



Press release
For immediate release

2500 KM to Meditate!

The adventure of a 28-years old Québécois to help the opening of the Open Centre, a UNESCO-supported project

(Montreal, May 14th, 2007) - Benoit Martin, from the South Shore of Montreal, is about to set on a **2500 km tour on his bicycle** to collect funds for the opening of a meditation center named *Open Centre* in Spain. This adventure is to raise funds: **1 euro per kilometer** cycled, for a total of 2500 Euros (approximately \$3800 CAN). The collected funds will go directly to the *Open Centre*, to allow for the purchase of the land for this project.

The trip will start in Leipzig, Germany, in the beginning of June and will end in mid-August in front of the *Open Centre*, located in the region of Catalonia, north of Barcelona. Benoit Martin will pass through a total of 5 countries: Germany, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, France and Spain. He will also cross the Alps and the Pyrenees, ascending 3 times up to an altitude of 2000 meters (6500 feet). With his laptop computer and his digital camera, powered by a solar panel, the whole world can witness Benoit Martin's **philanthropic adventure** through the official *2500 KM to Meditate* website: www.2500km.com

UNESCO is supporting the opening of the *Open Centre* and has recently launched a campaign through out Catalonia to get the support of 50 spiritual/religious groups for the project. This generous support is essential for the creation of the Open Centre.

Facilities of a previous meditation centre, able to accommodate 40 people, along with 2 meditation halls accommodating up to 225 people are already existing and are in excellent condition. The actual owner of the location, a retired spiritual teacher, was not intending to sell his property until hearing about the *Open Centre* project. *Open Dharma*, the non-profit organization which is supporting the *Open Centre*, includes Jaya Julienne Ashmore, Gemma Polo Pujol and Ajay Pal Singh, 3 meditation teachers coming respectively from the United States, Spain and India.

Thus, no construction or restoration work is needed for the opening of the Open Centre, and the funds collected by Benoit Martin will go entirely to the purchase of the location and the installations, which cost approximately 900 000 Euros (1.5 millions \$ CAN). The *Open Centre* has a great location, in the nature, surrounded by cliffs which are inspiring silence and tranquility. The facilities include 150 acres of lush forest, which will allow to hold different programs simultaneously without compromising silence or preventing laughter.

The fund-raising event organized by Benoit Martin is only one among so many. Many people around the world are working for the creation of the *Open Centre*.

Their visit in Québec

In June 2006, Benoit and friends organized a meditation retreat for *Open Dharma* in Mauricie, Québec.

Over the years, rich from the experience of more than a hundred retreats organized throughout the world, *Open Dharma* saw that there is a real need for a place like the *Open Centre*. There is a great hunger for a sense of belonging, for deep encounters with nature, silence, beauty, other people, and oneself, and for re-discovering what really matters in this life.

How to participate to this adventure?

To help Benoit in his adventure you can give 1 Euro (or \$1.50 CAN) for every kilometer that he will ride, through his **secured website**: www.2500km.com

Businesses giving \$75 or more will also have a link towards their website from the donators page. It is also possible to sponsor or to support Benoit for his personal and gear expenses, but Benoit Martin insists that the priority be given to the *Open Centre* first.

About the Open Centre

« We welcome people from any religion or no religion. »

The Open centre will inspire and support inner growth within a space of human and ecological diversity, to learn to live with inner and outer harmony through contact with nature, through interaction, and through silence. The Open Centre will offer residential retreats, workshops and onsite resources, including a library.

Along with meditation from diverse spiritual traditions, the Open Centre will also offer nontraditional ways to awaken the full potential of human life — to be relaxed and alert, centered and open.

The website of Open Centre: www.opencentre.es

About Open Dharma

Open Dharma is registered in the US under the umbrella of Earthville inc., a non-profit organization. Open Dharma is also present in Spain and in India.

Since 1999 Open Dharma has given teachings and group meditation retreats in India, North and South America, Europe, Israel, and Australia. Dharma means “nourishing support.” On retreats often with long waiting lists, participants discover their authentic priorities and solutions, and bring this wisdom and ease into their outer lives.

The website of Open Dharma: www.opendharma.org

- 30 -

For information:

Annie Martin
2500 KM to Meditate! Public Relations Officer
+1 (514) 743-7712
annie-martin@hotmail.com

Official website:
www.2500km.com

To contact Benoit Martin:
2500km@benoitmartin.com

