

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.

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.

Overview of the Program:

- Seven leadership modules correspond to the major ministries and spiritual practices offered by Abwoon Interspiritual Communities.
- At least two 3-day leadership retreats will be offered each year, approximately six months apart.
- Retreats will be limited to 40 people each.
- At each retreat, participants will learn body prayer, meditation and spiritual practice that can be integrated into their daily prayer or meditation practice for six months.
- Preference for enrollment will be given to those who commit to the entire three-year program. Spaces will then be available for those who wish to attend individual leadership retreats.
- Individual spiritual direction will also be available, if desired, to be agreed separately with a mentor/guide.

Each module of study and the associated retreat will include the following basic and advanced tools specific to each body of work. Students will naturally gravitate toward and select the tools most appropriate to their own community and work. Not everyone will wish to master all the tools, but we hope that all will become familiar with them and enter each with a willing heart. Participants will be expected to read and listen to the published materials associated with each leadership retreat prior to the retreat itself.

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:

- The background of the published work and its relation to current social, scientific and cultural research
- Work with the voice and leading chants
- Leading advanced meditations and contemplations

- 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

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*, *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*); Included: 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: *Genesis Meditations*, *The Hidden Gospel*, *The Tent of Abraham*; audio: *Genesis Meditations and Beginnings*). Included: 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*, *Genesis Meditations*, *Blessings of the Cosmos*). Included: 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*). Included: 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. Therefore, it will be possible for people in the United States to complete the program without international travel. 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.

In addition, those wishing certification as a teacher of the Dances of Universal Peace may contract with a Dance mentor familiar with the Dances included in this work on a mutually agreed basis, as detailed in the guidelines for certification (available upon request).

Application:

This is an advanced course of study that is for those who are ready to begin to lead this work or who are already doing so. Successful applicants will already have been working with and studying the material of the leadership course — through published books and recordings as well as public workshops or courses (for instance, through Wisdom University). 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 for download at the Abwoon website at www.abwoon.com. You can 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 2007

March 7–10: Edinburgh, Scotland. *2007 Edinburgh International Conference on Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace* on the theme “Spirituality and Community,” co-sponsored by the Edinburgh International Centre for World Spiritual Traditions and the Edinburgh Institute for Advanced Learning. Talks and workshops by grassroots peacemakers, artists, storytellers, musicians and others, including Dances of Universal Peace and interspiritual meditation for peace. For details of the conference and the associated festival, go to www.eial.org or www.mesp.org.uk.

March 15–18: Shambala Retreat Centre, Findhorn, Scotland. *The Aramaic Jesus: Blessings of the Cosmos.* Spiritual retreat led by Neil Douglas-Klotz, based on his new book of translations from the Aramaic words of Jesus by the same name. Meditation, chant, Dances of Universal Peace, and body prayer. Contact: Maris Warrior at 44-(0)1309-690690 or contact the Retreat Centre at info@shambala-retreat.org.

March 23–25: Fluehli Ranft, Switzerland. *The Aramaic Lord's Prayer and the Creation 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. 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. 2007 is the 25th anniversary of the cycle of dances to the Aramaic Prayer of Jesus. This is a wonderful opportunity both newcomers as well as old-timers to experience its power as led by the originator of the work, Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz. Contact: Barbara Küng at 41-(0)41-921-20-41 or Regina Gerber at azima@gmx.ch.

March 29–April 2: Finkenwerde, nr Berlin, Germany. Annual Native Middle Eastern retreat with Murshids Neil Douglas-Klotz and Gita Onnen. Celebrating 25 years of singing and dancing the Aramaic prayer of Jesus. Focus on new chants, dances and meditations from *Blessings of the Cosmos*, along with group SoulWork, zikr, wasifa walk and the Elemental Peace Ritual. German/English. 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.

May 4–6: Oblate Retreat Centre, Crewe, England. *Pathways of the Heart: Sufism in Action.* A Retreat with Saadi Neil Douglas-Klotz and Tansen Philip O'Donohoe. The Sufi way is an ancient path of Middle Eastern mysticism centred on the development of heart. With more heart we can live life with greater compassion and face life's difficulties with more courage. The Sufis use chant, heart meditation, walking meditation, body prayer, whirling and other forms of sacred movement and body awareness. Tansen and Saadi have specialised in adapting ancient Sufi practices to the everyday challenges of modern life. In this retreat, they will guide participants through a process that aims toward freedom, growth and joy. Contact: Tansen at 44-(0)1258-818067 or mail@philipodonohoe.co.uk.

May 25–27: Sarum College, Salisbury, England. *Blessings of the Cosmos.* See description for March 15th. Sponsored by the Institute for Christian Spirituality at Sarum College. Contact: Rosie Zaniewski at 44-(0)1722-424826 or shortcourses@sarum.ac.uk or visit www.sarum.ac.uk.

