



inscribing signs with a finger  
dipped in light

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

Liane Collot d'Herbois. Threshold

commencement: 10 – 12 march 2023  
venue: 15 haydon str, north dorrigo, nsw 2345  
duration: march - december 2023

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## Introduction

Most of us do not understand how to die, how to consciously meet Death, prepared and with equanimity. Predominantly, efforts by materialistic medicine approach quality end of life care as a way to relieve pain and suffering, to provide compassionate support to family, friends and carers and increasingly offer information that directs the terminally ill towards voluntary assisted dying. Death, while it cannot be defeated, in this stream of thinking, 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' out of 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'. 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, 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:

Ten 3-day Intensives Friday 4:00pm – 2:30pm Sunday; tasks will be set during the intensives. These include independent research, writing short essays and preparing presentations that further develop themes, as well as practice and honing skills [storytelling, speech and recitation, contemplation/meditation].

Ten monthly Online Tutorials [basic zoom skills required] will be offered between intensives. Individual consultations can be offered on agreement.

Estimated course hours: 3 hours per week; 800 hours in total: 180 hours intensives; 20 hours zoom; 600 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 silent 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 material:**

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

## **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.

## **Educators and Presenters:**

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

Experience: tertiary teaching, Speech Art, the Art of Storytelling. Performances: Storytelling, Speech Art. Long term focus: Storytelling and Community Building, Storytelling and Recitation in Dying and Death Care. Creative course work: Folktales as Conscious Threshold Crossings, Sounds and Listening; Breathing, Rhythmic Speaking; 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, M Ed (Steiner Ed) (University of Can), Dip Ed, Ad Dip Graphic Design, Dip Fine Art*

Death as Image, An Evolution of Consciousness in Visual Art. (More details to follow).

*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.

Further Educators and Presenters to be advised.

## **Course commencement:**

Weekend of the 10 – 12 March 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 200 hours face to face teaching the course fee is \$3.40 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](mailto:naturosophy@protonmail.com)

**Contact for further inquiries:**

Irmhild Kleinhenz 0444 651 381 [naturosophy@protonmail.com](mailto:naturosophy@protonmail.com)

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