



Soul Voyagers Network

February 2017

Come, gather in the tent together...

Our theme this month is Sacred Activism. If, like me you are uncertain what this is, Andrew Harvey makes the following definition on his website:

“Sacred Activism is a transforming force of compassion-in-action that is born of a fusion of deep spiritual knowledge, courage, love, and passion, with wise radical action in the world.”

Pam and Kris take up and expand on this theme in their articles. Elsewhere a BIG reminder of our one day conference on March 26th (do come if you are able), and, looking forward to the annual retreat at Charney Manor (Oct 27-29th), a request for whatever contributions you may want to gift from Jen and Pauline.

Your steering group have been very active since the retreat in planning for the coming year and the future of the network, incorporating many ideas raised at the retreat. See how this all fits together in the new terms of reference (it really is more inspiring than the name suggests), now available on the website.

Also in this issue:

- Sacred Activism: We Are The Ones Pam Douglas-Smith
- SOUL PRACTICE Ingeborg Borst
- Spiritual Activism Kris Misselbrook
- Review of “Re-enchanting the Forest” by William Ayot. Jen Kershaw
- New on the website.

Soul-Voyagers Network

www.soul-voyagers.net



Discovering Your Soul Journey

Sunday 26 March 2017

10.00 for 10.30 am – 5.00 pm

**at Hamblin Hall, Bosham House, Main Road, Bosham
Chichester, West Sussex, PO18 8PJ**

Cost: £35 including refreshments

Please bring lunch to share

The Soul-Voyagers Network is a community of spirit which is open to all those working in transpersonal fields who would like to deepen their experience and practice by connecting with like-minded others. Come and hear more about the Network and spend a day in the beautiful surroundings of Bosham House, exploring your mission in life and your soul journey.

Book online at www.soul-voyagers.net

or send cheque to Soul-Voyagers Network

c/o Walnut Tree Cottage, Bosham Lane, Bosham, Chichester, PO18 8HL

*For further information, please contact Carol Duncan, carolduncan8hl@btinternet.com, 01243
576634*

Contributions are invited for the Soul-voyagers Network
Charney Manor Retreat 27 - 29th October 2017

Inspired by William James's impressive classic, 'The Varieties of Religious Experience', the steering group has decided that the theme of our Retreat this year is to be –

VARIETIES OF TRANSPERSONAL EXPERIENCE

This theme seems open enough to provide great richness and diversity, but also specific enough to be fascinating to all those who are drawn to be members of the Network.

We are mindful that last year's Appreciative Enquiry identified the following as aspects of our vision and purpose that we would like to promote -

Exploring the Journey of the Soul
Soul Healing
Aiming to reach and be more inclusive of a wider (younger!) age range
and Sacred Activism

Pondering on one of these topics might trigger your creative juices – but if you prefer to focus on some different aspect of Transpersonal Experience that is also fine.....

We are inviting all those who would like to offer a presentation, short or long, involving some variety of Transpersonal Experience, to contact a member of the steering group with your proposal – and from the offerings made we shall evolve a Retreat along the lines which have given widespread satisfaction for the last five years – including also keeping in mind the feedback which requested more times for group discussion.

We very much look forward to receiving your offering.

Jen and Pauline – on behalf of the steering group

“We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.” (Hopi Wisdom Teaching)

To say we live in interesting times is quite an understatement for us all these days, wherever we live upon our shared globe. We are living in times of profound consciousness shifts with a fascinating and frustrating mix of growing oneness emerging within a culture of increasing polarity. We are dancing between moments of sunlight, shadow and darkness in our daily lives. It’s like we’re in a spirituality graduate school curriculum that’s calling us all into higher awareness and deeper commitment to being present amid it all.

On the Sunday after the American election, I spoke of the process of creating “A More Perfect Union.” How far we have come is reflected in everything from racial equality to women’s right to vote to marriage rights for all . How far we still have to go is reflected in the challenges to those powerful forward actions. It helps to remember that from our deepest challenges have come amazing movements of hope. After the September 11th tragedy, the international interfaith movement grew so powerfully that Pope Francis did a full interfaith service at that memorial when he came to the US last year. People from many spiritual traditions standing on that hallowed ground . . . dressed in their native attire, praying in the language of their traditions, and all honoring each other with compassionate love and conscious acceptance in front of the world.

