

MEDITATION ON THE OCEAN RETREAT

June 22 – 28, 2012

Teacher: Susie Harrington

Guide and Cook: Jennifer Knochel

Welcome to the Lost Coast

The Lost Coast is a designated Wilderness area on the coast of Northern California. The coastline here is wild, rugged and extraordinarily beautiful. The house where we will be hiking into is one of just a few in-holdings in the wilderness. This very remote piece of property overlooks the ocean and is backed by mountains. To get there we will walk 9 miles from Shelter Cove along the beach. Our food and one stuff sack per person of heavy gear will be taken in for us. The rest of our gear — clothes, sleeping bag and lunch for the hike in — will be carried in on our backs. If carrying your gear on this hike would make this trip prohibitive, and you would like to come, please contact us as we may be able to accommodate this special need. (As long as we have 9 or more retreatants, we will fly our heavier gear both in and out, a change from the past. However, please remember in the event of bad weather, all gear may need to be carried out.)

The retreat site consists of a large house with 15 beds or sleeping pads, with sleeping available on the porch, in tents outside (some tents will be available), or on the floor indoors (dormitory style). There is a separate outhouse, a shower house, a separate kitchen/dining area, and a hot tub. There are endless hiking trails, both along the coast and up into the mountains.

Weather

The weather on the Lost Coast during June is often warm and dry (temperatures ranging from 60's into 80's), but coastal weather can change quickly, and days can be foggy and drizzly. There can also be strong and erratic winds.

Food

Food will be vegetarian, organic where possible, wholesome and plentiful. There will be some protein, in the form of nuts, beans, eggs, seeds, nut butters, and cheese, available at all meals. There will be non-dairy and wheat-free options available for those who are lactose or wheat intolerant. There will be tea, fruit, and snacks (rice cakes and nut butter, etc.) available at all times.

Dana and Retreat Cost

The Buddha asked that the teaching of the dharma be offered freely, without charge, since it is of infinite value, and beyond any price that could be put on it. The tradition of 'Dana,' or mutual giving, has supported Buddhist cultures for 2500 years. In Asia, the monks and nuns offer the teaching, and the lay people support the monastery and fill the monks' begging bowls each morning as they walk through the village on alms rounds. It is a beautiful exchange, in which the hearts of both giver and receiver are opened in joy and gratitude, and love flows between them.

In accordance with that tradition, the teacher, Susie, as well as Jenn, in the spirit of generosity, are offering their teachings, time and service. The retreat fee just covers the retreat costs: food, retreat center donation, administration costs, and other incidental expenses. After the retreat, there is the opportunity for participants to practice generosity in offering financial support to Susie, and Jenn in appreciation. By offering your financial support, you will help support Susie to continue teaching the dharma and Jenn to continue to support retreats. It will be warmly and gratefully received.

Creating the Retreat Container

Precepts

We will undertake to follow the five traditional lay precepts of non-harming during our time together, forming a reliable basis for mutual trust in our little community. These precepts are to remind us of our natural behavior when we are resting in our true nature.

1. To refrain from killing and from other actions that harm oneself or others.
2. To refrain from stealing, from taking anything that is not freely given.
3. To refrain from sexual activity during the retreat.
4. To refrain from lying and from harsh, abusive or damaging speech, or from unnecessarily breaking silence.
5. To refrain from consuming alcohol, illegal drugs, or other intoxicants that will unnecessarily cloud our awareness during the retreat (prescription medication that you need to take regularly is excepted; retreat is not a good time to alter these medications).

Noble Silence

Meditation retreats are traditionally silent. The teacher will emphasize silence, both to deepen our practice and as a refuge. All yogis will have the opportunity for interviews individually and in small groups. In the sharing circle, each person will have a chance to share what has come up since the last circle, and to share how he or she is relating to it in practice. There will be a message board if you need to communicate with Susie or Jenn at any time. To help maintain silence, please be sure all buzzers, cell phones, watch alarms, etc., have been turned off when you arrive. If there are issues concerning a yogi job or personal needs, these questions should be directed to the teacher.

Work Meditation

This is our opportunity to both integrate our practice and to serve the community — our sangha. Each person will be asked to participate in a daily ritual of either meal prep, clean-up, bell ringing or other shared need. Participants will sign up for these work meditations at registration.

