

FAQs

What is Miami ACX?

[Astral Codex Ten](#) (ACX) is a blog that grew out of “the rationalist community”, a mostly-online subculture of people trying to improve our reasoning and decision-making. We seek to hold true beliefs, be effective at accomplishing our goals, and work to develop and practice the [art of human rationality](#). Our community is a place to 1) develop and train rationality, and 2) apply one’s rationality to real-world problems.

Miami ACX hosts official meetups monthly, as well as informal social activities that are announced in our [Discord](#). Topics we discuss include philosophy, self-improvement, cognitive science, psychology, artificial intelligence, game theory, evolutionary psychology, economics, and the far future.

Can I come if I’m not a rationalist / (trans)humanist / familiar with ACX/LW/EA?

Yes, of course. Keep in mind that the gathering celebrates the pursuit of science and reason, so it will be most relevant if that’s something that you respect.

Can I bring friends?

Yes! We request that you give them some context to the event.

Are kids allowed?

Children are welcome, but we will be addressing dark topics (death, loss, etc). If you’re concerned they might not be appropriate for your kid(s), you’re welcome to take them for a walk during the darker part of the ceremony.

Can I bring companion animal(s)?

We *love* dogs, cats, and other non-human animals. And for their safety, we request that they **not** attend.

Do I have to register for the event or can I just show up?

You’ll need to [sign up on eventbrite](#) in order to attend the event. At this time, registration is free.

What about Covid precautions?

We hope that everyone has been vaccinated but understand that some may not. If you are feeling sick a few days before the event, we ask that you not attend for the health of others. If there is a drastic change in the county’s Covid situation, we will reassess.

What is the winter solstice?

It is “the day with the shortest period of daylight and longest night of the year, when the Sun is at its lowest daily maximum elevation in the sky... Since prehistory, the winter solstice has been a significant time of year in many cultures and has been marked by festivals and rituals. It marked the symbolic death and rebirth of the Sun; the gradual waning of daylight hours is reversed and

begins to grow again. Some ancient monuments such as Newgrange and Stonehenge are aligned with the sunrise or sunset on the winter solstice.” ([Wikipedia](#))

Will this take place on the actual winter solstice?

No, we are celebrating the weekend beforehand. This year’s winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere will fall on Wednesday, December 21.

What is secular solstice?

Here is a [longer explanation](#) of how and why the holiday was developed. Communities in the Bay Area and NYC typically start the event with a group meal followed by a two-hour ceremony, in which we follow an “[emotional arc](#)” of song and written word. The event is meant to be impactful and moving, covering topics such as humanity, progress, science, love, history, the future, life, death, and hope.

What is the theme for this year?

We are still working on that, and will update the event description (as well as announce in our Discord) once it is confirmed.

What if I might struggle with the topics?

Upon request, we can provide a list of content warnings or a preview of any potentially upsetting content. We expect some of the darker topics will include death, loss, grieving, coldness, and abandonment. You’re welcome to take some time out from the ceremony at any point if you need a break or other reason.

What songs will we be singing?

We’re still picking out the playlist, but here is an [album of songs commonly found at secular solstice events](#). We will post the final list of songs before the event and encourage everyone to listen to them in advance. Printouts with the lyrics will be provided at the event so you don’t have to learn the lyrics. If you have a passing familiarity with the tunes to sing along at roughly the right rhythm, you’ll enjoy yourself much more.

What if I’m not comfortable singing?

That’s fine, just please be respectful as others around will be. Know that none of us are singers, and you are welcome to start singing if your comfort level changes.

Can you describe the event logistics in greater detail?

The event will take place in one of the group campgrounds in Markham Park – the “Preserve,” found just south of the archery range. Even though we won’t be opening the campground gates until 4pm, daytime activities are likely to occur beforehand, such as frisbee, art, lunch, etc. Please [register for the event](#) so that we can email you details once our daytime plans have been confirmed.

The campground gate will open an hour before dinner, for socializing and if you plan to stay overnight, a chance to set up your tent. We will provide a group dinner for everyone. The ~2

hour long Winter Secular Solstice ceremony will start as the sun starts to set. You should plan to be there for the entire ceremony, but if you have to leave in the middle, please leave without disrupting anyone.

Afterwards, we will build a bonfire and enjoy the rest of the evening. We might take a group walk (or car ride) over to Fox Observatory (also located in Markham Park) for stargazing. Anyone is welcome to stay the evening in a tent. The campground has room for 100 people.

What food should we expect? What if I have allergies?

All the food will be vegan, and we hope to have some gluten-free option. If you are concerned about specific allergies, feel free to reach out.

What should I bring if I'm attending the evening event only?

A water bottle would be helpful. If you have any large candles, please bring them and we can use them during the ceremony.

Can I bring drugs and alcohol?

No, please leave them at home.

What should I bring if I want to stay overnight?

Basic car camping staples: a tent, blankets/sleeping bag, pillow, flashlight/headlamp, a couple gallons of water. Helpful but not necessary additions: inflatable mattress or mattress pad, pajamas, towel, etc.

What if I don't have a tent and sleeping bag?

We don't have any spare tents, however [\\$20 2-person tents](#) can be purchased online. If that is going to be cost-prohibitive, send us an email at miamiACX@gmail.com. Also if you're coming from out of town and want to ship it to South Florida in advance, send us a message.

As for bedding, we are more likely to have spare pillows and blankets! Post a message to our Discord. There are a variety of \$20 sleeping bags available on Amazon also.

If I'm coming from out of town and would like accommodations for longer, do you have anything available?

Not specifically, but one of us can likely host you for a couple days. Please reach out miamiACX@gmail.com.

This sounds awesome, can I volunteer or participate in the ceremony?

We would love that! We are most in need of people to help lead songs and read speeches during the solstice event (no experience needed). If you're not comfortable being in the limelight, we could definitely use help the day of the event. Please [fill out this form](#) to let us know your preferences.

Can I get to the park by public transportation?

It's unlikely. But we have plenty of people coming with cars from all around South Florida. I recommend reaching out in our [Discord server](#) about carpooling.

What if I have another question that isn't answered here?

Please reach out! Either ask the question in our Discord or you can email us miamiACX@gmail.com.