

The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program with Neil Douglas-Klotz

This program, developed and taught by Neil Douglas-Klotz, Ph.D., will train leaders in interspiritual practices for peacemaking and service, in ministries of spiritual direction, counseling, teaching and ritual.

See www.abwoon.com/AbwoonLeadership.html for complete details including the application form and proposed schedule for 3 years.

Who Will Benefit from the Program:

- Students, teachers and ministers of Sufism, Kabbalah and Christian spirituality who, to strengthen their work in interfaith and interspiritual service, would like to experience a personal spiritual practice that draws from a larger range of Middle Eastern spirituality, from the most ancient earth-based traditions through those rooted in the Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic languages.
- Therapists, counselors and individual spiritual directors who, for their own spiritual development as well as to help others, wish to deepen in breath, body awareness and counseling practices that stem from the native spiritual tradition of Jesus, the Hebrew prophets, Sufism and the Native Middle Eastern traditions.
- Interfaith ministers and leaders who wish to add practical experience in the meditations and body prayers of Middle Eastern spirituality to their theoretical work in comparative religion, in order to share a wider ministry in ceremony, counseling and ritual.
- Spiritual directors in any tradition who wish to learn to lead practices, body prayers and meditations inspired by Jesus' Aramaic spirituality and use them for counseling, mentoring and retreat work.
- Retreat guides and teachers of meditation who wish to learn to lead body prayer, spiritual practice and guided meditation that arise from Kabbalah, Aramaic Christian spirituality, Sufism and the earlier indigenous traditions of the Middle East.



The first NA AILP group, Columbus, OH, in April, 2007

Overview of the Leadership Program:

The program is in seven modules. These modules will consist of 3-day leadership retreats with two held each year. Each group will be limited to 40 participants. At each retreat, participants will learn body prayer, meditation and spiritual practice to integrate into their daily prayer or meditation practice for the ensuing six months.

The retreat for each module will include the following basic and advanced tools specific to each body of work.

Basic Skills and Leadership Experiences:

- Leading body prayers and body awareness practices for use in group work
- Leading walking meditations
- Leading Dances of Universal Peace
- Leading basic guided meditations and contemplations

Advanced Skills and Leadership Experiences:

- Learning the background of the published work and its relation to current social, scientific and cultural research
- Working with the voice and leading chants
- Leading advanced meditations and contemplations
- Experiencing psychospiritual exercises and practices (for instance "Depths of the Self" from *Desert Wisdom* and "Hokhmah's Table" from *Blessings of the Cosmos*)
- Mixing and blending material and practices for use with specific groups



The AILP European group, Scotland, in July, 2007

Modules of Learning and Leadership Experience:

- **Module 1: Aramaic Spirituality I: The Aramaic Prayer of Yeshua.** (books: *Prayers of the Cosmos*, *The Hidden Gospel*; audio: *Original Prayer*) Introduction to the program; leading the body prayers and dances associated with the Aramaic Prayer of Jesus.
- **Module 2: The Native Middle Eastern Roots of Western Spirituality.** (books: *Desert Wisdom*, *The Genesis Meditations*; audio: Native Middle Eastern chants and dances) Includes meditations on Depths of the Self, Sound and Embodiment, Simple Presence, Heart Awareness, Gratitude and Celebration; the Native Middle Eastern chants and dances.
- **Module 3: Aramaic Spirituality II: The Aramaic Beatitudes of Yeshua.** (books: *Prayers of the Cosmos*, *Blessings of the Cosmos*; audio: *The Healing Breath*, *Blessings of the Cosmos*) Includes the body prayers and dances associated with the Aramaic Beatitudes.
- **Module 4: The Creation Spiritual Traditions and Practices of Early Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sufism.** (books: *The Genesis Meditations*, *The Hidden Gospel*, *The Tent of Abraham*; audio: *The Genesis Meditations* and *Beginnings*) Includes the Genesis cycle of dances and chants; the Genesis day-long retreat.
- **Module 5: Aramaic Spirituality III: Yeshua in the Gospels of John and Thomas.** (books: *Desert Wisdom*, *The Hidden Gospel*, *The Genesis Meditations*, *Blessings of the Cosmos*) Includes the Aramaic 'I Am' dances; other body prayers and dances associated with Yeshua in the Gospels of John and Thomas.
- **Module 6: Sufi Spirituality.** (books: *The Sufi Book of Life*; *The Tent of Abraham*) Includes the Service of Elemental Peace, the Elemental Heart Healing Meditations, leadership of Sufi chant and meditation.
- **Module 7: Integrative Retreat: Leading Interspiritual Rituals and Creating Retreat Models.** For the leadership group, a final, integrative retreat in the fourth year of the program.

