

ACEM MEDITATION

INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER

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THE FIRST
world retreat
of acem meditation

the power of
silence



- INSPIRATION
- INSIGHT
- SILENCE
- LONG MEDITATIONS

SAT JULY 12 – SUN JULY 20 2003 OSLO NORWAY

MODERATOR: DR ARE HOLEN FOUNDER OF ACEM

www.acem.com



Dr. Are Holen on the First World Retreat of Acem Meditation:

“Meet, Meditate and Discuss!”

“Long meditations bring us closer to the universal and the timeless aspects of existence, shared by all mankind, beyond language, image or thought,” says Dr. Are Holen. This summer, he directs the First World Retreat of Acem Meditation in Oslo, Norway.

“To meditate is profoundly enriching. When we solve a meditation dilemma, we expand our psychological freedom in everyday life,” says Dr. Holen.

Over the years, many people have benefited from Dr. Holen’s dialogues on meditation and existential questions. This year’s retreat will build on the experience that Acem has accumulated during almost 40 years. Participants will be brought up to date with the latest developments in the psychology of Acem Meditation.

The retreat will be an opportunity to meet Acem meditators from many countries and cultures. Some are beginners, while others have been meditating for many years through different stages of life.

Since the mid-1990s, many of the advances in Acem’s understanding of meditation have been introduced at deepening retreats with long medi-

tations. Meditation teachers and instructors have used these opportunities to further explore the potentials of the technique, to the benefit of all meditators. The World Retreat provides an ideal setting for exchange, growth and learning.

Inspiration from abroad

Teaching Acem Meditation to people of different cultures, in Asia, Africa, the Americas, and Australia, over the past 10-15 years, has given new insights into Acem Meditation. So has the fact that many Scandinavians have participated in Acem retreats in both India and Taiwan. These encounters have broadened the perspective and understanding of meditation.

The World Retreat will offer opportunities for cross-cultural encounters that may provide inspiration for one’s meditation and daily life. Cultural diversity makes the perception of our existence both richer and subtler.

Idealistic and personal

Dr. Are Holen has been a pivotal person in the development of Acem Meditation, since he founded the

organisation in 1966. By profession, he is a medical doctor and a psychologist. A specialist and consultant in psychiatry, he is particularly interested in group therapy and individual psychotherapy. He is internationally recognised for his research on stress and disasters, and he has lectured at numerous universities around the world. After the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, he was called to New York to assist with debriefing.

Today, Dr. Holen is the chairperson of the Department of Neuroscience, Faculty of Medicine, at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. He has been central in his university’s development of problem-based learning and in the establishment of behavioural medicine. He is a highly esteemed lecturer and teacher.

Dr. Holen’s persisting interest in meditation is both idealistic and personal. He has practised daily meditation ever since his high school years, and instructed, either personally or through others, tens of thousands of individuals, in different countries and cultures. As a young man, he also taught

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at the Acem School of Yoga, which he founded in the late 1960s.

“As a high school student I was interested in yoga. I practised some exercises and was fascinated. As my interest grew, I came in contact with meditation, and my involvement has continued to this day.”

You were 20 years old when you founded Acem. Why did you start a meditation organisation?

“To stimulate the growth process, we need to share experiences and reflections with others. Accordingly, I felt a need to give my interest in meditation an organisational expression. Acem was founded when I was a student at the University of Oslo.”

How does Acem Meditation work?

“The mental repetition of a sound activates psychological structures that influence our experience and behaviour. When we meditate in a technically correct way, we gradually begin to make ‘mistakes’. Distortions of our experience enter our meditation practice. We encounter inner paradoxes where we do not see our own contributions to the problems that we face—in our meditation and in everyday life. To advance further, we need to transcend some of our inner boundaries in the silence of our meditation practice. This is not an intellectual task, it can only be resolved by changes of the inner practice.”

Introspection and empathy

You have published a book and an audio CD called Inner Strength. What does this title connote to you?

“Meditation brings us beneath the surface. We get in contact with parts of ourselves that are easily overlooked. Exploring and reflecting on our lives gives inner strength. This makes it easier to understand feelings, contradictions and conflicts in self and others. The capacity for introspection is closely related to the capacity for empathy, and both profit from practising Acem Meditation.

