

## Guidance for the Centers of the Americas from the Regional Coordinating Office

15 March 2020:

### Context:

Our guiding principles in creating this set of guidelines are to protect our instruments, students, contacts and friends from becoming ill and to support public health efforts in mitigating the spread of this highly contagious virus. We understand that those with strong immune systems might contract the virus but remain without symptoms. However, they may infect those who are older or who have weakened immune systems. Our hope is to support the efforts in all of our countries and local communities to protect the health of everyone who lives and works there. As we do this, it's important to remain aware of our main task of spiritual sustenance and upliftment. Our responses to situations need to be considerate and compassionate.

### Guidelines for Centers Regarding Gatherings:

- Effective immediately, and through the end of April, we are requesting that all BK centers and classes in the region be closed for gatherings of any size for the public and for BK's.
- During this period, we encourage you to make every effort to create on-line versions of programs using Zoom, Facebook live, Skype and other technologies to continue to sustain our students, friends and contacts.
- We will not have in-person murli class in our centers except for those who live in the center. Note there may be case-by-case exceptions for those who live nearby and are not using public transport, but instead will offer murli via Skype, Zoom, phone or other methods.

### Guidelines for instruments living at the centers:

- For those who work, please consider working from home if at all possible.
- Please cancel all non-urgent appointments, including those with doctors or dentists.
- Those arriving back from travel to India or elsewhere should thoroughly wash and sanitize their luggage before bringing it into the center.
- We will not be able to accommodate international guests at the centers until further notice.
- Anyone with a cold or symptoms of a respiratory disease should self-quarantine for 14 days. If there are vulnerable people living with you, make every effort to self-quarantine in a location other than the center – or as far away as possible in the center.
- For those who have to go into work,
  - Avoid public transportation.
  - Remove outerwear, such as coats and gloves and handbags, briefcases, backpacks, etc. before you enter the center and keep separate in a garage or outer room.

- Disinfect anything you touch when coming in from the outside.
- Shower with disinfectant soap as soon as you enter the center.
- Follow the precautions set by the Center for Disease Control.
  - **Take [everyday preventive actions](#) to stay healthy.**
    - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
    - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
    - Stay home when you are sick.
    - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
    - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
    - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
    - **Follow [public health advice](#)** regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.

#### [Guidelines for Instruments Not Living at the Center:](#)

- Those instruments who support the center while living in their homes should practice social distancing, minimizing their contact with the public and maintaining high levels of hygiene.

#### [Guidance for those Hoping to Attend the Regional and Sub-regional Retreats and Brothers Retreat](#)

- Because it is still 10 weeks until the scheduled start of the Regional Retreat, and there is so much uncertainty at this time, we will delay making a decision on this series of retreats until April 15 when we hope the situation will have stabilized.
- Please wait to purchase tickets until that time.
- The planning team will continue to plan for the retreat in the awareness, that it could be conducted on-line as a webinar or similar format if necessary.

#### [Stay current with updated information on the virus.](#)

- Check reliable [Websites](#) for updated information
- Take the guidance of the government officials in your area.
- **Stay informed.** CDC's [COVID-19 Situation Summary](#) will be updated regularly as information becomes available

#### [Prepare the Centers for Extended Periods of Confinement](#)

- As advised in the past, all centers should maintain a stock of a 3 to 6 months of food staples, medical supplies and paper goods.
- Instruments should maintain a supply of critical personal medications.

- In the case of a public health epidemic as we're facing now, you will want a stock of disinfectants, hand purifiers, sprays and wipes, hand soaps, tissues and so on.

### The Power of Our Practice:

- Our foundation as always is to keep our centers and the instruments at our centers spiritually charged.
- We are asking that you set aside time each morning and again in the evening for extra yoga.
- Consider the power of vibrations of compassion shared with all souls of the world, and nature.
- Once you have taken all necessary measures, allow your thoughts to remain elevated, peaceful and stable.