

Completed 2010 workshops:

February 26-28: Oblate Retreat Centre, Crewe, England:

The Dance of Inner Silence

A Retreat with Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz and Tansen Philip O'Donohoe

The world's spiritual and healing traditions approach silence in various ways and under different names--meditation, contemplation, awareness, centering or body prayer, sitting zen, self-observation and stress relief--to name a few. Ultimately, being able to find our way more easily into a compassionate, inner silence can help us to attain more understanding and empowerment in daily life, a type of "meditation with open eyes," or as St Paul puts it, "prayer without ceasing." In this weekend, Tansen and Saadi will continue with their past work together, deepening in the teachings of the Sufi-Buddhist master Samuel L. Lewis, as well as his teachers, including Hazrat Inayat Khan and Nygogen Senzaki. Dances of Universal Peace, walking meditation, Sufi zikr, chant breath practice and contemplation will all interweave to create an experience of renewed energy, joy and balance.

Contact: Tansen. Tel 01258 818067.

March 5-March 18: Edinburgh, Scotland:

2010 Edinburgh International Festival on Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace (MESP)

Workshops, performances, panels and talks by grassroots peacemakers, artists, storytellers, musicians and others, including Dances of Universal Peace and inter-spiritual meditation for peace. Featured presenters and workshop leaders will include Rabbi Shefa Gold, Dr Geo Trevarthen, Dr. Andrew Powell, Dr. Stephen Wright, Imam Nusrah Cassiem, Professor Ursula King, Alva Group, Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz and many others. There will be the 2010 Middle East Festival One World Peace Concert, 6/2/2010; the MESP 2010 Middle Eastern Film Festival, 12/2 - 22/2/2010; the MESP 2010 Pre Events, 23/2 - 4/3/2010; the MESP 2010 Middle East Youth Festival, 27/2 - 3/3/2010; the MESP 2010 Main Events, 5/3 - 18/3/2010; and the MESP 2010 Exhibitions and Displays, 11/1 - 31/3/2010. Contact: Email Neill Walker. For details of the conference and festival, go to www.eial.org or www.mesp.org.uk

March 5-6: Edinburgh, Scotland:

Always Coming Home: Healing, Empowerment and Freedom

Through the Christian and Sufi Spiritual Traditions

with Rev Prof Stephen Wright and Murshid Saadi Shakur Chishti

Home means many things to many different people. For some of us, it has to do with place, nature and culture. For others, "home is where heart is." For still others, we only know the feeling of home when we're already there. In this two-day "urban retreat," two experienced spiritual directors in the Christian and Sufi traditions will guide us in exploring our longing for the feeling of being at home--in our lives, communities and world. What prevents us from feeling as alive and free to express our purpose in life as we would wish? What healing could occur to dissolve these blocks and renew our sense of both individual empowerment and community? Using spiritual healing tools like deep listening, storytelling, chant, body prayer, breathing awareness and guided meditation, we will work with themes such as forgiveness, grief and bereavement, sense of purpose, past and present impressions of authority, the drag of popular culture and media, idealism and presence, patience, humor and a healthy toleration of paradox. Our aim is to leave feeling more empowered to live life to the fullest, as part of a larger community of creation. This two-day retreat is designed as a single experience and we encourage participants to join us for both days.

In absolute necessity, it is possible for someone to attend only the first day; however, for continuity and group experience, no one will be able to attend only the second day.

Venue: Meeting Room, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh. Time: 9.30am for 10am-4.30pm, both days. Cost: £40/£30 (Concessions).

March 15: Edinburgh, Scotland:

A Beginner's Guide to Beginner's Mind and Heart:

Interspiritual Meditation in the Sufi, Christian and Buddhist Traditions with Neil Douglas-Klotz

This day workshop will introduce various approaches to meditation in the Sufi, Christian and Zen Buddhist traditions. In addition to sharing various shorter or longer meditations, we will explore approaches to silence in the "empty" and "full" ways, the use of paradox (in the form of Sufi stories and Zen koans), and the roles of music, chant, breathing and body awareness, compassion, devotion, releasing and forgiveness. Knowing which "flavor" of entering silence suits our temperament can help us to establish a regular practice. At the same time, because we human beings share certain essential characteristics (like breathing, body awareness and capacities for love and wonder), approaches to silence also share key features. Knowing how to extract these keys and benefit from the meditations of other traditions can help us to either begin a practice or deepen and enrich the one we're pursuing. It can also help us share a deeper sense of silence and heart in interspiritual gatherings, including those with no overt spiritual content. Ultimately, being able to find our way more easily into a compassionate, inner silence can help us to attain more understanding and empowerment in daily life, a type of "meditation with open eyes," or as St Paul puts it, "prayer without ceasing."

This event is offered as part of the 2010 Edinburgh Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace. Venue: Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh. Time: 9.30am for 10am-4.30pm. Cost: £20/£15 (Concessions).

March 19-21: Fluehli Ranf, Switzerland:

The Wisdom of the Sufis: Healing, Movement, Meditations of the Heart

During the retreat, we will select healing resources from the rich treasure of the "pathways of the heart" found in the Sufi practice of the 99 Beautiful Names (In German: Die Weisheit der Sufis, Koesel Verlag). We will focus on the many pathways that deal with strength, renewal, releasing, trust, being at home in the body, and increasing clarity in relationship to one's inner healing guidance. Connections will also be made to Neil's related work on the Aramaic words of Jesus. As resources we will use chant, heart meditation, walking meditation, body prayer and other forms of sacred movement and body awareness. The retreat aims to guide participants through a process that promotes freedom, growth and joy along with better understanding of oneself and others.

