

Exploring the Soul's Journey

A retreat at The Abbey, near Oxford: Feb 27-28 with Alan Heeks and Cordelia Prescott

This retreat offers a safe, supportive space to explore how can we enrich and guide our life by a deeper understanding and dialogue with our soul. If our soul is on a longer journey, before and after this current lifetime, what does it want now? What are we here for?

A classic teaching in Sufi and other traditions is to enrich your living by including your dying: in other words, to face consciously our death and what may be beyond it. This can move us beyond fears into truly enjoying and fulfilling ourselves through the gift of this lifetime/incarnation. Imagining our soul as having its own consciousness, as choosing this lifetime and what follows, can open new sources of guidance and creative power.



This weekend can also help if you have friends or family who are dying, or if you work or volunteer with those close to passing on. By clarifying our own beliefs and shedding our fears, we can find our own truth and strength, and give more positive support to others.

The intention in this retreat is to respect everyone's varied beliefs and doubts on these delicate topics, not to offer a defining view. We will use teachings and practices mainly from the Sufi and Aramaic traditions, including the book 'The Soul's Journey' by Hazrat Inayat Khan, and Neil Douglas-Klotz's brilliant renderings of Jesus' teachings from the original Aramaic language. Our retreat will include guided meditations, sacred dance and chant, group sessions and quiet solo time, and working in pairs or small groups.

Alan Heeks: Alan has been leading personal and spiritual development groups for over 20 years, with a special interest in exploring life purpose. He has also led groups and written a book on elderhood and creative ageing. Since 1992, Alan has been a student of Neil Douglas Klotz's pioneering work exploring Middle Eastern spiritual teachings in their original language. See more at www.alanheeks.com.

Cordelia Prescott: Cordelia is an experienced group leader, musician and healer, with a passion for the joy of life. She has trained in classical music and various forms of spiritual healing, and has studied for many years with Neil Douglas Klotz and other leading teachers. Cordelia leads a range of retreats and other groups, and was a soul midwife and funeral celebrant for a close friend who passed in 2015.

The Abbey is a retreat centre with beautiful old buildings, welcoming atmosphere and excellent food, in a quiet village near the Thames, but only three miles from Didcot Parkway Station.

Timings 10.30am – 9.30pm **Saturday**, 10.00am – 4.00pm **Sunday**

Residential Cost including meals and accommodation: £195: **early bird** £175 if paid by Jan 15

Non-Residential Cost including two lunches and dinner: £148: **early bird** £133 if paid by Jan 15

For more info and bookings contact:

The Abbey, Sutton Courtenay, Oxon OX14 4AF, tel 01235 847401, email admin@theabbey.com
www.theabbey.uk.com

From Before to Beyond: exploring the soul's journey

Life is getting more changeable for most of us. Many of us these days have to face mortality more directly: perhaps because of our own health, or the passing of a friend or family member. Sufi teachings and other traditions urge us to face our dying to enrich our living: by getting through fears and denial, we can reach a view of death as a positive transition, and our soul can help us in this process. **Exploring the soul's journey** is a weekend retreat near Oxford, February 27-28 on these themes.

It can be illuminating to imagine that we soul which exists before us and chooses human lifetime, and the family we're born provide experiences and learning which it Believing that the challenges in our life positive purpose has helped me hugely, stops me feeling like a victim of circumstances. However, finding the positive aspect can be tricky! This retreat will offer various ways to help you to listen to your soul, and seek its guidance on questions about your life, death and beyond, in a supportive setting.



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Does some part of us have a life of its own, before and after our time in a human body? If we call this our soul, why did it choose to experience life through us? Can it give us some guidance, for this life and beyond? How can we hear its voice? These are some of the questions we'll explore: the aim is not to prescribe answers, but to share some wise teachings and create a safe space for each person to explore their own answers.

One of our main sources for this weekend will be the book 'The Soul's Journey' by Hazrat Inayat Khan, a leading Sufi teacher in the early twentieth century. He believes that each soul chooses its human life, and is guided by departed souls and angels. He says that "ignorance of the self gives the fear of death", and the antidote is to identify more with the soul than the body. One benefit of drawing on Sufi teachings is that they are un-dogmatic, centred on open-heartedness and a sense of divine unity in all life: so they can fit alongside many other spiritual teachings.

Another main source is the work of Neil Douglas Klotz, who has explored the deeper truth of Christian and other teachings by re-translating them from the original languages. This often adds great depth of meaning compared to traditional translations. See more at www.abwoon.com.

Here's an example of Jesus's teachings on this topic: *"unless a human being returns to that sameness with the cosmos that feels like death – the dark, moist place of birthing, the place where only flow and animating spirit, only water and breathing, exist – that person cannot enter the reign of unity, the "I can" of the cosmos..."* This is Neil's rendering of John 3:15, in the King James *'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God'*.

This will be the third retreat that Cordelia and I have led at The Abbey. Each has provided a safe space with a supportive group for deep, personal exploration. These are delicate topics, and our aim is not to prescribe any answers, but to help each of us find our own insights.

For more information and bookings, see www.living-organically.com