



A Guide to Retreats

Retreat Information and Resource Package
Bamboo Forest Monastery & Westlock Meditation Centre

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About Retreats

Mindfulness Day

Truc Lam Monastery conducts a Monthly Retreat (Mindfulness Day) in English. Spend a day cultivating mindfulness at Bamboo Forest Monastery (Trúc Lâm Monastery)! Participate in a full day of activities alongside monastics, nuns, and fellow practitioners. The day unfolds with guided meditations, both seated and walking, alongside sessions of Dharma Sharing and a Dharma talk - a teaching offered by a monastic. Enjoy mindful meals and practice techniques like mindful breathing and smiling together as a community.

Offered monthly, Practice starts at 9:00 AM and ends at 5PM on a pre-determined Saturday of each month. Registration is required to attend this practice.

Please email retreats@truclam.ca for information or registration.

Seasonal Retreat

Autumn

When autumn falls gracefully on the grounds of Westlock Meditation Centre, surrounded in the beauty of change, nature offers vibrant painted leaves and charming peachy skies that nourish our seeds of peace and tranquility. This time of year welcomes us with a cozy hug and is what you might expect, a very fond experience for many of our friends in the community.

We invite you to come attend these retreats with us in the autumn season and practice together in harmony contemplating impermanence and transformation.

Winter

Snow is a soft and plush blanket that nature lovingly uses to tuck us in for much needed rest. The winter season reminds us that we are so akin to the trees that stand bare in the cold winter storms. Sometimes life seems so difficult and overwhelming, but don't make the mistake of thinking winter is a permanent season. It's a much needed preparation for the abundance of life that awaits in the spring!

Winter retreats are like bright reflections of the cloud and sky on the white blanket of snow that covers the ground. They're a time for us to practice with inner stillness and touch reality as it is around us. We invite you to return home to yourself and practice with the support of the community that practices together.

Spring

Spring arrives slowly, awakening the joy in the earth and restoring life force in the plants and trees. (earth and skies)

We invite you to come join us in opening up the heart of the practice, allowing the sweet rain of the dharma

Short-Term Monastic Retreat

to nurture and refresh the soil of the mind. Grow together in the practice, offer to each other the budding flowers of understanding and love.

Summer

See Below:



"The sun's rays are veiled, And the earth is cooled; The cloud lowers and spreads As if it might be caught and gathered; Its rain everywhere equally Descends on all sides, Streaming and pouring unstinted, Permeating the land.

On mountains, by rivers, in valleys, In hidden recesses, there grow The plants, trees, and herbs; Trees, both great and small, The shoots of the ripening grain, Grape vine and sugar cane. Fertilized are these by the rain And abundantly enriched; The dry ground is soaked, Herbs and trees flourish together."

Vassa (An Cu) is a historic and traditional retreat known as the 'rains-retreat' in English. Vassa marks the beginning of the summer/monsoon season, a time that also coincides with Summer, where life amongst the world of plants, bugs, and animals is abundant. During the time of The Buddha, the Sangha would settle in one place and practice for 3 lunar months.

Trúc Lâm Monastery and Westlock Meditation Centre hosts our most remarkable retreat during this season: The Short-Term Monastic Retreat (Khóa Tu Xuất Gia Gieo Duyên). During this time, members of the lay community may receive the monastic precepts for the during of the retreat and practice as monastics for 10 days.

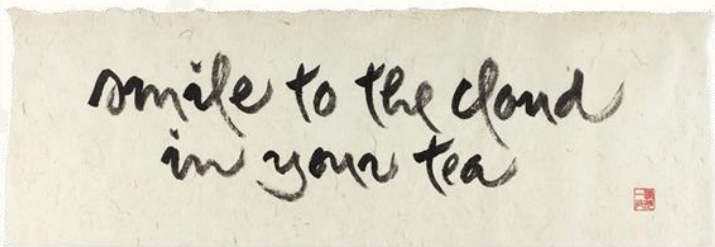
***This retreat is exceedingly busy
registrations typically open 4 months in advance and spots run out quickly***

Walking Meditation

*I have arrived, I am home
In the here, in the now
I am solid, I am free
In the ultimate I dwell.*

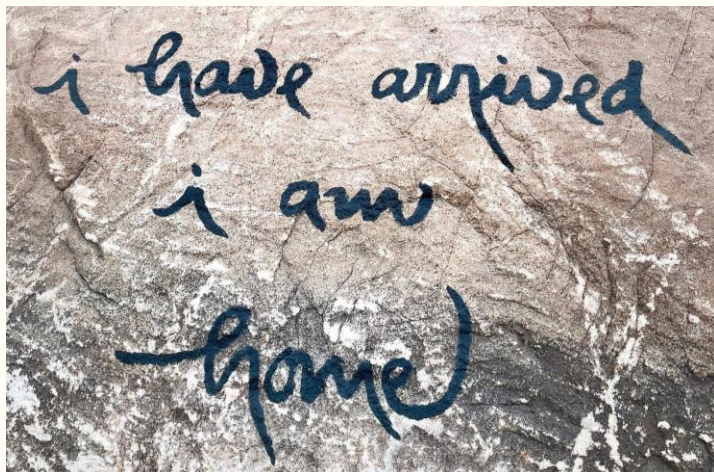
Walking meditation transforms walking into a moving meditation. Rather than rushing from point A to B, you become fully present in the experience of walking. Each step is a chance for you to deeply touch the present moment. Only in the present moment will you be able to feel solidity and freedom. If you can walk freely and touch the wonders of life, you have arrived in the present moment.

Tea Meditation



*smile to the cloud
in your tea*

Tea meditation is a joyful gathering where the Sangha simply enjoys being together in a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere. This practice is simply a chance to be fully present with your teacup and each other, appreciating the simple joys of the moment despite our sorrow or worries. You can sit and enjoy your tea silently, being in the wonderful present moment, and you can also share a song, story, or dance to nourish the seeds of happiness, understanding, and love within the community.