All modules will be offered in the United States and will be taught by Neil Douglas-Klotz, Ph.D. over a three-and-a-half year period. Some modules may also be offered in other countries and may be taken at either locale or repeated if one desires.

Retreat Costs:

Tuition for each three-day retreat will be \$300, plus room and board fees depending on the venue. Personal spiritual direction from several ministers and counselors familiar with the work will also be available, which is to be contracted with each separately.

Application:

All who wish to enter the leadership program, either for the entire series or for an individual retreat, must fill out the leadership program application form available from www.abwoon.com/AbwoonLeadership.html, or you may also get a copy by sending an e-mail message to info@abwoon.com.

Preference will be given to those applying for the entire program. Individual spaces in each retreat will open 6 weeks before each begins.

European Events in 2008

February 22–24: Crewe, England. *Shining the Mirror of the Heart with Zikr, Fikr and Meditation.* A retreat at the Oblate Retreat Centre with Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz and Tansen Philip O'Donohoe. The mystics of the East have realised the importance of the power of sound and its repetition for many thousands of years. Sufis primarily utilise zikr, meaning remembrance of Divine Unity in this process. Fikr is a means of purifying the mind. Both of these practices can lead naturally to meditative states. The weekend focus on zikr, fikr and meditation will offer participants the opportunity to deepen in their spiritual life and gain insight useful for daily life. Contact: Tansen at 44-(0)1258-818067 or mail@philipodonohoe.co.uk

March 1–12: Edinburgh, Scotland. *2008 Edinburgh International Conference on Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace.* Talks and workshops 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 Dr. Seyyed Hossain Nasr, Rodesh Shalom Eliyahu McClean, Sheikh Abdul Aziz Bukhari, Dr. Stephen Wright, Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz and others. On March 2, Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz will present a workshop on the Aramaic Jesus: *Living Blessing: The Aramaic Lord's Prayer and the Middle Eastern Mystical Tradition of Jesus.* On March 10 Dr. Seyyed Hossein Nasr will present a workshop on Sufism: *"Sufism – Doctrines, Practices, and Historic Manifestations"*. For details about the conference and the associated festival, visit www.eial.org or www.mesp.org.uk. Contact: Neill Walker: njwalk810@hotmail.com

March 14–16: Fluehli Ranft, Switzerland. *The Aramaic Jesus and the Sufis: Shared Paths of the Heart.* This retreat will explore, with chant, meditation and movement, the shared prayers and meditations of the heart that connect the Aramaic Jesus and the Sufis. As we explore this relationship, we aim to help build bridges between the differences we perceive within and between us. Jesus' wisdom teachings are still as relevant today as when he first said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." We love the "neighbor" within as we become more fully human, exploring the full potential of our power and love. This naturally expresses itself in a more vivid and enlivened daily life. German. Contact: Barbara Küng at 41-(0)41-921-20-41 or Regina Gerber at azima@gmx.ch

March 26–30: Finkenwerde, nr Berlin, Germany. *Annual Native Middle Eastern retreat with Murshids Neil Douglas-Klotz and Gita Onnen.* See description for March 14–16. German. Contact: Gita Onnen at 49-(0)30-791-5211 or Anapurna von Kügelgen at 49-(0)30-313-9163 or brita.v.k@gmx.net.

