

Grief Tending in Community

a 3-day residential workshop led by Sophy Banks



“Grief is like the ocean. Sometimes the water is calm, sometimes it’s overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim” VickyHarrison

Fri 5th – Sun 7th July 2019
Nr Aylsham, N. Norfolk

This workshop offers a rare opportunity to express grief with others, in beautiful surroundings, using tried and tested practices held by an experienced workshop leader.

Grief is a natural response to what life brings us – sadness, loneliness, frustration, despair and many more feelings. The more we open ourselves to love others, to celebrate the beauty of our world, to long for, or work for peace and justice, the more we also open to the pain of losing what we love, of witnessing the destruction of what is precious, and experiencing the suffering and inequality in the world around us.

For many, the natural flow of grief is blocked in a society where spontaneous expressions of feeling are often taboo. Giving space to reconnect with buried grief, as well as what is present and moving right now, can be a healing, relieving and life affirming experience.

This weekend includes practices and rituals from Joanna Macy, Sobonfu Some, Francis Weller, Maeve Gavin and others that support us to connect and open to our grief in its different forms.

Creating a place where we can be heard and supported in our grief – and feel the support that comes from sharing grief with others – is rare in our modern world where it is often hidden away, or expressed privately with

therapists or those close to us. Yet human cultures around the world have included shared grieving as a normal, even necessary part of staying in connected and loving community.

Such a process is not about resolving our grief or the sources of it, rather tending to and honouring it. Francis Weller talks about “apprenticing ourselves to grief” – giving ourselves to learning from its wisdom. This workshop gives space to gently deepen into our feelings, recognising the many forms of support that help us to do so. And we will take time to integrate and prepare to return at the end.

Who is this workshop for?

This workshop is suitable for those wanting a space to explore, honour and tend to their grief. For some, grief is right at the surface, ready to be expressed. Others may need time to connect – or find that their journey is to slowly come into relationship with grief that feels blocked or stuck. We will open a space for expressing something of our grief, or our relationship to it, and come back out of it again. It’s important that those attending have support in place before and after the workshop.

Because of the format, this workshop is probably not suitable for those with severe depression or mental ill-health, or who are feeling very fragile or alone and unsupported with strong feelings.

If you are not sure if this is right for you and would like to explore this please contact Sophy: sophyb@btinternet.com or 01803 840877

The weekend will be held at North Farm, near Aylsham in North Norfolk. All meals are provided and there are a range of accommodation options.

Workshop Fee:

£220 or £195 EARLYBIRD if paid by MAY 1ST

Food & Accommodation:

Luxury Twin Room - £139 per person

Shepherd’s Hut - £178 per couple, £143 single occupancy

Simple Twin - £75 per person

Camping - £55 per person (NB you will need to bring tent, sleeping bag etc)

natasha@natashahood.com for all booking enquiries

Sophy Banks



Sophy has worked as a therapist, family constellator and workshop leader. Her understanding of the importance of spaces for feeling has come through many threads – working as a therapist, understanding the impact of trauma in individuals and families, and studying with Joanna Macy and Sobonfu Some, and later with Maeve Gavin. In 2006 as Transition Town Totnes was coming into being, Sophy co-founded the “Heart and Soul” group, addressing the inner aspects of reimagining and rebuilding resilient, local ways of living and went on to train groups around the world in this model. At the heart of this global movement for positive change she saw the need to honour our grief for suffering and destruction in the world, and the problems of burnout, conflict and despair that can arise when we fail to give space for expressing this pain. Since 2012 Sophy has co-led Grief Tending in Community

workshops. Once an engineer and a passionate footballer in East London, she moved to Devon in 2005 where she grows vegetables and still just about gets up the hills on her bike