



inscribing signs with a finger
dipped in light

a schooling course
towards a cultural-spiritual approach
to dying and death

commencement: may 2023
venue: 15 haydon str, north dorrigo, nsw 2345
duration: course may - november 2023;
endorsement: feb 2024

Liane Collot d'Herbois. Threshold

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Introduction

Most of us do not understand how to die, how to consciously meet Death, prepared and with equanimity. Predominantly, conventional approaches to quality end of life care offer a way to relieve pain and suffering, to provide compassionate support to family, friends and carers and increasingly include information that directs the terminally ill towards voluntary assisted dying. Death, in this stream of thinking, while it cannot be defeated can be ‘managed’ and scheduled – and it becomes an abstraction. The consciousness, understanding and reverence that should surround dying and death and life beyond the threshold, have been silenced, misrepresented, denied and ‘dropped’ from the cultural-spiritual life of individuals and communities. It is often, at best, addressed with an ‘end of life plan’, ‘life insurance’ or ‘insurance’ that covers care or funeral costs.

The course presenters feel a deep need to build, cultivate and humanise a personal and communal awareness and out of this to develop a deeper relationship with Death, an understanding of the individual path of dying, and of the actual, autonomous moment of death.

If we look to earlier times, we find images and approaches to dying and death borne by Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. Using creative sources and insights offered by Spiritual Science, we discover death is the most sacred moment in our life; it is entirely individual. Out of this insight, that all life is a process of *stirb und werde*, Goethe’s ‘die and become’, this course will focus on Spiritual-Cultural approaches – Contemplative Enquiry as a ‘way of knowing’, creative processes, visual art, music, speech art, poetry, creative writing, oral storytelling and folktale research, eurythmy, meditation, and inspiring, and deeply insightful presentations – that will encourage you to creatively approach dying and death in your own life and enable you to support others journeying towards the threshold.

There is a further question we wish to explore. Our fear of death and dying has separated us from life imbued with Spirit and pushed us deeper into materialism and consequently onto a path of destruction we now know by the term of ‘omnicide’. Can we resolve to find new approaches to dying and death for the sake of Earth’s healing and to evolve humanity towards freedom and love? Our increasingly challenging times will provide us with opportunities to realise and to deepen our spiritual interconnectedness and responsibilities.

Course structure:

Five full 4-Day Intensives; tasks will be set during the intensives. These include independent research, writing short essays and preparing creative presentations that further develop themes, as well as practice and honing skills [storytelling, speech and recitation, contemplation/meditation].

Six monthly Online Tutorials [basic zoom skills required] will be offered between intensives.

Overall course hours 420 hours [150 hours intensives; 12 hours zoom; 8 hours Final Presentations and Endorsements; 250 hours independent study and creative practice].

Course themes:

Core Units: Contemplative Inquiry [research method]; Salutogenic Work and Understanding Pain; Storytelling and Folktales – Conscious Threshold Crossings; Occult Hearing; Speechformation [working with the sounds; the excarnating/incarnating paths], Sounds and Breathing, Rhythmic Speaking, Poetry and Verses – a bridge for the dying

Additional Creative Subjects: Eurythmy; Death as Image, An Evolution of Consciousness in Visual Art; The Musical Element in Service of the Dying and the Deceased; The Poetic Soul, Developing Imagery and Metaphor

Focus Subjects: The Experience of Sleep, The Concealed Human Being; What is Death? What does it mean to Die? The Moment of Death – The Experience of Individuality; The Sublime Experience of Light ‘I Am a Spiritual Being’.

The Tableau of Our Life – Life after Death, a path of further development; Kamaloka – purification, deliverance, and entry into Spiritworld;

The Universal Easter Imagination – Death and Resurrection. What is our task on Earth?

Social Responsibility: Suicide; Voluntary Assisted Dying in Retirement and Care/Palliative Care Institutions; Euthanasia

Course intention:

To facilitate a process through which participants develop their own healthy and integrated relationship to dying and death.

To support participants in their intention to become trusted companions of the dying, the care of the deceased, the care of souls who have crossed the threshold.

Trusted companions are people who are open to:

- Contemplating their own life, examine their relationship to dying or near-death experiences and, through personal exchanges of these experiences, actively practice perceiving, contemplating and engaging with death.
- Learning about current developments, insights and research in cultural-spiritual approaches to dying and death.
- Seeking to educate themselves, and embark on the path of actively accompanying the dying and deceased, participating in/creating a community of people who support each other on this path in service to their families, friends and local communities.
- Potentially, seeking to deepen their knowledge of areas and issues and take responsibility for coordinating and/or training, to grow the trusted companions supporting circle.

This Schooling Course is recommendable for those dedicated to accompanying the dying, counsellors, health practitioners, carers, social and support workers, educators, and those who wish to care for the newly deceased, like funeral personnel and celebrants. If your reasons are more personal and you wish to consciously prepare yourself, are grieving a loved one, seeking greater understanding of assisted dying, organ donation, or suicide this Schooling Course will aid you in sovereign inquiry and finding autonomous answers.

Educators and Presenters:

Beverley Clarke - Higher Diploma Secondary Teaching (H.D.S.T. Rusden); Masters in Experiential Creative Arts Therapy (M.I.E.C.A.T)

Studying ceramics and sculpture at the School of Arts and Design, Canberra, lead her to a Masters in Experiential Creative Arts Therapy at the M.I.E.C.A.T. Institute. Her experience includes work as Experiential Creative Arts Therapist, with people addressing addiction, mental health conditions, relapse prevention, post-traumatic stress disorder and family relationships. In the fields of Aged Care and Dementia, she provided Experiential Creative Arts Therapy at an award-winning, not-for-profit organisation. Additional studies in Anthroposophical Art Therapy, in particular the approach of Liane Collot d'Herbois (1907-1999) followed and are on-going with Iris Sullivan, a master student of Collot d'Herbois.