Retreat Activities

Sitting Meditation

*I am blooming as a flower,
I am fresh as the dew,
I am solid as a mountain,
I am firm as the Earth.
I am free.*

*Breathing in, breathing out,
I am water reflecting
what is real, what is true;
And I feel there is space
deep inside of me.
I am free.*

Sitting meditation emphasizes relaxation and enjoyment of the present moment. Practitioners are encouraged to find a comfortable posture and focus on their breath, gently returning attention when the mind wanders. There's no pressure to achieve a perfect state of meditation; instead, practitioners cultivate a sense of peace and well-being by simply being present.

Workshops

5 Mindfulness Trainings

The 5 Mindfulness Trainings offer a practical guide for ethical living. They promote reverence for life, encouraging non-violence and protecting the planet. They advocate for true happiness through mindful consumption and responsible relationships. Finally, they emphasize the importance of nourishing ourselves with wholesome elements to cultivate peace and well-being.



Beginning Anew

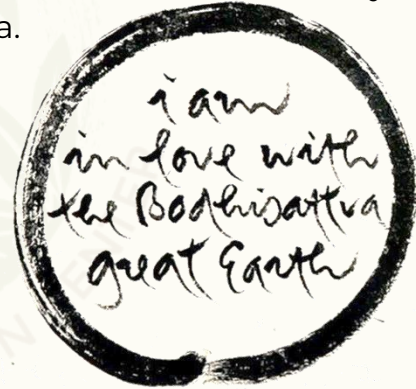
"Beginning Anew" workshop is a practice of writing a letter to another person (or oneself) without the obligations to deliver this letter. The practice fosters healing and communication in relationships. It involves four steps:

- 1) Sharing appreciation for the positive qualities of the other person.
- 2) Expressing regret for any hurtful words or actions.
- 3) Communicating any hurt or difficulties you've experienced.
- 4) Listening deeply and compassionately to the other person's perspective. By following these steps, both parties can gain a clearer understanding and work towards forgiveness and a stronger connection.



Chanting

Chanting is a practice to cultivate peace, compassion, and awaken mindfulness. Monastics and practitioners chant together, focusing on the sounds and meaning of the words. It's not about perfect pronunciation, but about being present in the moment and allowing the sounds to wash over you, fostering a sense of connection to the community and the sangha.



Touching the Earth

Touching the earth is a practice of humility, gratitude, and deep connection. Practitioners kneel and rest their palms and forehead on the ground, symbolizing surrender and receiving the Earth's strength. We breathe in stability and peace from the Earth, while releasing suffering and negativity. This practice fosters a sense of interconnection with the planet and reminds us of our dependence on its resources.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a way to deepen your practice while supporting the community. It involves offering your skills and energy for a set period, helping with tasks like cooking, cleaning, gardening, or assisting with retreats. In return, you receive meals, accommodation, and the opportunity to learn and practice alongside monastics and fellow practitioners, fostering a spirit of generosity and mindful service.

Smile
my dear
it'll be alright



Dharma Talks

Dharma talks are teachings offered by monastics. These talks delve into Buddhist wisdom, focusing on applying mindfulness and compassion to daily life. Talks are a chance to learn about the Buddha's teachings, explore practices like mindful breathing and walking meditation, and gain guidance for navigating challenges. Delivered in a clear and accessible way, Dharma talks aim to inspire, support, and deepen your understanding of the path to peace and happiness.



Dharma Sharing

Dharma sharing is a supportive space for practitioners to speak and listen deeply. Participants share their experiences with mindfulness practice, both joys and difficulties. By listening attentively and speaking from the heart, the Sangha creates a safe and compassionate environment. This practice fosters collective learning, strengthens connections within the community, and allows individuals to benefit from the insights and experiences of others.

Practicing Mindfulness with Gathas

Gathas are short poems or verses used to cultivate mindfulness throughout the day. These poems are memorized and silently recited during daily activities, like washing dishes or brushing your teeth. By synchronizing the gathas with your breath, you gently bring your attention to the present moment. Gathas serve as poetic reminders to be mindful and bring a sense of peace and joy of the practice into everyday tasks. We have a collection of Gathas that you may read in Appendix IV: Gathas



Mindful Manners

Mindful Manners are principles, not rigid rules. The goal is to cultivate awareness and respect in your interactions, fostering harmonious and peaceful environments.

Conduct Towards Oneself and Others

Awareness

Being in the present moment and aware of your actions and their impact on others. This translates to thoughtful actions and avoiding distractions during interactions.

Respect

Showing respect for yourself, others, and the environment. This includes bowing as a greeting, maintaining a clean and tidy space, and speaking kindly.

Non-judgment

Approaching interactions without preconceived notions or judgments. This allows for genuine connection and understanding.

Mindful speech

Using words thoughtfully, avoiding gossip, negativity, or excessive talking. This promotes clear communication and a peaceful atmosphere.

Right action

Taking actions that are beneficial for yourself and others, avoiding causing harm or disruption. This includes being helpful, considerate, and mindful of noise levels.

Simple living

Practicing moderation and avoiding excess. This can be reflected in how you approach possessions and your interactions.

Gratitude

Expressing appreciation for the things you have and the people you encounter. This can be a simple thank you or a mindful offering of your time or assistance.

Silence

Many Zen practices emphasize silence and meditation. Respecting quiet spaces and times for contemplation is important.

Focus

During teachings or ceremonies, maintaining focus and avoiding distractions demonstrates respect for the practice and the teacher.

Community

The Sangha places importance on communal living and working together. Contributing to the well-being of the community reflects mindful manners.



Conduct Towards Monastics

By following these mindful manners, lay persons can demonstrate respect and appreciation for monastics and teachers within the Thiền Buddhist tradition. Remember, the core principle is to be present, respectful, and create a harmonious environment conducive to personal growth.

Greetings and Demeanor

Bowing

A respectful bow is the customary greeting for monastics and teachers. The depth of the bow can vary depending on the level of the monastic or teacher. A slight bow with your hands together at your chest is a good starting point.

Respectful language

Use respectful language when addressing monastics and teachers. Common terms include "Thầy" (teacher) or "Brother" for male monastics and "Sư Cô" (teacher) or "Sister" for female monastics.