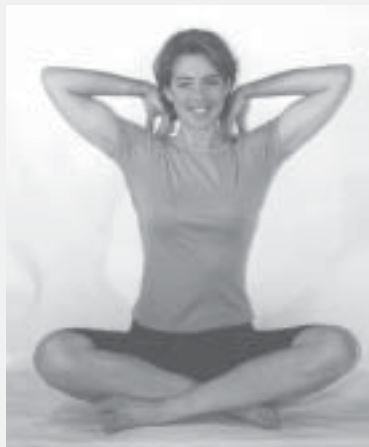
“In the silence of meditation, we become aware of parts of ourselves that daily life may fail to address. Meditation improves our understanding of what we are and what our needs are. It also helps us to see more clearly how we can adjust our lives to make our existence more satisfying. The World Retreat offers opportunities for insights and reorientation.” ●



Awareness training

The World Retreat will include three training sessions in mindful awareness in relation to body, breath, space, and interpersonal relations. Instruction will be given by Dr. Are Holen.

Effortless, mindful awareness is a central aspect of meditation techniques. It has its source in our self-structure, reduces repression and increases our capacity for existential presence. It enables us to realise more fully the silent currents of the mind and helps us to bring this dimension into our daily lives - both in work and in social relations. The training sessions will highlight central aspects of Acem Meditation and other meditation traditions.



Yoga – psycho-physical training

Like many types of physical training, yoga increases well-being and provides an outlet for inner tension. In addition, the relaxation of yoga makes it easier to get in touch with one's own feelings and impulses. By improving the bodily basis for introspection, yoga stimulates the meditative process.

Most yoga exercises involve three elements: physical movement, breathing, and mindful awareness. It is the emphasis on breathing and awareness that gives yoga its psychological and meditative dimension. Without this emphasis, yoga would be reduced to plain physical training.

Yoga is a way of getting closer to one's self. Photographs of Indian yogis in extreme postures have little to do with the core of yoga. Yoga makes one calm and brings elusive moods and emotions to the surface. It has to do with acceptance, not with mindless pursuit of impressive achievements. Anybody can practise yoga.

The World Retreat will include three sessions of basic yoga instructed by physiotherapist Anne Friis-Baastad, who is in daily charge of the Acem School of Yoga, and who has taught yoga in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Taiwan.



Dreiva – speaking with your body

Dreiva is a form of dance developed in Acem since 1976. The word is a combination of “drive” and “wave”. Dreiva builds on experience with yoga, meditation and group psychology. It activates as many body parts as possible and uses them as rhythmical elements to intense music. The aim is to give bodily expression to spontaneous thoughts, feelings and impulses. On the one hand, Dreiva helps to open a channel towards hidden areas of the mind. On the other hand, the interplay with other Dreiva dancers stimulates a kind of physical and emotional communication beyond words.

The World Retreat includes two Dreiva sessions with leading Dreiva instructor Terje Buuer, who has taught this form of dance in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Taiwan.

Workshops and seminars

At the First World Retreat of Acem Meditation, there will be three one-hour sessions of parallel workshops and seminars with experts in their various fields who are also experienced Acem instructors and meditation teachers. Below is a preliminary list of workshops and seminars that participants can choose from. Some of these will be given in English, others in Scandinavian. Simultaneous translation into English, German, Dutch, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese will be available for a number of workshops and seminars.

Workshops

Paint your self

- Eva Skaar, Artist

Using form and colour to discover and express hidden parts of yourself.

Creative writing

- Christopher Grøndahl, Novelist

Tapping into the sources of creativity, transforming impulse to language.

Explore your personal values

- Eva Brandt, PhD, Senior Researcher in Collaborative Design Processes, The Interactive Institute

Discovering some of the hidden agendas that shape your life.

Seminars

Emotional awareness and family relations

- Turid Suzanne Berg-Nielsen, PhD, Associate Professor of Clinical Child Psychology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Emotional awareness during Acem Meditation is not the same as being preoccupied with feelings. Acknowledging this may have implications for family relations.

Group psychology

- Maria S. Gjems-Onstad, Psychotherapist

The interaction between members of a group can form the basis for self-reflection.

Love as an existential challenge

- Carl Henrik Grøndahl, Artistic Director, Radio Drama, Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation

One of the strongest impulses of human life: a biological drive or a sacred power?

Ethics and meditation

- Ole Gjems-Onstad, Professor Dr. Juris., Norwegian School of Management

To what extent may the way one works with Acem Meditation act as a guideline in the complex choices of human life?

The philosophy of restlessness

- Eirik Jensen, Lawyer and Philosopher

Our time seems plagued by a pervasive restlessness. So may our meditation. What is the meaning of this restlessness? How can we best deal with it?



