of the other Master Teachers. Despite the guidelines stated, each student should listen to his/her own body and do only what you can do. Spiritual growth does not happen by forcing yourself to do a yoga posture when you realistically cannot do it - it comes from watching your ego's reaction to accepting yourself as you are. Please remember this important point during the retreat and honor your body and your limitations.

SEOUL HOTEL INFORMATION

If you are staying in Seoul before or after the retreat, we recommend making a reservation at: **Best Western Premier Seoul Garden Hotel, #169-1, Dohwa-Dong, Mapo-Gu, Seoul, 121-040, S. Korea. Phone: +82 2 717 9441.** This hotel is the first stop on the airport limousine bus from Incheon airport and is conveniently located.

See:

<http://book.bestwestern.com/bestwestern/productInfo.do?propertyCode=99516&disablenav=false> for a direct link to the hotel.

WHAT TO BRING

Because the retreat is held at a retreat center that mostly offers Buddhist programs (rather than yoga), the center have yoga mats (we bought them last year), but no blocks, or yoga props. But you can bring your own yoga mat and whatever other props you need. Zabuton will be available (square meditation cushions). If you need a zafu (round meditation cushion), please bring one. If, for travel reasons, this is impossible, please contact Master Yu to find other options for you.

S. Korea in summer can be hot and humid. We recommend that you bring plenty of light cotton clothing for practice, a water bottle, a hat, bathing suit, and some sunscreen just in case.