Maintain a Calm and Mindful Presence

Avoid being overly chatty or disruptive. Focus on being present in the moment and showing attentiveness.

During Teachings and Ceremonies

Punctuality

Arrive on time for teachings and ceremonies. Punctuality shows respect for the teacher's time and the practice itself.

Silence and attentiveness

Maintain silence during teachings and ceremonies. Avoid distractions like phones or fidgeting. Focus on listening attentively to the teacher's words.

Sitting posture

Sit in a respectful and mindful posture that allows you to be alert and present.

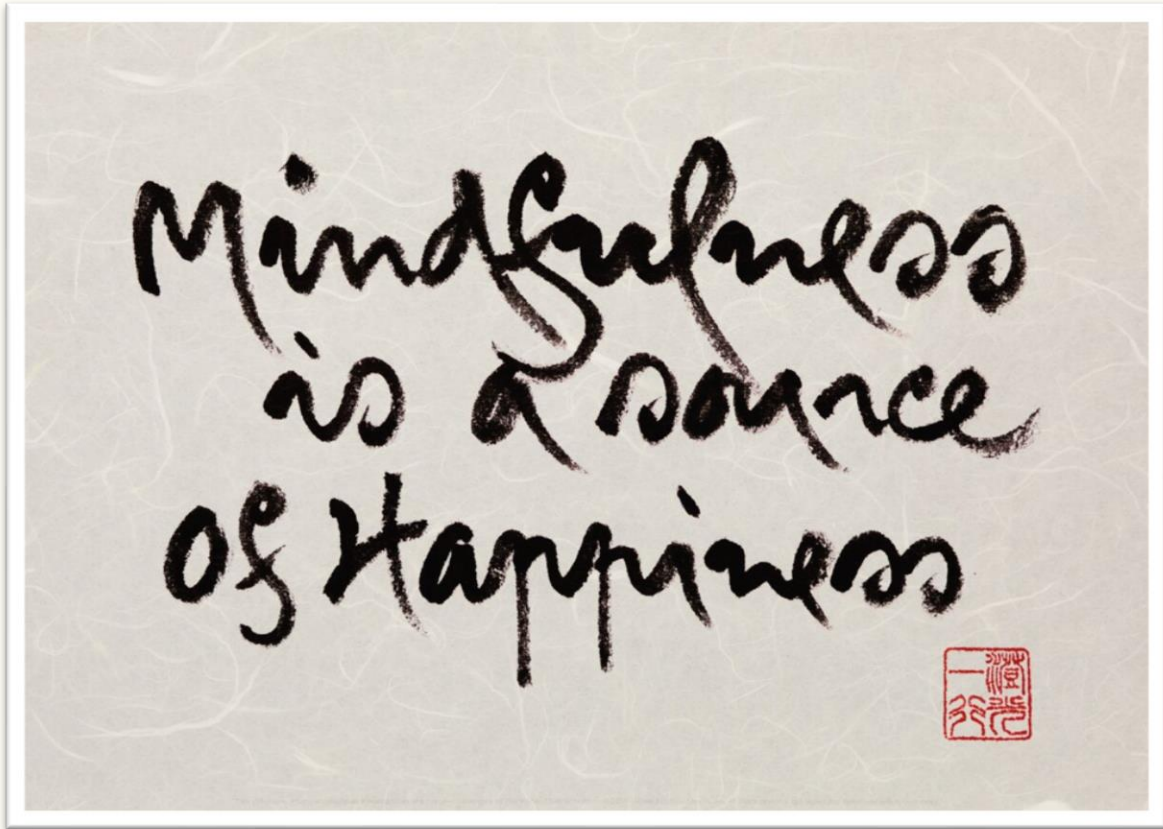
Additional Tips

Mind Your Belongings

Keep your personal belongings organized and out of the way during teachings or ceremonies.

Observe and Learn

Observe how experienced lay followers interact with monastics and teachers. This can be a valuable learning experience.



Compulsory Observances

To dignify the body, mind and ashram, as well as foster true happiness and spiritual life of each individual and the sangha, please practice the following observances while staying at the retreat:

1. Speak graciously, openly, happily without attachment.
2. Remain silent while listening to the Dharma, meditating, eating and going to sleep.
3. Avoid gossiping and senseless discussions. Practice speaking only when necessary and with right tone to not disturb others.
4. Maintain grace and mindfulness when walking, standing, lying and sitting.
5. When hearing the bells, gather at the designated place in prompt manner (except when you have assigned duties).
6. Only those with kitchen and dining hall duties are allowed to be in the kitchen.
7. Fulfil assigned duties with dedication.
8. Keep rooms and amenities clean and tidy.
9. Avoid bringing precious items to the retreat.
10. During the retreat, refrain from using the phone to avoid external distractions.



Registration

Registration Requirements

As this retreat involves gentle yet sustained physical activity, we kindly ask that participants arrive in good overall health.

Our typical daily routine will include mindful walking meditation, periods of sitting meditation (between 30 minutes and an hour), and prostrations, which involve repeated standing and kneeling.

To fully participate in the joyful spirit of our community practice, we ask that you only pack and bring with you as much as you are comfortable carrying on your own. Participation is mandatory for all group activities, which are offered for the benefit of everyone on the retreat path.

Additionally, while mindfulness practices can be a gentle companion on the path to well-being, it's important to remember that this program, and Buddhism in general, is not a substitute for professional mental or emotional healthcare. If you're experiencing anxiety or depression, we encourage you to seek the support of a qualified therapist or counselor. They can offer invaluable guidance and tools specifically tailored to your needs.

Registration Guide

For help registering, view our registration guide under the Retreats tab of our website. (Or directly through this link: <https://truclam.ca/registrationguide>)

Frequently Asked Questions

For retreat or registration questions, our FAQ section can be found under the retreats tab of our website. (Or directly with this link: <https://truclam.ca/retreatFAQ>)



Packing List for Retreatants & Short-term to Long-term Visits

As we prepare for the retreat, let's pack lightly, bringing only what we truly need. Remember, a lighter suitcase allows for a lighter mind, free to be fully present during our practice.