Introspection East and West

- Torbjørn Hobbøl, Meditation Teacher in Acem, and Halvor Eifring, PhD, Professor of Chinese, University of Oslo

Reflections on the meetings between Acem Meditation and the ancient meditative traditions of India and China.

Meditation and modern reason

- Dag Jenssen, PhD, Associate Professor of the Theory of Science, Stavanger University College

How does Acem Meditation fit into modern debates about rationality?

Acem history

- Tor Hersoug, PhD, Director of Economic Research, The Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry

The fascinating story of almost 40 years of work to develop a unique approach to meditation, inspired by a profound vision of the human condition.

Leadership training in Acem International

- Sigrun Hobbøl, Educationalist

Teaching Acem Meditation is an idealistic pursuit that intensifies the meditative process. How can you contribute to Acem's international growth?

Research on Meditation 1

When the body hurts: Effects on the physical condition

- Merete Hetland, MD, PhD, Consultant in Rheumatology, Copenhagen University Hospital in Hvidovre

Psychological effects of meditation

- Anne Grete Hersoug, PhD, Psychotherapist and Senior Research Fellow, University of Oslo

Meditation and performance

- Erik Ekker Solberg, MD, Ullevaal University Hospital

Research on Meditation 2

The meditating brain

- Svend Davanger, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Neuroscience, University of Oslo

Stress hormones

- Margareta Hammarlund-Udenaes, PhD, Professor of Pharmacokinetics, University of Uppsala

Meditation and blood pressure

- Erik Ekker Solberg, MD, Ullevaal University Hospital

Registration form

The First World Retreat of Acem Meditation July 12-20, 2003

Fee for non-Scandinavians: USD 420. Course fee includes accommodation, but not meals.

Name: _____

Male Female Age: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Country: _____

E-mail: _____ Tel: _____

I have learnt Acem Meditation (time/place)

Name of instructor: _____

I have not learnt Acem Meditation, but practise the following sound-based meditation:

I want to learn Acem Meditation during the retreat (only non-Scandinavians; extra fee: USD 50)

I want to participate in the post-retreat tour extra cost: USD 230 (non-Scandinavians)

I want to participate in the International Deepening Retreat (fee for non-Scandinavians: USD 490)

I want to buy the CD *Inner Strength* (USD 14)

Which languages do you speak?

Prior participation in Acem Meditation retreats?

Yes No

Time/place: _____

Signature: _____

PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS

International Deepening Retreat

Sat July 26 – Sun August 3, 2003



Skaugumåsen Retreat Centre, Oslo

This retreat is for Acem meditators who have some experience of long meditations and want to practise sittings of more than six hours. Instruction will be given in several languages.

Typical daily programme

0730 - 0830: Breakfast, exercise

0830 - 1630: Silence for meditation

1630 - 1700: Pause

1700 - 1900: Process guidance

1900 - 2000: Dinner

2000 - 2130: Instruction groups or seminar

A deepening retreat will help participants to master long meditations of six hours or more. It will provide a good opportunity to work thoroughly with one's meditation practice and to explore aspects of meditation that are not easily available in other contexts. Meals and lifestyle are designed to intensify the meditative process.

The retreat includes instruction in advanced meditation practice, group discussions, seminars, guidance and existential questions. On some days, there will be yoga instruction and group meditation.

Participants in a deepening retreat must have recent experience of long meditations of three hours or more, and must have practised Acem Meditation regularly for at least three months before the retreat starts. Earlier participation in overnight retreats in Acem Meditation is an advantage.

Fee for non-Scandinavian participants: USD 490 including board and lodging. This is approximately 40 percent off the original fee.

ACEM School of Meditation

is a non-profit organisation which helps people develop existentially by means of a mindful, reflective process known as Acem Meditation.

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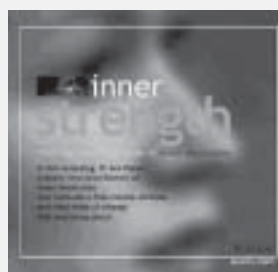
Go to www.acem.com/info/centres.html to locate addresses in other countries.

Contributors:

Nina Tjomsland (transl.) Carl Henrik Grøndahl (layout)

Halvor Eifring (ed.)

Audio CD: Inner Strength



On this CD, Dr. Are Holen discusses the importance of the free mental attitude in Acem Meditation. He explains how to cultivate and maintain a free mental attitude and suggests the kinds of change that this attitude can bring about.

Order from Acem now.