April 3–6: near Edinburgh, Scotland. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 2 — The Native Middle Eastern Roots of Western Spirituality.* See details on the other side. This retreat is open to a limited number of participants who are not enrolled in the entire leadership program. Contact: Fateah Alice Saunders at 44-(0)131-664-6206 or alicefateah@btinternet.com

April 12–13: London, England. *The Healing Breath: The Aramaic Beatitudes and Spirituality of Jesus.* A two-day workshop on the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew using chant, movement, meditation and contemplation. The Beatitudes in Aramaic present a subtle psychological process of healing and empowerment. We will meditate, chant and dance our way through this process of healing, re-experiencing the empowerment that Yeshua offered his original listeners. For more information, visit www.spiritualitycentre.org. Contact: London Centre for Spirituality, 44-(0)20-7621-1391 or info@spiritualitycentre.org

June 5–8: Örebro, Sweden. *Living Blessing: The Aramaic Lord's Prayer and the Middle Eastern Mystical Tradition of Jesus.* 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 walking meditation and a cycle of simple circle dances, Dances of Universal Peace. No experience is necessary and all are welcome. Contact: Cajsa Ty at 46-(0)70-683-9-836 or cajsaty@usa.net

June 13–15: Bad Herrenalb, Germany. *Sufi Wisdom and Healing: 99 Meditations on the Pathways of the Heart.* This workshop will introduce the essential forms of Sufi healing meditation and will be based on the author's recently released book *Die Weisheit der Sufis: 99 Meditationen der Liebe* (Koesel Verlag). The group will explore practices using breathing, sound, walking and silent meditation, as well as some of the energy and movement practices of the Sufis, called zikr (remembrance). Sufi stories will punctuate the journey, along with Dances of Universal Peace from the Sufi tradition. German. Contact: Förderkreis für Ganzheitsmedizin, Sägwiesenplatz 4, 76332 Bad Herrenalb, Germany. Tel: 49-(0)7083-3845; Fax: 49-(0)7083-2307; Email: Foerderkrs@aol.com

June 28–July 5: near Hamburg, Germany. *2008 European Summer School of the Sufi Ruhaniat International. "Becoming Whole-heartedly Human."* Classes in Sufi Practice, Zikr, Breathwork, Healing, Advanced Dances of Universal Peace and Walking Meditation, SoulWork, Sound and Music, Spiritual Ministry. Based on the teachings of Hazrat Inayat Khan, Hazrat Murshid Samuel L. Lewis and Hazrat Murshid Moineddin Jablonski. Murshid Wali Ali Meyer, special guest teacher, and European Ruhaniat teachers. Camp director: Murshida Gita Onnen. For details see the Sufi Ruhaniat European website at www.ruhaniateurope.org. Registration: Ayat Sabine Brandt at 49-(0)30-47036783 or AyatSabine@web.de

July 19–24: Estonia. *Retreat and Training in Sufi Zikr and Zikr Dance/Movement.* With Murshid Saadi Shakur Chishti (Neil Douglas-Klotz). This retreat will explore the experiences invited by the lessons on this essential Sufi practice in the teachings of Murshid Samuel L. Lewis. It is based on an earlier, short course on the subject given at the Sufi Ruhaniat European Summer School in 2007. During the retreat, we will explore spoken, sung, silent and moving zikr from various traditions and consider how they can help us live more invigorated and joyful lives. We will also be sharing practices related to Sufi healing as well as the Healing Ritual of Hazrat Inayat Khan. The retreat is open to all. It will be held at Altmoisia, a beautiful guest house on the Baltic coast (<http://www.altmoisia.ee/english/index.php>), near a bird sanctuary. Contact and Registration: Silje Seppik email: siljeseppik@hotmail.ee

August 11–17: nr Bath, England. *2008 Three Faiths Summer School.* Annual conference and retreat in interfaith and interspiritual peacemaking hosted by Ammerdown Centre to give members of the three faiths — with priority given to attracting young people — a better awareness and understanding of the other two faiths through shared encounters and experiences. Representatives of the three main Middle East faiths will participate. The school will be chaired this year by Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz, who will also present and share from his work in *The Genesis Meditations* and *The Tent of Abraham*. Contact: Ammerdown Retreat Centre, Tel: 44-(0)1761-433709; Fax: 44-(0)1761-433094; Email: centre@ammerdown.org