Required Items

If possible, use travel-sized containers for your personal care and hygiene products to comply with TSA regulations if you're flying and to minimize the amount of space they take up in your luggage.

Personal Hygiene

Travel-sized Toiletries

Pack shampoo, conditioner, soap, and body wash

Toothbrush and Toothpaste

This is a must-have for any trip in order to protect your dental health.

Deodorant

To cultivate a harmonious retreat environment, we kindly ask everyone to bring a travel-sized, natural deodorant if possible. This small act of consideration helps ensure everyone feels comfortable throughout our practice.

We understand that some may have sensitivities or medical concerns regarding deodorants. If this applies to you, please know that showering more frequently and wearing fresh clothing are also wonderful ways to practice mindful living in our shared space.

Feminine Hygiene Products

Pack enough for the duration of your retreat, considering any potential changes in your cycle due to a change in routine or environment.

Personal Care

Prescription Medications – Must.

It is not guaranteed that your medications are obtainable from local pharmacies.

Lip Balm, Face Moisturizer, Body Lotion – Highly Recommended

Alberta climate is very dry year-round. Pack to prevent dry and other skin concerns.

Sunscreen & Sun Protection (Hats) – Highly Recommended

Some retreats involve time outdoors. Pack sunscreen to protect your skin from UV.

Insect Repellent – Highly Recommended

Spring and summer retreats may have mosquitos and other bugs outdoors.

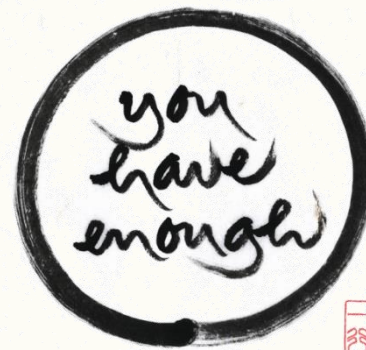
Loofah/Washcloth

Some people prefer using a loofah or washcloth in the shower. (*Not essential*)

Nail Clippers

You may pack a small nail clipper for any unexpected needs. (*Not essential*)

Hairbrush/Comb/Travel-Hairdryer – As Needed



Clothing

Temple Clothing & Robes

- 🕒 If you have temple clothing, please bring enough sets to last you the duration of the retreat.
 - We suggest that you wear a single set for no more than two days.
- 🕒 Temple Clothing and Temple Robes for your personal use (to take home) is available at set donation amounts from our small onsite shop.
- 🕒 A limited number of robes are also available for borrowing.
- 🕒 If you prefer not to wear temple clothing, please see 'Dailywear' below.

Dailywear

Our retreats are set within religious spaces and welcome practitioners from all cultural backgrounds. To contribute to a harmonious community, please be mindful of the sensitivities of all community members, consider packing clothing that is modest in nature.

Example: Please do not bring crop-top, V-neck, tight-fitting, or sleeveless top wear, and avoid bringing shorts or tight-fitting bottom wear other than as sleepwear.

Sleepwear

Please bring comfortable pants/shorts and shirts to use as sleep wear.

All retreatants will be staying in shared dorm-like rooms, it is not permitted to sleep without clothing.

Socks & Undergarments

Use of laundry facilities may be limited. Please bring enough to last you the entire duration of the retreat plus a few extra. (1 set for each day plus 2 or 3 extra sets)



Seasonal Considerations

Please check weather forecasts regularly before your travel to determine what types of outer layer are necessary to bring with you during the retreat.

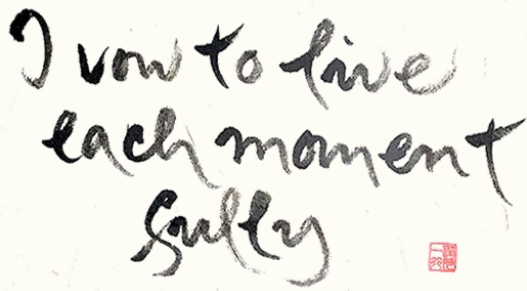
Autumn, Winter, & Spring

Both Autumn & Winter in Alberta/Canada can be extremely cold. (0 to -35°C)

Typical articles include: Thermal regulating layers (tops, bottoms, socks, undergarments), sweaters/hoodies, scarves, gloves, beanies, boots, insulated coats, parkas, windbreakers.

Summer

Typical articles include: Windbreaker, raincoat, travel umbrella, sandals or slides, hat (Sun protection), hand fan, rainboots.



Other Items

Retreats offer a nourishing space to cultivate peace and deepen your practice. Ideally, we can all be fully present during this time. However, we understand that work or school commitments sometimes can't be left behind.

If this is the case for you, know that even small gestures of mindfulness can make a big difference. Perhaps you can delegate tasks beforehand or set gentle boundaries with colleagues. Remember, a retreat is a time to care for yourself, which ultimately allows you to return with renewed energy and a more centered mind.

Laptops, Tablets/iPads, Smartwatches, Headphones, Earphones/Earbuds.

If possible, avoid bringing these items unless absolutely necessary for work or school.

Wi-Fi is given for work or school during allotted times only. Plan accordingly.

Extra cash

A small amount of cash might be helpful for unexpected needs like personal care items. If you feel called to support the Sangha's work through a donation, you're welcome to do so at our small onsite gift shop, or at the donation boxes located in the main hall.

Gifts

Although not necessary, it may be nice to bring a few small gifts to share with any new friends that you may make during your time at the retreat.

Travel Documents

Verified during travel and reception.

Domestic Retreatants

Provincial/Territorial ID or License

(AB, BC, MB, NB, NL, NT, NS, NU, ON, PE, QC, SK, YT)

Provincial / Territorial Health Insurance & Supplemental Health/Travel Insurance

AHCIP, BC Health Plan, MB Health Plan, Medicare+NBPDP, MCP, NWT Health Care Plan, MSI, Nunavut Health Plan, OHIP, Health PEI, RAMQ, SK Health Plan, YHCIP

Retreat Confirmation

Printed email confirmation

International Retreatants

Passport

Check expiry and renew early if needed.