Iris Curteis, PhD, B.A. BA Honours (English) Storyteller, Social Artist, Speech Artist.

Creative Practice: I will create an intense focus on folktales and the art of storytelling, Liminal Space, the power of Story to carry listeners across thresholds and the immense benefits this offers in our understanding of Death, in the care of the dying and their loved-ones. I will introduce you to the Art of Speech, creative work with sounds, listening/stillness, poetic metre and rhythmic breathing. Theory: Folktale Research, Liminality, Occult Hearing, and Spiritual Science.

Irmhild Kleinhenz, Anthroposophic Naturopath; Tutor and Mentor for International Postgraduate Training Anthroposophic Medicine.

Long term focus: Salutogenesis, grounded in a healthy humanistic understanding, reaches beyond pathology. Pain is often seen as an inescapable part of dying. Salutogenic work is to find a way to understand and overcome the pain. Out of this context, I will explore the pain threshold and how we can experience pain differently, as a metamorphosis to higher knowledge.

Bronwen Haralambous, PhD, Master Educational Leadership, BA (English and History) and Higher Education Diploma, Advanced Diploma in Holistic Counselling and Psychotherapy.

I currently teach in the Graduate Certificate in Steiner Education at the University of the Sunshine Coast. My main areas of research include Steiner philosophy and pedagogy, Contemplative Inquiry, Imagination in Education, Teachers' Research and Professional Learning, Curriculum Evaluation. I will be offering Contemplative Inquiry as a way of knowing.

Deirdre Korobacz, MEd (Steiner Ed) (Uni of Can), Dip Ed, Ad Dip Graphic Design, Dip Fine Art.

A founding graduate in Fine Arts at the Canberra Art School, Deirdre continued her studies at East Sydney Tech in the late 60s. She spent her life working as an educator and being a passionate 'traveller' both in the sense of seeing the world and exploring the frontiers of creative thoughts and acts. Her clear perception of Joseph Beuys concept of Social Sculpture, expressing art's potential to transform society, human activity, and environment, using language, thoughts, actions, and objects, influenced her work as the Artistic Director of 'Wearable Arts Vision in Education (WAVE)', initiated in 2001. While Deirdre has always cultivated a lively interest in the spiritual-cultural life, deeply considered lore and law, it is the fraternal and associative nature of economic life that offers the greatest appeal.

Educators and Presenters [cont.]

Michelle Nicholls, RN, Dip. Eurythmy, Dip. Eurythmy Therapy

Michelle began her professional life as a Nurse, working predominantly with chronic renal patients, administering Haemodialysis. She began her artistic eurythmy training at *Aurora Australis, Anthroposophical College of the Arts* in Melbourne, and later attended *Peredur Centre for the Arts* in the UK to complete the Diploma of Eurythmy Therapy. Her practical experience includes working at *Park Attwood Clinic, UK*, based on Anthroposophic medicine. It was this experience that 'opened her eyes' to what is possible through holistic healing practices, when various appropriate therapeutic modalities work together for the benefit of the patient. On her return to Australia, Michelle worked as a practice nurse at *The Melbourne Therapy Centre*, as well as continuing her work as Eurythmy Therapist in her private practice and then at the *Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School*. Eurythmy and Nursing are both unique in the way they require the practitioner to have the capacity to sit comfortably with a patient / client, often during extreme threshold moments in their life. Michelle has had many years of service in both areas.

Gillian Rogers, M.Ed (Steiner), Grad Dip Adult Ed., English (Hons).

I will work imaginatively to provide experiences that sensitise participants to the poetic in language and to further the development of a 'Poetic Soul' that can, with greater sensitivity, accompany those approaching the threshold. We will explore: What makes poetic language different from prose? How does it create deep understanding while working on the feeling life of listeners? There will be time for speaking, sharing and appreciating poetry in order that inspiration is there to accompany the creative process of composition.

Arne Schaafsma, MMThy, MMus, BMus(Hon), RMT, NMT, Music therapist & Counsellor. Trained in conventional music therapy, I am informed by a number of system approaches, including the theoretical framework which supports Anthroposophic music therapy. I received further practical training from an Anthroposophic music therapist.

The experience of sound is the last faculty to leave the physical body as we are on the way to cross the threshold. How music and a number of its elements can facilitate wellbeing and the dying process, will be my focus during this course. I will offer a basic theoretical and experiential understanding of the experience of tone and integrate this with other teachings provided in this course.

Course material:

Lectures and readings supplied by convenors; art materials provided in the intensives; further material to be advised

Course commencement:

Weekend of the 11 - 14 May 2023, Venue: 15 Haydon Street, North Dorrigo, NSW 2345

Course costs:

Discounted cost \$550 per month

Full cost \$680 per month

Payment plans can be arranged.

[At 140 hours face to face teaching the course fee is \$4.86 per hour].

Application of Enrolment:

To honour the spiritual nature of this course and the earnest, respectful bearing required to work with dying and death, we ask that you write to us and tell us why you wish take this course.

Please elaborate [both options are possible]:

Do you wish to develop your own relationship to Death and dying as part of Life, and consciously engage with dying and death on a personal level?

Are you enquiring about this course to develop your understanding of dying and death to serve your family, friends and/or community as a trusted companion and to support them on their journey?

Please include any experiences you have had that you feel are relevant to this field and send to:
Irmhild Kleinhenz naturosophy@protonmail.com

Enrollments close: 26th April 23

Contact for further inquiries:

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