

Abwoon Interspiritual Leadership Program USA Group #3 Begins Spring 2011

All modules will be offered in the United States. Some modules may also be offered in other countries. Modules may be taken at either locale or repeated if desired.



with Dr. Neil Douglas-Klotz

A program to develop 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, Kaballah, 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 Kaballah, Aramaic Christian spirituality, Sufism and the earlier indigenous traditions of the Middle East.

Overview of the Program:



pictured: AILP Group 1

- 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 group

Fees and Application:

Retreat Tuition: Tuition fees for each three-day retreat will be \$350 for the third AILP group plus room and board costs depending on the venue. Personal spiritual direction from several ministers and counselors familiar with the work will also be available, 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).

AILP Modules of Learning and Leadership Experience:



- **Module 1: The Aramaic Prayer of Yeshua / Aramaic Spirituality I** (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). Included: 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: The Aramaic Beatitudes of Yeshua/ Aramaic Spirituality II** (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/chants; the Genesis daylong retreat.
- **Module 5: Yeshua in the Gospels of John and Thomas / Aramaic Spirituality III.** (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; 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.

To Apply:

This is an advanced course of study, aimed toward 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 use the leadership program application form available [here](#) or for a copy please address leadership@abwoon.com.

[Click here](#) for answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs).



Munira Elizabeth Reed administers the AILP program through the nonprofit organization Shalem Center and is pictured here with Neil Douglas-Klotz.

UK-Europe program:

Applications are still being received for this program for attendance on a module-by-module basis. The first module was held in July 2007. [Please visit the various workshop pages](#) about each UK-Europe module.

USA Group 1:

This group completes the program in May 2010.

USA Group 2:

The second group began in April 2008. Some modules are open to one-time participants.

AILP 2010 dates:

May 11-14: Group 2 Module 5 (St. Therese Center, Columbus, Ohio), May 14-16: Public Event at Martin de Porres Center (Columbus, Ohio), May 16-19: Group 1 Module 7 (St. Therese Center, Columbus, Ohio); November 16-19: Group 2 Module 6.

AILP 2011 dates:

April 28-May 1, 2011 (Thursday dinner to Sunday lunch): Group 3 Module 1 at Procter Center in London, Ohio (Flights to Columbus or Dayton). Module 2 will be held in November 2011. Venue to be announced. Other dates will be announced before program begins, May 2-5, 2011: Group 2 Module 7 (St. Therese Center, Columbus, Ohio).

If you have trouble downloading the program application or any documents, please contact us:

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