Visa

[Check online to see if you require a visa to come to Canada](#)

Health & Travel Insurance

Valid for the entire duration between your departure and return

Retreat Confirmation

Printed email confirmation

Complete Packing List



























To avoid delays during airport customs declaration and inspection

Appendix I: Checklists

Packing List				
Required Items				
!=Must *=Highly Recommended ~=If Available ?=As Needed				
Personal Hygiene				
✓/✗	Item	Quantity per Day	# of Days	Total Quantity
	! Shampoo	n/a	X__	
	! Conditioner	n/a		
	! Body Wash	n/a		
	! Tooth Brush	n/a		
	! Tooth Paste	n/a		
	? Retainer/Denture	n/a		
	? Retainer/Denture Cleaner			
	? Dental Floss	n/a		
	! Deodorant	n/a		
	! Feminine Hygiene Product			
Personal Care				
✓/✗	Item	Quantity per Day	# of Days	Total Quantity
	Medication(s), Medical Device(s), Glasses/Contacts, & Nutrition Supplement(s)			
			X__	
	? Incontinence Products			
	? Sleep Apnea Machine			
	? Anti-Snoring Device			
	? Ear Plugs for Sleep			
	! Refillable Water Bottle			
	* Lip Balm			
	* Facial Moisturizer			
	* Hand/Body Lotion			
	! Bath Towels & Face Towels			
	* Sunscreen			
	* Insect Repellent			
	? Loofah/Washcloth	n/a		
	? Nail Clippers/Hairbrush/Comb			
	? Hair Dryer (Travel Size)			
	? Sleeping Mask			
	* Travel-Sized Facial Tissues			
	* Personal Travel First Aid Kit			
	* Cotton Swabs (Ex. Q-tips)			
	* Wet Wipes (Do not flush)			

Temple Clothing						
✓/X	Item	Quantity per Day	# of Days	Total Quantity		
	~ Temple Clothing Sets	1 set per 1–2 day(s)				
	~ Temple Robe (Áo Tràng)	n/a		1		
	? Saṃghāti (Y hoặc Y Nâu)	n/a				
Dailywear, Sleepwear, Socks, Undergarments, & Indoor Footwear						
✓/X	Item	Quantity per Day	# of Days	Total Quantity		
	* Hoody or Sweater	n/a				
	* Lightweight Windbreaker Coat					
	! Undershirt	1 per 1–2 day(s)				
	! Short-sleeve/Long-sleeves	1 per 1–2 day(s)				
	! Pants	1 per 2 day(s)				
	! Pyjama Sets	1 per 2-3 nights				
	! Socks	1pair/1day + Extra				
	! Undergarments	1pair/1day + Extra				
	* Indoor Shoes/Slippers !Labeled	n/a				
Seasonal Considerations						
✓/X	Item	Notes:		Total Quantity		
	? Thermal Regulating Pants	Autumn / Winter / Spring		1 per 1–2 day(s)		
	? Thermal Regulating Shirt			1 per 1–2 day(s)		
	? Thermal Regulating Socks			1 per 1–2 day(s)		
	! Gloves / Mittens					
	? Scarf					
	? Toque/Beanie					
	? Insulated (winter) boots					
	* Insulated Coat / Parka					
	? Raincoat			Summer		
	? Rainboots					
	? Hiking Shoes / Sneakers					
	? Travel Umbrella					
	? Outdoor Sandals / Slides					
	* Hat/Visor (Sun Protection)					
Other Items						
✓/X	Item	Notes:				
	? Laptop / Tablet / iPad	If possible, do not bring these items unless <i>absolutely necessary</i> for work or school. Wi-Fi is given for work or school only and during allotted times only. Plan accordingly.				
	? Smartwatches					
	? Headphone, Ear(phone/bud)					
	? Converter & Charging Cables					
	? Cash	For unforeseeable expenses, use at onsite gift store, donations to the community, etc. Be mindful not to bring excessive amounts.				
	? Small Gifts	Although not necessary, it may be nice to bring a few small gifts to share with any new friends that you may make during your time at the retreat.				

Travel Documents are Verified by Government Immigration Agencies During Travel and by the Retreat Registration Team at the time of Sign-in/Reception

Travel Documents & Retreat Documents	
Domestic Retreatants	
! Valid Provincial or Territorial ID Card or Drivers License	<i>Issued by the Province/Territory of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Alberta  British Columbia  Manitoba  New Brunswick  Newfoundland and Labrador  Northwest Territories  Nova Scotia  Nunavut  Ontario  Prince Edward Island  Quebec  Saskatchewan  Yukon Territory
! Valid Provincial or Territorial Health Insurance Card	<i>Issued and VALID by:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Alberta: AHCIP  British Columbia: BC Health Plan  Manitoba: Manitoba Health Plan  New Brunswick: Medicare & NBPDP  Newfoundland and Labrador: MCP  Northwest Territories: NWT Health Care Plan  Nova Scotia: MSI  Nunavut: Nunavut Health Plan  Ontario: OHIP  Prince Edward Island: Health PEI  Quebec: RAMQ  Saskatchewan: Saskatchewan Health Plan  Yukon Territory: YHCIP
! Printed Retreat Confirmation	<i>Received from confirmations.khoatu@truclam.ca</i>
US & International Retreatants	
! Valid Passport	<i>Check your passport's expiry prior to booking flights.</i>
! Valid Visa	Check online to see if you require a visa to come to Canada
! Health Insurance	<i>Required for all US & International Retreatants & Visitors. Valid for the entire duration while traveling.</i>
! Travel Insurance	
! Printed Retreat Confirmation	<i>Received from confirmations.khoatu@truclam.ca</i>
* Filled Packing Checklist	<i>To avoid delays during airport customs declaration</i>

Appendix II: Retreat Waivers

COMPLETED DURING REGISTRATION

Completed—Per Participant—Per Retreat

WAIVER FOR ADULT PARTICIPANTS

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

THIS DOCUMENT WAIVES CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUE

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE that there is potential risk for injury involved in the training and participation of any physical activity. I further understand and agree that participating in any **ADULT RETREAT** hosted by **WESTLOCK MEDITATION CENTER AND EDMONTON BUDDHIST RESEARCH INSTITUTE** is a potentially dangerous activity. Bumps, bruises, scrapes, scratches and soreness are commonplace, and most participants will encounter this sort of minor injury from time to time. More serious injuries are possible, including sprains, strains, twists, cramps, and injuries of similar magnitude. The possibility of more serious injury exists, including fractured bones, broken, bones, torn ligaments, though most participants do not encounter such serious injuries. There remains, despite safety precaution, the remote possibility of crippling or death. **I FREELY ACCEPT AND FULLY ACKNOWLEDGE** all such risks, dangers and hazards, resulting from my participation in any event hosted or sponsored by **WESTLOCK MEDITATION CENTER AND EDMONTON BUDDHIST RESEARCH INSTITUTE**.