This is the wondrous paradox of diversity and oneness we find being equally present in life. It is up to each of us to do our part in our current collective divine co-creation. There is no one else. There never has been. It is up to us. Today . . . here and now.



“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” (Mahatma Gandhi)

The reality of this statement is both profound, hopeful and overwhelming. How easy it is to want a magical solution to appear from outside ourselves. And yet in every story, it is the hero and heroine’s journey to travel through challenges and blessings as they move toward the unfolding of their souls into their own deeper callings in their life experiences.

To do this soul work together certainly isn’t always easy. We tend to see life from our own perspective with our hidden judgments as well as potential compassion. The choices are ours. Can we truly learn to not only accept but to honor our diversity? There is a delightful letter written by a child named Nan . . . “Dear God. I bet it is hard for you to love all of everybody in the whole world. There are only four people in our family and I can never do it.”

Wade Davis expresses the need for this collaboration beautifully, “The world in which you were born is just one model of reality. Other cultures are not failed attempts at being you. They are unique manifestations of the human spirit.” To allow an honoring of these differences and to celebrate their contributions is one of our deepest callings as human beings. We each have our own world view, but to expand to include other possibilities brings deep soul growth and enriched life. From this perspective of acceptance, we can begin to do true sacred activism.

“I don’t know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know . . . the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.” (Albert Schweitzer)

It used to be that we of planet earth did our sacred work in the inner sanctuaries of religious temples, but now we are doing it outwardly in our lives through our thoughts, actions and prayers. Our inner worlds and outer worlds are one if we can unite them in our consciousness. The word “temple” comes from the Latin “templum” which was a place set aside to observe the heavens. “Religio” meant to relink or rebind. Thus to do spiritual soul work is to set one’s sights on a higher vision that renews perceptions beginning at our own places of life. It is to take the time to consciously expand our sense of reality and to reestablish our connection to it.

Our relationships are the modern frontiers of spiritual awareness and growth. They are the tender places where we can be more fully present and share our gifts. They

are the most sacred and profoundly human connections we are invited to experience. Having a circle of kindred souls is holy ground that nurtures us, but we can also expand that circle to include more variety. To explore beyond present boundaries is the calling of life. Allow this new year to birth a new flowering of who we are and what we do with the deepest energies of life.

“If you wait until you are ready, you will wait forever.” (Will Rogers)

There are as many ways to do sacred activism as there are moments in life. Just be willing to do it. Find humor and interest in differences. Open to compassionately respond without judgment. Bless the difficult people encountered. Nurture inner growth and expand outer connections. Offer hope and be welcoming to the lives of others. Let love transform each one, and make our world a more conscious, grace filled place for the journeys of our souls.

To not only accept but to appreciate differences while embracing a sense of oneness can be challenging. Jean Houston reminds us of the simplicity and yet challenge of doing that. She calls love “the evolutionary energy par excellence” and shares that it “carries us to the thresholds of our lives and allows us to be seized by possibility . . . in high empathy there is always high empowerment ~ a quickening.” It is our time to stand in our personal truth and be empowered to serve highest and best for all whenever and wherever we can. It is time for our quickening to heal our world and love one another, for:

“The pure love of one soul can offset the hatred of millions.”



During our last retreat in Charney Manor I gave examples of case studies in my Workshop about Shamanism.

Since I finished my study as a Shaman, I made many journeys to help clients when they were stuck and the usual psychotherapy did not have the result they wanted. Journeying as a shaman means moving between different dimensions or realities as everything is energy. It also means that you can do journeys for animals, houses, or places.

Background information.

Today's case study is about an animal. A black and white spotted cat. Her name is Sweety and she is about 6 years old. She is a rescue cat. Her owners took her from a shelter and have chosen her because she was so shy and skinny.

They asked for help because she is terrified of the other cat in the house, a very sweet, old one. She hides in the most difficult places like behind the central heating, the radiators, in small holes behind cupboards and she refuses to eat.

There is not much information about her background or where she came from. She was already a long time in the shelter.

