



Drinking From The Well ~ The Sacred Work Of Grief
Community Grief Ritual at Loving Earth Sanctuary
May 25th - May 28th 2018

This powerful restorative Grief Ritual and healing workshop over Memorial Day weekend draws from the traditional grief rituals of the Dagara tribe of Burkina Faso, West Africa brought to the West by Dagara healer Sobonfu Somé, ritual practices from Joanna Macy's *The Work that Reconnects*, and the teachings of grief workers, soul activists and ritualists Francis Weller, Martin Prechtel, and Michael Meade.

What if we had the loving support of community to help us connect with and process the pain of our personal losses along with the anxiety, sadness, and overwhelm many of us are feeling collectively in these unprecedented times of deep social division and injustice, and ongoing environmental devastation? Throughout history people have come together tribally and ceremonially to honor and metabolize their grief.

During this event we will engage with ritual and ceremony and explore the healing power of rhythm, sound, song, movement, art, and writing practices. By sharing rituals of remembrance, mourning, celebration, and praise of life we create space for the alchemy of communal grieving to transform our fear, guilt, anger, numbness, and despair, and for our hearts to be restored to strength, creativity, and vitality.

This gathering is being held at Loving Earth Sanctuary, a remote, ecologically-focused community and homestead near Lake San Antonio in the beautiful Santa Lucia mountains. Along with the sense of belonging that comes from a village-like setting, there will also be opportunities for solo reflection in nature. This entire event is being offered in the Buddhist spirit of *dāna*, similar in concept to the gift economy.

Our Facilitator

Lara Lwin Treadaway works with cross cultural ritual and ceremony, storytelling, song, sound, poetry, and alchemical empathy to guide and support individuals and groups to creativity, transformation, and wholeness through connection with soul. She has studied with Joanna Macy, Francis Weller, Marshall Rosenberg, and Michael Meade. Her website is www.wholeheartedpath.com

Weekend Schedule

Friday May 25th

Participants should plan to arrive by 4pm to set up camp.

Potluck dinner at 6:00 (please bring food to share, we will provide a large salad to supplement)

Opening Circle and Introductions 7.00-9.00

Saturday May 26th

Breakfast at 8:00 (Amaranth porridge, nuts + fruit + honey, scrambled eggs, grilled veggies, etc)

Morning Events 10.00-1.00

Lunch at 1.00 (your own lunch, we will provide a large salad to supplement)

Afternoon Events 2.00-6.00

Dinner at 6:30 (Soup, grilled bread- gluten-free options, more salad, and rice)

Bonfire, drumming and dance.

Sunday May 27th

Breakfast at 8:00 (Amaranth porridge, nuts + fruit + honey, scrambled eggs, grilled veggies, etc)

Morning Events 10.00-1.00

Lunch at 1.00 (your own lunch, we will provide a large salad to supplement)

Afternoon Events 2.00-6.00

Dinner at 6:30 (Soup, grilled bread- gluten-free options, more salad, and rice)

Bonfire, drumming and dance.

Monday May 28th

Breakfast at 8:00 (Amaranth porridge, nuts + fruit + honey, scrambled eggs, grilled veggies, etc)

Closing Circle & Farewell Ceremony 10:00

Some may stay later for casual lunch (left-overs) and to help with clean-up. We'd appreciate guests to leave by 1:00 PM.

What is dāna?

Similar in philosophy to the gift economy, dāna means “giving” and refers to the ancient practice of cultivating generosity dating back to the Vedic traditions. Often used in the context of donation, it can take the form of giving to an individual in need or supporting philanthropic projects that empower and support others.

As a Buddhist practitioner Lara offers all of her work in the spirit of dāna, choosing to trust that the receivers of her gifts are best guided to support her and her work by their gratitude, their ability to give, and their natural impulse for contribution, rather than from out of any sense of duty or obligation.

Lara’s Bus Project

Lara is open to receiving any gifts to support her and her livelihood. However, one area she actively needs support with at this time is moving forward with converting the bus she uses to bring herself and her work to communities. Her current focus is on bringing her grief and healing work to some of the areas in California affected by recent wildfires and mudslides.

The school-bus she owns has already been converted to run on waste vegetable oil. In order to become the 4-season home/work space she needs will require insulation, a wood stove, and finished floor, walls, and ceiling. She would particularly enjoy receiving help with this project, either through monetary contributions to go toward the purchase of specific items, or help with materials or physical labor.

If you are interested in participating in this event, please let us know in which specific ways you might feel inspired and able to support Lara’s needs. Below are some of the specific items, materials and labor needed for her project if that inspires you! Feel free to be creative and suggest any ways (monetary or other) to contribute.