I am also aware that I should discuss my participation in this activity with my physician to determine the effect on my current health.

It is my right and responsibility as a participant to immediately remove myself from participation in the program and notify the nearest official, if at any time I sense unusual hazard or unsafe condition or if I feel that I am physically, emotionally, or mentally unfit for continued participation in the program.

I have read and understand the above statement of risk. I assume responsibility for my own safety, and I understand and accept the risks involved with my participation.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

I hereby agree as follows:

TO WAIVE ANY AND ALL CLAIM that I have or may in future have against **WESTLOCK MEDITATION CENTER AND EDMONTON BUDDHIST RESEARCH INSTITUTE**., its coaches, officials, members, agents, directors, officers, employees and representatives, and other participants (all of whom are hereinafter collectively referred to as “Releases”).

I HAVE READ, understood and agree with the statements in the **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK** portion of this document, and by assuming and acknowledging this risk, I completely absolve all **RELEASES** from any and all liability for loss, damage, injury or expense that I may suffer, that a third party may suffer, or that my next of kin may suffer as a result of my participation in any of the activities and/or programs offered by the Releases, **DUE TO ANY CAUSE WHATSOEVER**. I acknowledge my responsibility to ensure adequate medical personal health, dental and accident insurance coverage, as well as protection of my personal possessions.

IN ENTERING INTO THIS AGREEMENT, I am not relying upon any oral or written representations or statements made by the Releases other than what is set forth in this agreement.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTOOD THIS AGREEMENT AND I AM AWARE THAT BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT I AM WAIVING CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHT WHICH I OR MY HEIRS, NEXT OF KIN, EXECUTORS, ADMINISTRATORS OR ASSIGNS MAY HAVE AGAINST THE RELEASEE. I SIGN THIS DOCUMENT, EFFECTIVE THE DATE BELOW UNTIL THE END OF THE ACTIVITIES (THE END OF THE RETREAT)

ADULT WAIVER FOR MINOR PARTICIPANT

RELEASE OF LIABILITY, WAIVER OF CLAIMS, ASSUMPTION OF RISKS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

THIS DOCUMENT WAIVES CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO SUE

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

In consideration for allowing my minor child/ward to participate in all related events and activities of WESTLOCK MEDITATION CENTER AND EDMONTON BUDDHIST RESEARCH INSTITUTE I hereby warrant and agree:

1. I am the parent/guardian having full legal responsibility for decisions regarding my minor child/ward; and
2. I am familiar with and accept, on behalf of myself and my minor child/ward that there is the risk of serious injury and death in participation in a YOUTH RETREAT and in any competitive ACTIVITIES in particular; and
3. I have satisfied myself and believe that my minor child/ward is physically, emotionally and mentally able to participate in this program, and that his/her/they equipment is mechanically fit for his/her/they use in this program; and
4. I understand, and will instruct my minor child/ward, that all applicable rules for participation must be followed and that at all times the sole responsibility for personal safety remains with my minor child/ward; and
5. I will immediately remove my minor child/ward from participation, and notify the nearest official, if at any time I sense or observe any unusual hazard or unsafe condition or if I feel that my minor child/ward has experienced any deterioration in his/her/they physical, emotional or mental fitness for continued participation in the program.
6. I authorize WESTLOCK MEDITATION CENTER AND EDMONTON BUDDHIST RESEARCH INSTITUTE to consent to emergency medical treatment in accordance with the best interest of my minor child/ward, should I not be present at the relevant time to grant consent myself.

I UNDERSTAND AND AGREE, ON BEHALF OF MY MINOR CHILD/WARD, HIS/HER/THEY HEIRS, ASSIGNS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES AND NEXT OF KIN, MYSELF, MY HEIRS, ASSIGNS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NEXT OF KIN THAT MY EXECUTION OF THE DOCUMENT CONSTITUTES:

1. AN UNQUALIFIED ASSUMPTION OF ALL RISKS associated with participation in this program by my minor child/ward even if arising from negligence or gross negligence, including any compounding or aggravation of injuries caused by negligent first aid operations or procedures, of the program organizer, the program venue and any persons associated therewith or participating therein; and
2. A FULL AND FINAL RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND ALL CLAIMS that I have or may in the future have against WESTLOCK MEDITATION CENTER AND EDMONTON BUDDHIST RESEARCH INSTITUTE, and its directors, officers, employees, guides and representatives, advertisers, other participants, sponsors (all of whom are collectively referred to as “the Releasees”) from any and all liability for any loss, damage, injury or expense that my minor child/ward may suffer, or that his/her/they next of kin may suffer as a result of his/her/they use of or presence at, the SUMMER/SPRING/WINTER YOUTH RETREAT, facilities, due to any cause whatsoever, INCLUDING NEGLIGENCE, BREACH OF CONTRACT, OR BREACH OF ANY STATUTORY OR OTHER DUTY OF CARE, INCLUDING ANY DUTY OF CARE OWED UNDER THE RELEVANT OCCUPIERS LIABILITY ACT OR ANY OTHER RELEVANT STATUTES, on the part of the Releasees.
3. AN AGREEMENT NOT TO SUE THE RELEASEES for any loss, injury, costs or damage of any form or type, howsoever caused or arising, and whether directly or indirectly from the participation of my minor child/ward in the program; and
4. AN AGREEMENT TO INDEMNIFY, and to SAVE and HOLD HARMLESS the RELEASEES, and each of them, from any litigation expense, legal fees, liability, damage, award or cost, of any form or type whatsoever, they may incur due to any claim made against them or any one of them whether the claim is based on the negligence or the gross negligence of the Releasees or otherwise.
5. AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT that I HAVE READ THIS DOCUMENT THOROUGHLY.