They really love her and taking her back means that she probably has to be put down.

Journey.

My guide seems very pleased to do a journey for her.

I have done a long distance journey and a physical rebalancing treatment. I brought back 3 soul pieces. Yes, I am convinced animals have souls too!

Part 1 Real World

My guide brings me to a small barn. It is inhabited by a horse or donkey. I cannot see if it is a horse but it is big. Maybe it is big in the perspective of the cat. There is a bale of straw in the corner and a mother cat with kittens is hiding there. She is feeding the kittens. At a distance is a very small, skinny one. It is the black and white spotted Sweety. She tries desperately to drink from one of the teats but doesn't succeed



because every time she is pushed away by the other kittens. I take the little skinny kitten and promise to bring her to the older one, who has a good and warm home and enough food.

Part 2 Real World

The young, very skinny, Sweetie walks over the court yard of the farm. She is starving. There is a bowl which contained milk, but it is already emptied. She licks the last drops of the milk out of the bowl. She is pregnant but in an early stage. It is not yet showing. She is so hungry. My guide tells me that shortly afterwards she was brought to the cat shelter, sterilised by the vet and they removed the unborn embryos too.

Again I take the little skinny Sweetie and promise her that she can go now to her older one and that there is love and always enough to eat.

Part 3 Real World

I am in the shelter in a little room full of cats. There are different kind of climbing tools and scratch poles. In one of them hidden in a small tube sits Sweetie. She is terrified. The other cats are terrorizing her, so she is staying there forever. She doesn't eat or drink. She is probably there already for a long time.

When I ask her to come with me, she is too afraid to come out. Finally I entice her to come out of her hiding place with a little coloured, textured mouse with bell as decoy.

When I finish my journey and travel to her house, she is sitting on the landing of the stairs. As if she is waiting for me. I bring back the pieces and she purrs happily.

Physical rebalancing

My guide tells me to do an extraction too.

In her head around the eyes, nose and in the eye sockets is a grey, slimy substance.

My guide cleans it and fills it up with blue-green antiseptic.

The lungs show some dark spots. They are removed and filled with blue.

In her womb is see dark spots too. Removed and filled with pink.

Her tail seems to be broken at the 2nd and 3rd vertebra and is crooked. My guide straightens it and filled it up with emerald green, as well as her whole body, which is harmonising.

After the work has been done, I put a circle of clear, vibrant red around her.

Conclusion

I recommended lungwort/tincture drops to support her lung function.

During the journey the owners observed Sweetie. She was out of her hiding place and



lying quietly in a chair. After a while she suddenly stood up and went upstairs where she was sat in a corner of the landing.

During the rest of the evening she was in a very deep sleep. Sometimes she made little noises as if she was dreaming. The next morning she was asking for food and defended her bowl when the other cat tried to eat out of it.

During the next days she was totally different. She was more social, did not hide away, and when I came to see her, she jumped into my lap and stayed there, purring. She is even friends with the other cat now.

The owners were happy to learn more about her background and understood now why she was so afraid and skinny. They gave her lots of love and a warm home.

**Mi Takuaway OYasin
Wakinyan Hotun
(we are all related)**



Spiritual Activism

Kris Misselbrook

This is the title of a book by Alastair McIntosh and Matt Carmichael - subtitled “Leadership as Service”. You may know Alastair from his previous books : “Soil and Soul: People versus Corporate Power” and “Hell and High Water : Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition” which are also well worth reading. In the first he describes two long campaigns in the Hebrides – to reclaim the island of Eigg as community owned crofting, and to prevent a giant quarry decimating part of the Isle of Lewis. These are heartening examples of peaceful, concerted, spirit aware activism, uniting different groups of people to bring about changes fostering community and respect for the earth in the face of larger corporate interests.

We need to hear these kind of stories now !

In ‘Hell and High Water’ he brings a clear voice to the effects of human kind’s violence to the physical world and its consequences, but also shows how that comes from a blindness, numbness, and manipulation of our culture, only possible to be addressed by a rediscovery of our spiritual nature – not just by political action.