June 30–July 7: near Hamburg, Germany. 2007 European Summer School of the Sufi Ruhaniat International. Classes in Sufi Practice, Breathwork, Healing, Advanced Dances of Universal Peace and Walking Meditation, SoulWork, Sound and Music, Spiritual Ministry. Special guest teacher: Murshid Saul Barodofsky, plus Murshid Mariam Baker and European Ruhaniat teachers. Camp director: Murshida Gita Onnen. Contact: Edmund Dixon at edmunddixon@yahoo.co.uk. Registration: Ayat Sabine Brandt at 49-(0)30-47036783 or ayatsabine@web.de. See also the Sufi Ruhaniat European website at www.ruhaniateurope.org.

July 10–15: nr Edinburgh, Scotland. *Sufi Meditation, Movement and SoulWork.* 2007 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 2007. This retreat ends at lunch on Sunday, July 15. For initiated Sufi mureeds or by permission only.

July 15–18: nr Edinburgh, Scotland. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 1 — Aramaic Spirituality I: The Aramaic Prayer of Yeshua.* Deepening and leadership retreat for those interested in sharing the Aramaic Prayer of Jesus in the context of building interspiritual com-

munities and ministry, as well as retreat work. Begins after dinner on Sunday, July 15 and ends at lunch on Wednesday, July 18. Prior reading and an application form are required. See the box below for information. **For both Wiston events contact:** Anna Keith at 44-(0)1387-740230 or anna@keith.vispa.com.

September 14–16: Oostraven, Netherlands. *The Aramaic Jesus: Blessings of the Cosmos.* See description for March 15th. Contact: Rob de Waal at 31-(0)182-517-325 or robdewaal@planet.nl.

October 9–14: nr. Fulda, Germany. *Healing the Past, Transforming the Present, Freeing the Future.* Retreat and training in SoulWork with Murshida Gita Onnen and Murshid Saadi Douglas-Klotz. Includes Sufi movement, meditation and the practices of Murshid Moineddin Jablonski. In German and English. For Sufi mureeds and others by permission. This retreat will be preceded by a retreat for initiated Sufi mureeds of the Sufi Ruhaniat International, October 7–9. For both events, contact: Ingrid Mettert at 49-(0)7948-941-256 or mail@ingrid-anahita.de.

USA Events in 2007

April 13–15: Columbus, OH. *The Aramaic Lord's Prayer and the Creation Tradition of Jesus.* See description for the March 23rd European event. Contact: The Rev. Elizabeth Reed, Shalem Center at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com.

April 15–18: Columbus, OH. *The Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 1 — Aramaic Spirituality I: The Aramaic Prayer of Yeshua.* Deepening and leadership retreat for those interested in sharing the Aramaic Prayer of Jesus in the context of building interspiritual communities and ministry, as well as retreat work. Prior reading and an application form are required. See the box below for information. Contact: The Rev. Elizabeth Reed, Shalem Center, at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com.

April 22–27: Ashland, OR. *Sufi Meditation, Movement and SoulWork.* 2007 North American 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 North America in 2007. For Sufi mureeds or by permission. The retreat begins Sunday evening and ends Friday at midday. Contact: Zahira Muhi Nadler or Raphael Birney at zahira1@earthlink.net.

October 26–28: Madison, WI, USA. *Pathways of the Heart: The Sufi Book of Life.* The Sufi way is an ancient path of Middle Eastern mysticism centred on the development of heart. With more heart we can live life with greater compassion and face life's difficulties with more courage. As resources the Sufis use chant, heart meditation, walking meditation, body prayer, whirling and other forms of sacred movement and body awareness. We will be focusing on the rich treasure of the “pathways of the heart” found in the Sufi practice of the 99 Beautiful Names. For several decades, Saadi has specialised in adapting ancient Sufi practices to the everyday challenges of modern life. In this retreat, he will guide participants through a process that aims toward freedom, growth and joy. Contact: Ken Basir McCullough at 1-608-277-0340 or kmccullough101@yahoo.com.

October 28–31: Madison, WI, USA: *Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Module 2 — The Native Middle Eastern Roots of Western Spirituality.* Deepening and leadership retreat for those interested in sharing the work contained in the book *Desert Wisdom* in the context of building interspiritual communities and ministry, as well as retreat work. Meditations on Depths of the Self, Sound and Embodiment, Simple Presence, Heart Awareness, Gratitude and Celebration; the Native Middle Eastern chants and dances are included. Prior reading and an application form are required. See the box below for information. Contact: Rev. Elizabeth Reed, Shalem Center, at 1-614-441-9773 or munira@abwoon.com. Registration: Ken Basir McCullough at 1-608-277-0340 or kmccullough101@yahoo.com.

November 2–3: San Francisco Bay Area. *The Aramaic Jesus: Blessings of the Cosmos.* See description for the March 15th European event. This event is Friday evening and Saturday during the day. Contact: Karim Baer at kbaer@ciiis.edu.

Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program Modules

These modules present leadership training in body prayer, contemplation, chant, voice, walking meditation and the Dances of Universal Peace connected to this work and deepening for those wanting to establish a personal spiritual practice. See a full description of the program on the other side of this insert.