

Pema Chodron Event Guide

WHAT IS THE RETREAT FORMAT AND SCHEDULE?

Our weekend retreat is open to everyone. The schedule includes teachings and question-and-answer sessions led by Pema Chodron. At Pema's request, Khenchung Joey Waxman, a senior student of Dzigar Kongtrul Rinpoche and head of study and practice at Pema Osel, will offer meditation instruction and program assistance. There will also be brief periods of gentle yoga led by Vanessa Waxman, Co-director of Pema Osel.

Pema Chodron has asked that all participants engage fully in the retreat by attending all teaching and meditation sessions. In addition, we will observe silence all day on Saturday.

Attendees are encouraged to purchase [Emotional Rescue by Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche](#) in advance of the program, Pema Chodron will be teaching from this text.

WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE?

Saturday (In Silence):

7:45 - 8:15 am Parking at Westshire Elementary, bus transport to Pema Osel
8:00 - 8:45 am Check-in at registration at Pema Osel
9:00 - 10:00 am Meditation instruction and meditation
10:00 - 10:30 am Stretching & Tea Break
10:30 - 12:30 pm Talk 1 - Pema Chodron
12:30 - 2:00 pm Lunch
2:00 - 3:00 pm Meditation instruction and meditation
3:00 - 3:30 pm Stretching & Tea Break
3:30 - 5:30 pm Talk 2 - Pema Chodron
5:35 - 6:15 pm Buses depart Pema Osel for Westshire Elementary

Sunday:

7:45 - 8:15 am Parking at Westshire Elementary, bus transport to Pema Osel
9:00 - 10:00 am Meditation instruction and meditation
10:00 - 10:30 am Stretching & Tea Break
10:30 - 12:30 pm Recap by Joey Waxman and discussion groups
12:30 - 2:00 pm Lunch
2:00 - 3:00 pm Meditation instruction and meditation
3:00 - 3:30 pm Stretching & Tea Break
3:30 - 5:30 pm Talk 3 - Pema Chodron
5:30 - 5:40 pm Thank-Yous & Acknowledgements
5:45 - 6:20 pm Buses depart for Westshire Elementary

HOW DO I GET TO THE EVENT SITE?

May in Vermont is called "mud season." Due to potentially poor driving conditions and limited parking, we will be busing participants three miles to Pema Osel from the Westshire Elementary School, 744 Route 113, West Fairlee, VT. The elementary school will provide parking. Please arrive at the school between 7:45-8:15 am on Saturday and Sunday. It is very important that everyone arrive at the school during these times so they do not miss the bus. See Google map of parking location.

WHAT IF I HAVE LIMITED MOBILITY, HEARING IMPAIRMENT OR SPECIAL CONCERNS?

Pema Osel is accessible to individuals with mobility impairments or other disabilities. Parking at Pema Osel will be available for individuals with mobility issues. Please contact Rebecca Henry at rebeccanow@gmail.com with any other questions and concerns.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

See Google map of parking location.

Coming from the South on I-91:

- From I-91 North, take Exit 14 - Thetford.
- Head west (left at exit) onto Route 113. Drive through Thetford Hill, Thetford Center, Post Mills, and then into West Fairlee (approx. 8.5 miles).
- Westshire Elementary School will be on your right.

Coming from the North on I-91:

- From I-91 S, take exit 15 toward US-5/Fairlee/Orford NH.
- Head west on VT-244, for 5.6 miles to Post Mills, going by Lake Fairlee.
- Turn right onto VT-113W, for 1.6 miles into the village of West Fairlee.
- Westshire Elementary school will be on your right.

Coming from the North on I-89 via Chelsea, VT:

- From I-89 S, take Exit 5 for VT-64.
- Head east (turn right) toward Williamstown on VT-64 (approx. 5 miles).
- Turn right onto VT-14 S/Main St. for approximately 1 mile.
- Turn left onto Chelsea Road for approximately 6 miles .
- Turn right onto VT-110 S, approximately 4 miles.
- From Route 110, take Route 113E toward Thetford. Continue 13.2 miles into the village of West Fairlee. Westshire Elementary school will be on your left.