September 12–14: Prague, Czech Republic. *Living Blessing: The Middle Eastern Mystical Tradition of the Aramaic Jesus.* See June 5–8. Contact: Lída Chrástanská at 42-(0)603-207-273 or 42-(0)387-225-239; or chrastan@ipex.cz

September 23–28: nr Fulda, Germany. *Sufi Meditation, Movement and SoulWork.* 2008 European SoulWork retreat and training with Murshids Mariam Baker and Saadi (Neil Douglas-Klotz). The retreat will focus on the inner practices transmitted by Pir Moineddin Jablonski called SoulWork. The aim is to befriend and engage all parts of the inner self as an integrated community, a whole 'I am' united to the One through zikr, walks, meditation, the Dances of Universal Peace and contemplation. This process frees life energy and gives a gift to our soul. This is the only SoulWork retreat with Mariam and Saadi in Europe in 2008. (From September 21–23 there will be a retreat for initiated Sufi mureeds of the Sufi Ruhaniat International.) Contact: Ayat Sabine Brandt at 49-(0)30-470-36 783 or AyatSabine@web.de

November 13–16: nr Edinburgh, Scotland. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 3 — The Aramaic Beatitudes of Yeshua.* See details on the other side. Open to a limited number of people not in the leadership program. Contact: Fateah Alice Saunders at 44-(0)131-664-6206 or alicefateah@btinternet.com

USA Events in 2008

April 29–May 1: Columbus, OH. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 1 — Aramaic Spirituality I: The Aramaic Prayer of Yeshua.* This is the first module of the second three-year program in North America. See description on the other side. Contact: the Rev. Elizabeth Reed, Shalem Center at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com

May 2–4: Columbus, OH. *The Healing Breath: Life, Healing and Empowerment in the Aramaic Teaching of Jesus.* Open workshop on the Beatitudes of Yeshua in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke with Neil Douglas-Klotz. See description for April 12–13. Registrar: Kellie Tikkun, 1-717-761-0888 or ktikkun@mindspring.com Event Coordinator: the Rev. Elizabeth Reed, 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com

May 4–7: Columbus, OH. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 3 — The Aramaic Beatitudes of Yeshua.* (First Group) See description on the other side. Contact: the Rev. Elizabeth Reed, Shalem Center at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com

October 12–17: Ashland, OR. *Sufi Meditation, Movement and SoulWork.* 2008 North American SoulWork Retreat and Training with Murshids Mariam Baker and Saadi (Neil Douglas-Klotz). See description for September 23–28. This is the only SoulWork retreat with Mariam and Saadi in North America in 2007. The retreat begins Sunday evening and ends Friday at midday. For Sufi mureeds or by permission. Contact: Zahira Muhi Nadler or Raphael Birney at zahira1@earthlink.net

October 21–24: Athens, GA. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 2 — The Native Middle Eastern Roots of Western Spirituality.* (Second Group) See description on the other side. Contact: the Rev. Elizabeth Reed, Shalem Center at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com

October 24–26: Athens, GA. *Genesis Now: The Original Meditation of the Aramaic Jesus.* This workshop focuses on a spirituality that unites the three main religions of the Middle East and demonstrates how early mystics, including Jesus, may have meditated. In spite of apparent differences, all three religions originally shared an emphasis on sacred beginnings and a vision of a living caravan of ancestors. The workshop will use meditation, chant, Dances of Universal Peace and body prayer based on the book *The Genesis Meditations: A Shared Practice of Peace for Christians, Jews and Muslims* and *The Tent of Abraham: Stories of Hope and Peace for Jews, Christians and Muslims*. Contact: the Rev. Terre Balof at tbalof@uathensga.org

October 26–29: Athens, GA. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 4 — The Creation Spiritual Traditions and Practices of Early Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Sufism.* (First Group) See description on the other side. Contact: the Rev. Elizabeth Reed, Shalem Center at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com

For more details and updates see <http://www.abwoon.com/workshops.html>.