This retreat is open to all, without prior experience. Only an open heart and mind, ready to move and dance with the One, are necessary. In German language.

Contact: Barbara Küng, Tel. 41 (0)41 921 20 41

**March 25-28: Wiston Lodge, nr Edinburgh, Scotland:
The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program
Module 6: Sufi Pathways: A Model for Interspiritual Work**

Deepening and leadership retreat for those interested in sharing meditation, Dance and spiritual practice related to the Sufi tradition in the context of building interspiritual communities and ministry, as well as retreat work. This includes especially the material articulated in the books *The Sufi Book of Life* and *The Tent of Abraham* and emphasizes on the Service of Elemental Peace, the Elemental Heart Healing Meditations, and leadership of Sufi chant and walking meditation. It also includes deepening for those wanting to establish a personal spiritual practice with this material. The three-year course also includes leadership training in body prayer, contemplation, chant, voice, walking meditation and the Dances of Universal Peace connected to this work.

See full description of the program online at www.eial.org. **This retreat is open to a limited number of participants** who are not enrolled in the entire leadership program. *Prior reading and an application form are required. See information at www.eial.org*

Contact: Fateah Alice Saunders, Tel. +44 (0)131 664-6206.

**March 31-April 4: Finkenwerde, nr Berlin, Germany:
Annual Native Middle Eastern Retreat
with Murshid Saadi Shakur Chishti and Murshida Gita Onnen
The Resurrection of Life: Easter with the Aramaic Jesus**

Resurrection occurs when we forget the small self, allowing it to fade away "like the dew drop into the shiny sea," and allow ourselves to become channels for blessing and healing. This was Jesus' practice, whose example we will follow through Walk, the Sufi practice of the pathways of the heart, the Aramaic Prayer cycle, and a focus on the blessing meditation Sufis call *mushahida* (the deeper experiencing of life). We will also share the Elemental Peace ritual and prepare for it progressively through further, advanced meditation on the elements and nature, as vehicles for blessing. Our way of practice will include Dances of Universal Peace, walking meditation, Sufi sound practice and *wasaf*, guided meditation and Soulwork. No experience is necessary and all are welcome. In German and English.

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Contact: Gita Onnen, Tel. 49-(0)30-791-5211 and Anapurna von Kugelgen, Tel. 49-(0)30-313-9163

**April 9-11: Ammerdown Centre, nr Bath, England:
Living Blessing: The Aramaic Lord's Prayer**

During this retreat we will focus on a step-by-step journey of the heart through the prayer of Jesus in his original Aramaic language. During this journey we will experience Jesus' original prayer tradition of living creation, a tradition that reminds us that new beginnings happen every moment in the heart of the divine. In this journey to our own center, we will also use contemplative prayer, walking meditation and a cycle of simple circle dances, Dances of Universal Peace. No experience is necessary and all are welcome. Contact: Ammerdown Centre, Tel: 01761 433709. Fax: 01761 433094.

**May 1: Guelph, Ontario, Canada;
Half-day Public Workshop:
The Aramaic Jesus and the Sufis: Shared Paths of the Heart**

This half-day workshop will explore the shared prayers and meditations of the heart that connect the Aramaic Jesus and the Sufis. As part of the journey, Neil will share stories, meditation and body prayer, including a number of new Dances of Universal Peace inspired by his recent work. An afternoon workshop the following day (Sunday, May 2) will feature Bruce Chilton and Neil Douglas-Klotz on "The Spirituality of the Historical Jesus."

**May 3-7: St. Francis Centre, Caladon, Ontario:
Seminars for Wisdom University**

Neil will be conducting two courses for Wisdom University (morning and afternoon): “The Hidden Gospel: Decoding the Spiritual Practice and Message of the Aramaic Jesus” and “Pathways of the Heart and Healing: Sufi Meditation, Musical Practice and Movement.” The classes may be taken for credit or for audit, and full details may be found at: <https://www.wisdomuniversity.org/class-schedule.htm#2010>
Contact: registrar@wisdomuniversity.org or online at the above link.

**May 11-14: Columbus, OH, USA:
The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program:
Module 5: Travelling the “I Am” Way: Yeshua in John and Thomas**

Deepening and leadership retreat for those interested in sharing the Aramaic teachings of Jesus in the context of building interspiritual communities and ministry, as well as retreat work. Deepening for those wanting to establish a personal spiritual practice. This retreat focuses particularly on sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of John, comparing them to the Jesus related by the Gospel of Thomas. Looking at these sayings in their Aramaic sense reveals a striking similarity united by Jesus' emphasis on love, trust and self-knowledge as the cornerstones of the teaching and spiritual practice he leaves to his disciples. Special focus of this retreat is leadership guidance for the dances associated with the Aramaic "I Am" sayings, dances from Jesus' last talk with his disciples as well as the related Aramaic body prayers in Blessings of the Cosmos, The Hidden Gospel, Genesis Meditations and Desert Wisdom. This retreat is open to a limited number of participants who are not enrolled in the entire leadership program. Prior reading and an application form are required. Contact: Shalem Center, Tel. 614-441-9773