Why participate in the First World Retreat of Acem Meditation?

Therese Peng, PhD, Taiwan
Associate Professor, Chinese Institute of Technology



I look forward to visiting the homeland of Acem Meditation, in order to grasp the nature of Acem and of this meditation technique. The international environment is also important. I can practise long meditations in

Taiwan as well, but here I can share my experiences with meditators from other countries and cultures.

Peter Grønholm, Denmark

Student, Roskilde University Centre



I want to learn more about the processes we go through as meditators. I also look forward to meeting interesting people from other cultures. In my own meditation, I

hope to understand better who I am and my relation to my own cultural background. I also want to get away from it all, to have a different sort of holiday.

Carina Heimdal, Norway

High school student, Oslo



I have never practised longer meditations, and I want to try it. As a child, I actually went to several Acem summer retreats, but then it was only because my parents meditated. This will be my first time as a real participant.

Alhagy Jagne, PhD, Gambia

Human Resources Manager, Trust Bank



I learnt Acem Meditation and yoga in Norway 25 years ago, and since then I have practised both on a daily basis. The World Retreat will be an opportunity to meet again people who I haven't seen for very

many years. Sharing my ideas with others will strengthen my motivation and help me improve my daily meditations.

Ivana Macek, PhD, Sweden

Researcher, Uppsala University



My first Acem summer retreat was in Sweden last year. It was a powerful experience. The long meditations were important. Apart from that, I met

persons who were both open and genuinely caring. They were so human and unpretentious, and that left a strong impression on me. I have heard much praise of Are Holen's seminars.

"The most beautiful place in the world"



Optional 4-day post-retreat tour of Norway
Sunday July 20
to Thursday July 24 2003

Departing from the retreat campus on Sunday morning. Returning to Oslo by 7 pm on Thursday evening.

The tour will provide an opportunity to visit some of the most scenic places in Norway and to enjoy the bright Nordic summer nights. It will include narrow fiords, white waterfalls, blue lakes, wild mountains, cold glaciers, deep forests, and old Norwegian farmhouses with grazing sheep and goats.



Participants will stay in country cabins (basic four-bed huts), make their own food and travel in private cars provided by Norwegian members of Acem. This will keep costs low. Non-Scandinavian participants pay only USD 230 for the whole tour, including board, lodging and travel expenses.

Limited participation. Priority will be given to non-Scandinavian participants.

Day 1

Gjende and Besseggen, where, in Henrik Ibsen's play, the legendary figure Peer Gynt fell from the mountain edge and into the lake 800 metres below, while holding on to the horns of a reindeer.

Valdresflya An old road along the wild river Sjoa and the wide mountain plateaux and high peaks of Jotunheimen National Park.

Hedalen Stave Church Built in 1160, the church has a unique ambience and contains precious medieval art objects.

Ridderspranget Knight's Leap According to legend, Sigvat, a 13th century knight, jumped over this gorge in order to marry the girl he loved.

Strynsvatnet A beautiful lake close to a world of glaciers and a summer ski centre.

Day 2

Kjenndal Glacier An offshoot of the Jostedal glacier, the largest glacier in mainland Europe.

Norrangsdalen Valley Here an old farmhouse can still be seen under the clear water.

Hellesylt A picturesque village on the west coast of Norway.

Geiranger Fiord Majestic snow peaks, wild waterfalls, green lushness and the deep blue fiord water, often described as "the most beautiful place in the world", and first on Lonely Planet's list of sights in Scandinavia. National Geographic Magazine chose this part of Norway as one of "50 Places of a Lifetime".

Day 3

Travel by car and ferry to a number of stunning locations on the west coast of Norway, rarely seen by tourists.

Herdalssetra Here you can see Norwegian goat cheese being made.

Tresfjord Experience both traditional and modern Norwegian farm life.

Molde Every summer this small town hosts Europe's oldest jazz festival.

The Atlantic Road Brings us to the vast ocean and the little fishing village of Bud.

Day 4

Trollveggen Europe's highest vertical mountain wall, where you can watch courageous mountaineers and maybe even daring base-jumpers.

Romsdalshorn and Trolltindan Beautiful peaks surrounding the area.

Rauma River Here we will have lunch at a secluded spot by the riverside.

Veidarvon A cottage in the mountain world of the legendary figure Peer Gynt.

Day 5

Return to **Oslo**, travelling through the green forests and rich farming areas of Eastern Norway.

Find links to each location on acem.com/scandinavia/tour_2003.html.