Retreat Teacher

Susie Harrington has been meditating since 1989, and been engaged in Insight meditation practice since 1995. Teaching since 2005 under the direction of her teachers Guy Armstrong, Jack Kornfield, she has also been influenced by Adyashanti, Tsoknyi Rinpoche and Reggie Ray. She often offers retreats in the natural world, believing nature to be the most profound dharma teacher, and a natural gateway to our true self. She is a graduate of Hakomi Therapy (a somatic psychotherapy modality). She has been an outdoor professional for over 30 years, including years as a river guide, mountaineering guide, and backcountry ranger. She currently teaches throughout the four corners area and in California.

Cook and Retreat Manager

Jennifer Knochel is our kind and incredibly skilled cook, able to prepare excellent, fresh, vegetarian food in all sorts of conditions. She has cooked on retreats for the past 5 years and offers her cooking, which is a part of her practice, in support of the retreat. She also provides general support to the retreat as the manager. She currently lives in Ophir, Colorado.

Retreat Details

Directions to Garberville and Shelter Cove

If you are coming from out of state, we recommend you fly into one of the Bay Area airports, rent a car and drive up from there. There will be a contact list and opportunities for carpooling. From the Bay Area, take Highway 101 north (202 miles). Take exit 639A toward Garberville (Garberville is 0.2 miles off of Hwy 101). To get to Shelter Cove from Garberville, go north on Redwood Dr. for 2.8 miles. Turn left on Briceland Rd/Briceland Thorn Rd. toward Shelter Cove and go 12.1 miles to Shelter Cove. Here is the mapquest link with exact directions.

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/Garberville+CA/Shelter+Cove+CA/>

Arrival – Thursday PM June 21st (on your own), Meeting Friday June 22nd AM

We will plan on meeting in Shelter Cove the morning of Friday, June 22nd, at 8:30 a.m. There are hotels in Garberville, Redway, and Shelter Cove for the night of the 21st. There is a campground in Shelter Cove also. Shelter Cove is approximately 45 minutes from Garberville. We will give you an exact location of where to meet prior to the retreat. When we meet on the 22nd, please be ready to hike in with your backpack packed with all your gear, lunch, rain gear, warm clothes, sunscreen, 2 quarts of water, and all you would need for a day in the elements, and have your one stuff sack filled with your heaviest items ready to give to the pilot. The hike will take us the entire day since we will be stopping often for breaks and for our process of descending into the depths of retreat. The hike is on sand, pebbles and boulders. It can be rugged, and where it is sand, the firmness depends on the tides. The coast changes constantly, so it is impossible to predict the exact surface or difficulty of the walk. Be prepared for a range of conditions. It is 9 miles in length.

Departure – Thursday, June 28th

The retreat will be complete and we will be back to Shelter Cove by 4:00 PM. Dinner is on your own.

Emergency Contact

Since we will be in silence and in the backcountry, we will not be in phone contact with the outside world during the retreat. There is an emergency phone at the site which will be turned off during the retreat, and used only for true emergencies. In special situations (ill family members in particular), there will be a number at which to leave messages and they will be checked periodically during the retreat.

What to Bring

You will need to bring a backpack large enough to fit the following items (with the exception of one stuff sack of your heaviest items which will be flown in):

- whatever you will need to sit and meditate comfortably (a cushion of some type, which could be a stuff-sack filled with clothes, blow up cushion, etc., and a mat, pad or blanket to sit on)
- a small tarp and light pad large enough not only to sit, but also to lie down on the ground
- sleeping bag (sleeping pads provided)
- towel
- layered clothing for walking and practicing outside (including long underwear, shorts, lightweight pants)
- fleece
- wool hat
- sun hat
- good raingear, tops and bottoms
- sunglasses
- sunscreen
- journal (optional)
- flashlight or headlamp
- the capability for two quarts of water
- good walking shoes (can be lightweight hiking boots or other walking shoes for sand and rocks — sturdy enough for hiking with your backpack)
- thermarester or crazy creek chair highly recommended
- rain cover for backpack or plastic bags for gear
- walking poles if you find them helpful (optional)

Please pack as lightly as you can as you will be carrying much of your gear on your back for 9 miles. Your pack should weigh no more than 25 pounds. Remember, you may need to carry all of your gear out, should conditions not allow flying.

Poison Oak — The area within the retreat center is mowed grass; however, there is occasional poison oak hidden in the grass. If you are sensitive to poison oak, please plan on wearing closed-toe shoes at all times. Outside the center, there is lots of poison oak and care should be exercised at all times.