For information on how to get to Vermont by air, train, or bus, see the Public Transportation section in the Pema Chodron Visitor's Guide.

WHERE DO I STAY?

There are no accommodations at Pema Osel itself. For a list of places to stay in the area, see the Accommodations section in the Pema Chodron Visitor's Guide.

If you need further assistance, please contact Allie Bauer at alliebauer@fairpoint.net, our Hospitality Coordinator.

WILL THERE BE FOOD AVAILABLE?

- Lunches are included in the price of the ticket. We will be offering delicious vegetarian fare, with salads, a hot entree, bread, dips, cheese, and fruit. Vegan and gluten-free options will be available.
- A snack bar, featuring light snacks and drinks for purchase, will be open throughout the entire program. Cash only please.
- We will serve complementary tea and coffee throughout the weekend.
- We recommend that guests eat breakfast before the program on Saturday and Sunday morning.
- If you have special dietary needs, please come prepared with your own food.

WHAT IS THE WEATHER LIKE IN MAY IN VERMONT?

The weather in May in Vermont is variable, temperatures from cool and chilly to warm and sunny. We recommend dressing in layers, and wearing good walking shoes. Vermont weather can change unexpectedly, so a sweater, shawl, and rain gear may come in handy.

HOW MUCH WALKING SHOULD I EXPECT TO DO?

The buses will drop you off in the parking area of Pema Osel, which is a few hundred feet from the main shrine hall. The terrain is hilly and grassy. There are gravel pathways. Walking shoes with rubber soles are best for this terrain.

WHAT KIND OF SEATING WILL BE AVAILABLE?

Seating will be on chairs. There are three tiers of seating available, based on ticket price. All seats have a view of Pema Chodron. Participants will receive a color-coded badge for their seating section when they check in.

- Gold—front row seating
- Blue—general admission shrine room seating
- Red—general admission adjoining room seating

In each tier, seating will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

- Your Ticket.

When you purchase your ticket online, you will receive a confirmation via email. This email confirmation is your ticket; please print it out and bring it with you. You will need this ticket in order to board the bus at Westshire School on Saturday & Sunday mornings.

Other personal items could include:

- Personal water bottle
- Notebook, pens
- Text - [Emotional Rescue by Ponlop Rinpoche](#) (We will have a limited number of the book available at our on-site store for purchase.)
- Walking shoes that can easily be put on and taken off.
- Cash for snack bar and cafe

Recognizing that space is limited, we ask you to pack lightly.

WHAT SHOULD I LEAVE AT HOME?

- Pets, alcohol, illegal drugs, and weapons of any kind

SHRINE ROOM ETIQUETTE

The following guidelines can help us remain mindful and respectful of the precious opportunity we have to hear the teachings and study and practice the Dharma.

- Please remove shoes before entering the shrine room and place them on the designated shoe racks. Personal belongings (backpacks, coats, etc.) can be left in designated areas or taken with you to your seat.
- When entering and leaving the shrine room, it is customary to offer a gesture of respect. This can be done by placing your palms together at your heart and bowing slightly.
- Conversation should be kept to a minimum in and around the shrine room.
- Turn off all cell phones and watch alarms.

- Dress appropriately. Revealing clothing such as halter tops and shorts are not considered appropriate attire. Hats should be removed before entering the shrine room.
- Chant books, texts, liturgies, and sacred images should be treated with respect. Do not place them directly on the floor or step over them.
- It is considered disrespectful to point one's feet at the shrine, a sacred image, or towards the teacher. Likewise, one never lies down in the shrine room.

WHAT IF I NEED TO LEAVE SUDDENLY?

Only in the case of an emergency should anyone leave during the teachings. Please make all necessary arrangements and plan to stay for the entire day.

CAN I BRING MY CELL PHONE OR LAPTOP?

Yes, but there is no cell reception within a 10-mile radius of Pema Osel, and we do not offer internet access. A landline will be available for emergency phone calls only.

WHAT IF THERE IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY?

There will be on-call medical staff available at all times.