Please respond to us by Friday, May 4th if you’re interested in participating.

Products & Materials

- Sheep wool from Black Mountain Insulation for insulating walls and ceiling
- Recycled foam board for insulating the floor
- Dwarf 4kw tiny home wood stove and 4” flue parts (*any monetary contributions towards a fund for this stove and flue would be greatly appreciated!*)
- Reclaimed wood for finishing the floor, walls, ceiling (*preferably hardwood boards for the floor, pine boards for the ceiling. Untreated oak pallets can be used also.*)

Physical labor/assistance:

- Sealing windows and bus roof
- Framing the interior

- Paneling the floor, walls, ceiling (*only relevant if materials are gifted*)
- Building a small kitchen (*only relevant if floor and walls are finished*)
- Installing a roof rack for her tipi and solar panels
- Wiring her solar system

Tipi making:

Lara has wild harvested a full set of tipi poles to make a ceremonial size tipi for future gatherings and also has a roll of canvas. If anyone would like to help her sew a cover while she is staying at Loving Earth that would be wonderful! Ideally the cover would be sewn electricity-free, with a treadle (foot pedaled) sewing machine.

Volunteers:

Lara and Loving Earth Sanctuary also need volunteers to help host this event. Activities would include cooking and preparing meals, clean-up, fire-tending, campsite prep, and more.

To learn more about Lara, visit wholeheartedpath.com. To learn more about Loving Earth Sanctuary visit: lovingearthsanctuary/ic.org.

Please register for this event at the following link: <https://goo.gl/forms/aEvv1mEmlPcqI3FV2>

Testimonials from previous Grief Gatherings

This is such important work, no matter where your grief is stemming from. It was very transformational for me and I highly recommend it. Drawing on the wisdom of so many amazing teachers, Lara presents it masterfully.

~ Brenda Johnson, Ashland, OR

I went specifically to grieve about the Earth and all we are losing. Those of us who love the earth and are awake to what is happening are carrying so much grief. Taking the time to feel and express grief for disappearing species, desecrated places, and our difficult future does not mean we are giving up, but rather it can re-energize us to continue our activism. Grief is the other side of love and we can't have one without the other, yet there are so few places where our grief is welcomed and accepted and can be fully expressed in community.

~ Sharon B, Eugene, OR

Here's a wonderful opportunity to reclaim energy you may be unknowingly wasting just trying to hold back despair. My close friend, Lara, is a gifted facilitator bringing many years of study and practice to create the safe space needed to grieve through despair into the power of community.

~ Leonard Higgins, Portland, OR

I cannot suggest enough how much this event changed me. For anyone feeling the loss of another or loss of a dream. This event helped me, in my darkest time, to begin my healing process. Sign up, you will not be disappointed.

~ Scott Roberts, Ashland, OR

The work you are doing is critical for assisting folks like me that need this energetic movement and soul retrieval plus radical support for it. I know I did some major work and felt honored to be present for my fellow villagers. I know that my ability to open to my grief was because of the beautiful and authentic tribe I had surrounding me.

~ Elizabeth Izzo, Portland, OR

Thank you for facilitating this amazing day on Saturday! I do feel changed, and I certainly can say this experience feels like one of those "watershed" experiences.

~ Lisa Mayfield, Portland, OR

You must experience this ceremony to whatever capacity you can. It is simple. It is powerful. And it is moving.

~ Blake S, Corvallis, OR

Grief Quotes

Communal grieving offers something that we cannot get when we grieve by ourselves. Through validation, acknowledgement and witnessing, communal grieving allows us to experience a level of healing that is deeply and profoundly freeing.

~ Sobonfu Somé

Feeling the pain of the world is not a weakness. Don't ever apologize for the tears you shed on behalf of other beings. This is, in its essence, not craziness, but compassion. This capacity to speak out on behalf of others, because you have the right to, because you can suffer with them, is part of our spiritual nature.

~ Joanna Macy

Descent and falling is the way of the soul from its beginning. We each fell from the womb of life when the waters of the inner sea broke and it came time for us to breathe on our own. We continue to descend in order to become ourselves more fully, in order to find our own inner depths and be born again from within.

~ Michael Meade

Those who will not slip beneath the still surface on the well of grief, turning downward through its black water to the place we cannot breathe, will never know the source from which we drink, the secret water, cold and clear.

~ David Whyte

To truly and freely grieve as an entire people can revive an entire culture just as much as it can bring back to life an individual.

~ Martin Prechtel

All war is unmetabolized grief.

~ Martin Prechtel