

THE BASIS OF OUR YEAR LONG PROGRAMS

NATURE CONNECTION

Enjoyment, like praise, is one of the most beneficially healing and naturally occurring states. You only have to watch a child or an animal to find that out! Having relationships with non-human beings is an important part of life. Being in tune with all the aspects of the life around us is deeply nourishing and invigorating. All of the basic life healing practices in wisdom traditions, such as Native American life practice and Traditional Chinese Medicine, have a solid link and grounded practice in nature connection. Nature is always present and we have an easy way of being present and relaxed and happy if we tune into it! This is a way of being and doing that pervades everyday life. Enjoyment, like praise, is one of the most beneficially healing and naturally occurring states. We will aim to come back to more aliveness in nature, experiencing the present moment alone and in group settings outside, beside a brook or a fire. It has been a huge part of our personal healing.

RENEWING CREATIVITY

In our experience, relating inside of ourselves and with others in ways other than just speaking, using other forms of expression, is a nourishing and healing way of connection to our nature. The full expression of our creativity can also include many things such as: film making, different forms of visual art, theatre, creating rituals, etc. We will be exploring singing, music, dance and drawing more specifically, as Gina has many years experience in leading peace dances, sharing different dance forms, and in creating living circles of chant, weaving song and voice with drums in community. We may also explore how to celebrate and offer our great fullness to all that is within and around us, through experiential exercises sometimes referred to as rituals.

MENTORING AND COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

In healthy, traditional cultures, mentoring is the primary method of facilitating learning and connection – everyone is a mentor, everyone has many mentors – for the length of life's journey. The mentoring model is a universal heritage; we respond quickly to its loving touch. This wing of the program provides you with opportunities for individual mentoring and communities of practice mentoring.

Communities of people who learn together from engaging in shared inquiries into issues of their shared practice is as old as humanity itself. It is just that now we are becoming conscious of it. Developing new individual and collective capabilities together, we also develop friendships that, in turn, provide the emotional energy of sustained and generous attention to one another. When that attention is there, the joy of shared discovery and understanding flows freely among friends and through the community.

GROUP LIFE PRACTICES

This wing of the program begins with the exploration of the benefits of being in circle with other human beings. From there we will explore different ways of relating together in

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groups, participatory leadership models, and using NVC consciousness and skills to aim towards living as fully in consideration of everyone as we can, while still meeting needs for effectiveness and prioritizing energy. Some of the practices we will explore will be: Open space, world cafés, NVC group decision making, consensus and transformational conflict practices such as Restorative Circles. RC will be a big part of our program, and we will have our own RC learning community, with teachings, practice, and live circles.

INNER LIFE PRACTICES

In this wing of our program you will explore, define and develop your relationship with your inner world – the conscious and especially the unconscious. You will be provided the tools and containers to gather the various ingredients of your whole self so that you can begin to create and live life from the consciousness and fullness of your whole being. The specific practices we will use are:

- NVC Consciousness and Self-Empathy
- Inner Relationship Focusing
- Whole Body Focusing
- Byron Katie's « The Work »
- Presences Practices

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