Appendix III: Taking Refuge Form

Complete to receive the 5 Mindfulness Trainings and your Dharma Name

III

Edmonton Buddhist Research Institute

Bamboo Forest Sangha & Westlock Meditation Centre

11328 — 97 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T5G 1X4, Canada
TakingRefuge@truclam.ca | +1 780 471 1093 | truclam.ca

Taking Refuge in the Triple Gem Form

Dear Sangha,

My name is: _____ Gender: _____

Occupation: _____

Dharma Name: _____

Born on: _____ Born at: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

I wish to take refuge in the Triple Gem and receive the trainings:

Five Precepts

Ten Precepts

Bodhisattva Precepts

I vow to respect the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha, and wholeheartedly practice the precepts (Mindfulness Trainings).

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Monastery use only:

Ordination Date:

Note:

1. Please write your full name clearly
2. Make an ✓ on the precept you wish to receive
3. For beginners, please check on the Five Precepts (Five Mindfulness Trainings)



Practicing Mindfulness with Gathas

Gathas are short poems or verses used to cultivate mindfulness throughout the day. These poems are memorized and silently recited during daily activities, like washing dishes or brushing your teeth. By synchronizing the gathas with your breath, you gently bring your attention to the present moment. Gathas serve as poetic reminders to be mindful and bring a sense of peace and joy of the practice into everyday tasks.

Starting The Day

Wake Up

Waking Up

Waking up this morning, I smile.
Twenty-four brand new hours are before
me.
I vow to live fully in each moment
And to look at being with eyes of
compassion.

Stepping Out of Bed

If today I inadvertently step on a small
insect,
May it not suffer too much.
May it be liberated.
Homage to the Bodhisattva of the Land of
Great Happiness.

Taking the First Steps of the Day

Walking on the Earth
Is a miracle!
Each mindful step
Reveals the wondrous Dharmakaya.

Opening the Window

Opening the window, I look out onto the
Dharmakaya.
How wondrous is life!
Attentive to each moment,
My mind is clear like a clam river.

Smile

Using Water

Turning on the Water

Water comes from high mountain sources.
Water runs deep in the Earth
Miraculously, water comes to us and
sustains all life.
My gratitude is filled to the brim.

Washing Your Hands

Water flows over these hands.
May I use them skillfully
To preserve our precious plant.

Brushing Your Teeth

Brushing my teeth and rinsing my mouth,
I vow to speak purely and lovingly.
When my mouth is fragrant with right
speech,
A flower blooms in the garden of my heart.

Rinsing Your Mouth

Rinsing my mouth, my heart is cleansed.
The universe is perfumed by flowers.
Actions of body, speech, and mind are
calmed.
Hand in hand with the Buddha, I walk in
the Pure Land.

Using the Toilet

Defiled or immaculate,
increasing or decreasing—
these concepts exist only in our mind.
The reality of interbeing is unsurpassed.

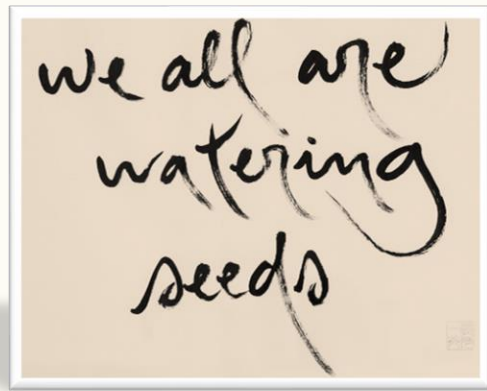
Cleaning

Washing Vegetables

In these vegetables
I see a green sun.
All dharmas join together
To make life possible.

Washing the Dishes

Washing the dishes is like bathing a baby
Buddha.
The profane is the sacred.
Everyday mind is a Buddha's mind.



Cleaning the Meditation Hall

As I clean
this fresh, calm room,
boundless joy
and energy arise!

Sweeping

As I carefully sweep
the ground of enlightenment,
a tree of understanding
springs up from the Earth.

Bathing

Unborn and indestructible,
beyond time and space—
both transmission and inheritance
lie in the wonderful nature of
Dharmadhatu.

Cleaning the Bathroom

How wonderful
to scrub and clean.
Day by day,
my heart and mind grow clearer.

Throwing Out the Garbage

In the garbage, I see a rose.
In the rose, I see compost.
Everything is in transformation.
Impermanence is life.

Washing Your Feet

The peace and joy
of one toe
is peace and joy
for my whole body.

Putting on Clothes

Putting on my Robe

Putting on this monk's/nun's robe,
my heart is at ease.
I live a life of freedom,
bringing joy to the world.

Putting on the Sanghati Robe

How wonderful is the robe of a monk/nun,
a field of precious seeds.
I vow to receive it,
and wear it lifetime after lifetime.

Looking in the Mirror

Awareness is a mirror
reflecting the four elements.
Beauty is a heart that generates love
and a mind that is open.

Practicing

Greeting Someone

A lotus for you
a Buddha to be.

Entering the Meditation Hall

Entering the meditation hall,
I see my true self.
As I sit down,
I vow to cut off all disturbances.

Sitting Down

Sitting here
is like sitting under a Bodhi tree.
My body is mindfulness itself,
free from all distraction.

Finding a Stable Posture

In the lotus posture,
the human flower blooms.
The udumbara flower is here,
offering its true fragrance.



Calming the Breath

Breathing in, I calm my body.
Breathing out, I smile.
Dwelling in the present moment,
I know this is a wonderful moment!

Adjusting Posture

Feelings come and go
like clouds in a windy sky.
Conscious breathing
is my anchor.

Morning Meditation

The Dharmakaya is bringing morning
light.
Sitting still, my heart at peace, I smile.
This is a new day. I vow to go through it
with awareness.
The sun of wisdom will soon be shining
everywhere.