‘Spiritual Activism’ is a book for those that understand this lostness, and is a handbook for those working in the outer world on bringing change while holding this inner vision, this ‘applied spiritual underpinning for social and environmental change in the world’. ‘Corrupted power will always seek to colonise the soul’ warn the authors, so the time is right to refuse this impotence, decolonise the soul and express our freedom. With ten case studies of inspirational actions, the chapters take a shrewd look at our motivations and guidance, our organisations and practices, our discernment and effectiveness. Its time more than ever now to be engaged, to be active in our society, media and community, to stand in love and power to reconstitute the world.

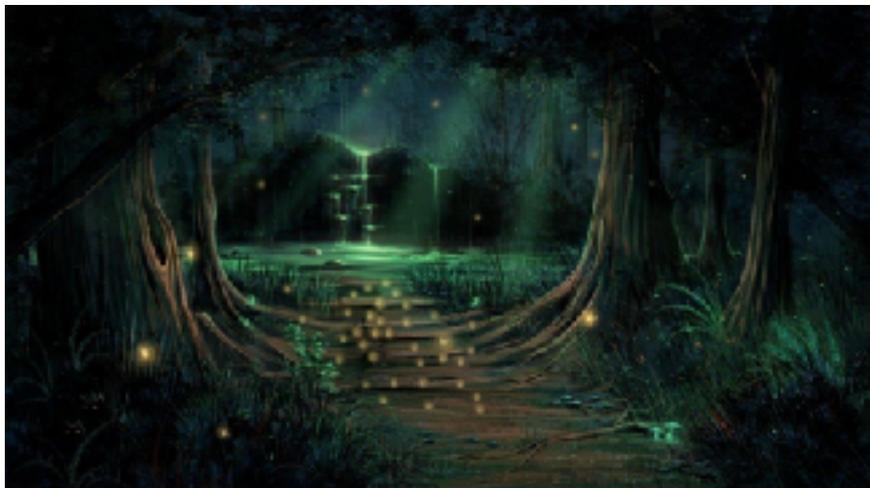


Review of Re-enchanting the Forest by William Ayot. Jen Kershaw

This interesting, and insightful book is both an autobiography and guide to various types of ritual work including finding his own route to becoming a ritualist. It covers various related areas from celebrants to shrines and many of the people he has met on his way. It is one of several he has written.

William recounts with great honesty his extraordinarily difficult and abusive childhood eventually finding healing and growth from joining various supportive men's groups and how he progressed to assisting and then becoming a facilitator himself and later a ritualist. Robert Bly author of "Iron John" was one of those men he met who was an important influence as was Malidoma Some and his wife Sobonfu who, through several enormously powerful and difficult ritual group workshops, helped him get in touch with his ancestors and release his grief and rage.

William's approach to ritual is shamanic using teachings from many different cultures including African, North American and Nordic cultures. He discusses how he became a ritualist starting with friends and others asking him to bury and honour their dead pets leading on to requests to conduct weddings, funerals and other celebrations. Gradually he was performing more and more complex rituals to help release past traumas and buried emotions. He gives several interesting case histories which show how therapy and ritual often intertwine.



He says

‘ritual is a symbolic action through which we can give our soul/psyche an important message’ also ‘ritual is at its best an art form, as exacting and rigorous as dance and theatre’ and ‘we need an appropriate secluded, safe space free of clutter both physical and psychic which we dedicate, making it sacrosanct for the duration of the ritual in which something transformational can happen’.

He states the essentials of ritual construction finishing with the importance of closure and grounding.

He discusses and reflects on the human condition and our loss of connection with the earth; how ancient cultures managed the transition from childhood to adulthood and how tribal cultures now are changing and trying to find a balance between the old and the new.

It felt that William wrote this book with reflection and great honesty both about himself and his life's journey and how that has led to a deep connection with those he helps with sensitivity, tenderness and clarity.
A book to keep and cherish.

www.williamayot.com

Also see on Amazon books

New on the website.

See what the steering group have been doing on your behalf. The revised terms of reference for the steering group are on the website, incorporating your ideas from the last AGM concerning the future aims and expansion of SVN. Also the accounts to the end of 2016 and the minutes of the AGM 2016. All can be found on the right hand column under Newsletters and Admin.

