**Information for 2 Day Non-Residential Retreat with Howard Cohn**

**Sat & Sun, Feb 4th & 5th**

**9am – 5pm Saturday**

**9am – 3:30pm Sunday**

**Please read this letter for important information about the retreat.**

**Location:**

The retreat will take place at **Kiva Elementary School.** We will meet in the **Cafeteria** which is located near the front of the school. Please see the accompanying map and parking information below. We will also have access to a small lunch room with a refrigerator and microwave available for use. (***Please note that the Friday evening talk will be held at a separate location – at the SCUCC in the Main Sanctuary, this is the church where we meet on Monday nights.*)**

**Kiva Elementary School:** [**6911 E. McDonald Dr, Paradise Valley AZ**](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Kiva%2BElementary%2BSchool/%4033.5231187%2C-111.9345313%2C17z/data%3D%214m7%211m4%213m3%211s0x872b0b727587cbe1%3A0x7354b0817a378bb8%212sKiva%2BElementary%2BSchool%213b1%213m1%211s0x872b0b727587cbe1%3A0x7354b0817a378bb8?hl=en)

**Registration/Check-in:**

Please plan to arrive *at the Meditation Hall* (Cafeteria) at least 10-15 minutes before retreat start time to check-in. *Please also take into consideration a large number of people arriving and parking at the beginning of the day; please allow at least 10 additional minutes to park and get to the Meditation Hall*. This is a large retreat.

**Parking:**

There will be someone to help direct parking in the morning, but you may wish to see the map included with this message for parking areas. Most parking is along the East side & Southeast corner of the school; there are two large parking lots next to, and behind, the church. Most parking will require a 5-10 minute walk to reach the the Cafeteria where the retreat takes place. There are only 2 gates into the campus, one at the front of the school and one on the East side from the parking lot, these are marked on the map. **Do Not park in the Temple Solel parking lot to the West of the school.** Please consider parking and walking time in planning your travel time.

**Schedule:**

The retreat schedule is 9-5 on Saturday and 9-3:30 on Sunday. It is advisable to arrive about a half-hour early to accommodate parking and check-in before the official start at 9:00. The schedule will consist of instruction and talks by Howie and periods of sitting and walking meditation. Howie will offer opportunities for group interviews throughout the day. We will have time for lunch each day, please bring your lunch so that you do not have to interrupt the flow of your practice by leaving in the middle of the day. We encourage participants to maintain the schedule to gain full benefit from the retreat.

**What to Bring:**

* We will have **folding chairs available**. Most have no cushioning, so if you’d like, you can bring something to pad your seat. If you prefer to sit on the floor, we will have a few zabutons and zafus available for communal use (provided by the Prescott Vipassana Sangha), however, **if you have your own cushions or bench, please plan to bring them**. Please note that the cafeteria has a linoleum-type floor and is hard.
* **Bring your lunch**. And if you’d like, ***a snack to share***. It is strongly encouraged, to hold the container and continuity for your practice, to stay on campus for lunch. There is a lunch room with a refrigerator, microwaves, and a few snack vending machines that will be available. There will be a tea table set up throughout the retreat with coffee and tea available and any snacks brought for sharing.
* **Wear comfortable clothing** with layers to accommodate varying temperatures.
* **Cash or check for Dana/donations** (and, if you wish, to purchase Howie’s new book which will be available for sale pre-release, and signed by Howie!: [Invitation to Meditation, by Howard Cohn](http://www.amazon.com/Invitation-Meditation-Find-Peace-Wherever/dp/1452144346/ref%3Dtmm_hrd_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=))

**Please Avoid:**

* Perfume, scented products such as deodorants or lotions. This includes ‘natural’ scents or essential oils. Be aware that some participants have chemical sensitivity to fragrances and our practice increases sensitivity to the environment.
* Cell phones, ticking watches, etc. If you must bring your phone, please make sure to turn it off completely (***not on vibrate***, etc)

**Noble Silence:**

Silence is observed throughout the retreat except during instruction and question and answer periods. This is to provide an optimal environment to turn inwards, since talking invites our energies outward. By reserving the energy normally directed toward speech, we begin to attend to the forces that drive compulsive thinking. When you experience the urge to talk, please remain silent and observe your body sensations, thoughts and emotions. This will enrich your own experience and respect the practice of others. You are also encouraged to avoid eye contact whenever possible.

**Dana (*‘generosity’*):**

In the Vipassana tradition, the teacher offers the teachings freely. Your payment for the retreat covers our venue, teacher travel and other costs of putting on a retreat, it does not go to the teacher. The tradition of Dana goes back to the time of the Buddha, where the monastic community was entirely dependent upon the lay community in order to encourage the understanding of inter-connectivity and the cultivation of wholesome states to open the heart. Retreat participants typically make a personal donation to the teacher in any amount consistent with their financial situation. There will be an opportunity to offer a gift of Dana directly to the teacher by placing cash or a check in an envelope at the end of the retreat on Sunday.

**Meditation Hall Protocol:**

These guidelines help to provide an optimal environment for meditation.

* Maintain complete silence and avoid eye contact. If you must communicate with someone, tap him or her on the shoulder and move away from any other participants. Please keep the meditation hall completely silent.
* Practice only sitting and standing meditation in the meditation hall. Do not lie down or practice walking meditation in the hall unless instructed. Exceptions are made for individuals with physical limitations, and for those wishing to lie down in the hall during the lunch period.
* Enter and leave the hall only at the beginning and end of a sit. **It is very important to arrive at each sit on time.**
* Do not wear perfume, scented lotions, scented hair products, scented deodorants or lotions, this includes muscle salves or essential oils.
* We request that you do not bring cell phones or ticking watches into the hall.

If you have any questions concerning the retreat, please contact me at: Insight.meditation.scottsdale@gmail.com

Thank you,

Genevieve Tregor