Evening Meditation

At the foot of the Bodhi tree, I keep my
back straight and my posture stable.
Body, speech, and mind are calmed.
There is no longer any thought of right
and wrong.
Mindfulness is shining on the five
skandhas. The original face will be found,
and the shore of illusion will be left behind



Mindfulness Bell

Inviting the Bell (Version 1)

Body, speech, and mind, held in perfect oneness,
I send my heart along with the sound of the bell.
May the hearers awaken from forgetfulness
and transcend the path of anxiety and sorrow.

Inviting the Bell (Version 2)

May the sound of this bell penetrate deeply into the cosmos.
In even the darkest spots, may living beings hear it clearly,
so that all suffering in them cease,
understanding comes into their hearts,
and they can transcend the path of anxiety and sorrow.
Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya

Inviting the Bell (Version 3)

May the sound of this bell penetrate deeply into the cosmos,
so that beings, even those in dark places,
may hear it and be free from birth and death.
May all beings realize awakening and find their way home.
Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya

Listening to the Bell (Version 1)

Listen, listen,
this wonderful sound
brings me back
to my true home.

Listening to the Bell (Version 2)

Listening to the bell, I feel my afflictions begin to dissolve.
My mind is calm, my body relaxed, a smile is born on my lips.
Following the sound of the bell, my breath brings me back
to the safe island of mindfulness. In the garden of my heart,
the flower of peace blooms beautifully.
Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya

Listening to the Bell (Version 3)

Hearing the bell, I am able to let go of all my afflictions.
My heart is calm, my sorrows ended.
I am no longer bound to anything.
I learn to listen to my suffering,
and the suffering of the other person.
When understanding is born in me,
compassion is also born.
Namo Shakyamunaye Buddhaya



Eating Mindfully

Holding the Alms' Bowl

The bowl of the Tathagata
is in my two hands.
Giver, receiver, and gift
held in perfect oneness.



Serving Food

In this food,
I see clearly
the entire universe
supporting my existence.

Before Eating

Beings all over the Earth
are struggling to live.
I aspire to practice deeply
so all may have enough to eat.

Beginning to Eat

With the first taste, I offer joy.
With the second, I help relieve the
suffering of others.
With the third, I see others' joy as my own.
With the fourth, I learn the way of letting
go.

Holding the Empty Bowl

Looking at this bowl,
I see how fortunate I am
to have enough to eat to continue the
practice.

After Eating

The meal is finished,
and I am satisfied.
The four gratitudes
are deeply in my mind.

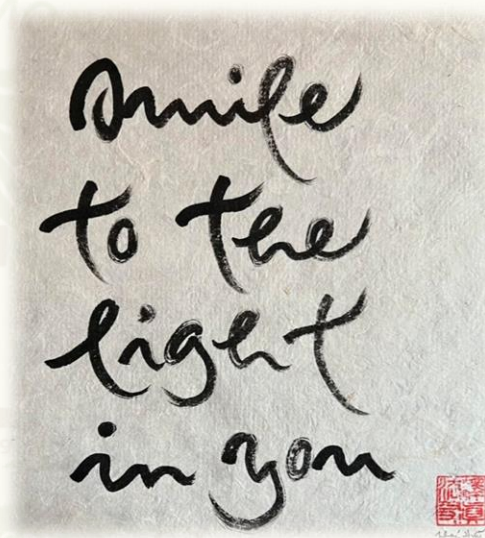
Simple Activities

Smiling at Your Anger

Breathing in, I know that anger makes me
not beautiful.
Breathing out, I smile.
I stay with my breathing
so I won't lose myself.

Using the Telephone

Words can travel thousands of miles.
May my words create mutual
understanding and love.
May they be as beautiful as gems,
as lovely as flowers.



Turning on the Light

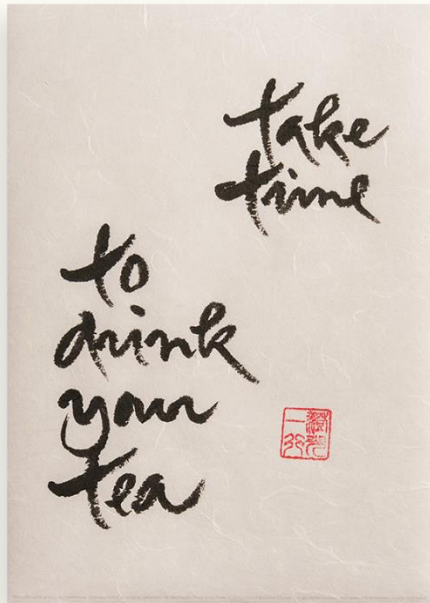
Forgetfulness is the darkness,
mindfulness is the light.
I bring awareness
to shine upon all life.

Lighting a Candle

Lighting this candle,
Offering the light to countless Buddhas,
the peace and the joy I feel
brighten the face of the Earth.

Walking Meditation

The mind can do in a thousand directions,
but on this beautiful path, I walk in peace.
With each step, a cool wind blows.
With each step, a flower blooms.



Drinking Tea

This cup of tea in my two hands,
mindfulness held perfectly.
My mind and body dwell
in the very here and now.

Driving the Car

Before starting the car
I know where I am going.
The car and I are one.
If the car goes fast, I go fast.

Making Short Journeys Safe

Two-thirds of accidents
take place near home.
Knowing this, I am very careful
Even on a short trip.

Turning on the Computer

Turning on the computer,
my mind gets in touch with the store-
consciousness.
I vow to transform habit energies
to help love and understand grow.

Gardening

Earth brings us to life and nourishes us.
Earth takes us back again.
We are born and we die with every breath.

Ending the Day

Impermanence

The day is ending and our life is one day
shorter.
Let us look carefully at what we have done.
Let us practice diligently, putting our
whole heart
into the path of meditation.
Let us live deeply each moment and in
freedom,
so the time doesn't slip away
meaninglessly.

don't be
indifferent to
the moon and
the mountains

End of the Day

I vow to bring awareness into my sleep
tonight
to dispel all fears
to see emptiness in all desires
to find my way with mindfulness
to know what is reality
and what is an illusion.

