

Equanimity Retreat

Thursday, Sept 29, to Sunday, Oct 2, 2016



Led by **Lila Kate Wheeler**

Sponsored by

Insight Meditation Houston

at the

The Margaret Austin Center

Chappell Hill, Texas

Lila Kate Wheeler attended her first IMS retreat in 1977. She teaches insight and loving-kindness practices from Theravada, Himalayan and Western Buddhist traditions. Her aim is to help people find ease, re-training the heart and mind. She is also a writer whose publications include two books of fiction; *In this Very Life*, an edited volume of teachings by Sayadaw U Pandita, and other works



An Equanimity Retreat - Equanimity grows through learning to attend in a consistent manner to any experience that might arise. Inclusion is the path, not denying reactivity and preference, but learning to be in wise relationship to them. As we open mindfully to sensations, emotions, situations and other people with equal respect, life can feel workable without needing to be perfect. This retreat will include instructions on equanimity meditation from both mindfulness and loving-kindness perspectives; silent sitting and walking meditations; daily guided meditations, question and answer sessions, and meetings with the teacher.

Cost: The charge for the retreat is \$275, which covers only the operating cost of the retreat, including fees to the Margaret Austin Center and payments to the cook and for teacher travel. It does not include any teacher compensation. Participants customarily give good will donations (*dana*) to the teacher at the end of the retreat.

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. 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 course of the weekend. Though based in Buddhist teachings, the retreat is non-sectarian and complements any spiritual or religious practice.

Noble Silence - During the retreat, you will be requested not to speak to your fellow retreatants, although lectures normally include a time for 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 as we seek their recognition and approval. Silence helps us focus on the experience of the present moment and helps us maintain the meditative state for longer periods of time.

The retreat will begin with a light meal at 7 p.m. on Thursday, September 29th, followed by the formal opening at 8:15 p.m. It will end after lunch on Sunday, October 4.

Scholarships: A very limited number of partial scholarships are available. You can find the details and an application on the website at <http://insighthouston.org>

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 are stated in the registration materials posted on the website.

Registration: Registration instructions will be found on our website. To find the registration information, go to <http://insighthouston.org> and click on the retreats tab on the left-hand side. You either can register online or print and complete a form, mailing it in with a check made payable to "Insight Meditation Houston" to Kanako Matsumura at 1530 Heights Blvd. Apt 1, Houston, TX 77008. The registration must be completed by September 15th.

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 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, if you're a light sleeper, earplugs.

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.

Cancellation policy: 20% fee for six weeks or more notice, 33% for between six and four weeks, 50% for between four and one week notice, and 60% for week of notice. No refund for day before cancellation.

Before August 15th: \$55

Between August 15th & August 29th: \$90

Between August 29th & September 19th: \$138

Between September 19th & September 28th: \$165

After Sept 28th: No refund

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 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. Driving west on 290, 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 the 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 email us at meditationhouston@gmail.com