Learn, heal and grow at

THE SCHOOL OF LIFE

THERAPEUTIC RETREAT:
HEALING EMOTIONAL PAIN

8th September – 11th September 2023
8th February – 11th February 2024
9th March – 12th March 2024
What to Expect

The School of Life is dedicated to helping you to heal, learn and grow. Most of the time, this can be done via our books, films, online classes and online psychotherapy. But there is also immense value in occasionally cordonning off a dedicated period in which we can leave day-to-day pressures behind and go and work on our emotions with other people, in a beautiful physical location, so as to make genuine and deep progress towards greater liberation, self-understanding and freedom.

That’s why we launched The School of Life Retreats, unique four day experiences that run throughout the year and are intended to do nothing less than expand and enhance our psychological lives.

In the company of kind and like-minded fellow participants, you will be able to build up your mental well-being under the guidance of gentle, experienced and compassionate psychotherapists. The result will be a lighter, more serene and more creative sense of self – and a feeling of having finally broken through barriers that stood in the way of flourishing. A Retreat is the ultimate way to care for yourself and, by implication, all those who love and depend on you.
Healing Ourselves

All of us carry scars from difficult events in the past. It might be something that happened relatively recently – a break up or a professional reversal – or else a difficulty that unfolded long ago – a painful dynamic in childhood or an event in adolescence.

Awkwardly, if we leave our sufferings unaddressed, they have a habit of giving rise to symptoms that spoil our lives day to day: anxiety, isolation, shame or hopelessness. Sometimes the symptoms become physical – insomnia, fatigue, restlessness or panic attacks – and defy all the normal medical remedies, as though our bodies were bearing witness to buried griefs.

Our Retreat is designed to offer a holistic approach to healing a range of emotional pains and distress. During your stay, you’ll work with The School of Life psychotherapy team and take part in a variety of experiences – therapeutic groups, journaling, art therapy, music therapy, dance and movement therapy, and EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing) among others – that together deliver a complete regimen of healing.

During mealtimes and other short breaks in the day, we will always have a choice to get to know the other participants on a more personal level — or else take time to ourselves to let our thoughts percolate.

Throughout, your mental well-being will be enhanced by two elements: the beautiful natural surroundings which offer ideal conditions for self-recovery and renewal; and the company of warm-hearted fellow participants, who foster a feeling of self-acceptance and belonging.

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CONTACT US THERAPY@THECOLLOFLIFE.COM
Overview

Day 1 —
Understanding Emotional Pain

Day 2 —
Resources and Resiliencies

Day 3 —
Finding Pathways to Healing

Day 4 —
Reflections

Find out more theschooloflife.com/five-steps/retreats
Contact us therapy@theschooloflife.com
Day 1 —

Understanding Emotional Pain

On the first day, we’ll focus on putting our pain into words. After introducing ourselves to one another, we’ll be invited to talk about our reasons for joining the Retreat and our hopes for the days ahead. With the guidance of a psychotherapist, we’ll try to identify the common threads among our accounts: the factors that have contributed to our challenges, the strategies we’ve devised for coping with them and how we would like to approach the future with maximal compassion and resilience.

In the afternoon, we’ll make use of art therapy to reflect on how the people in our lives have impacted on our psyches in both positive and negative ways.

We’ll end the day by heading outdoors to be refreshed by contact with nature. We’ll learn to immerse ourselves in the present moment and pay close attention to the natural world as a means of arriving at more insightful and balanced perspectives on our inner struggles.
Day 2 —
Resources and Resiliencies

Our second day begins with focus on the body. Through a series of meditative, relaxing exercises, we’ll reconnect with our physical selves: tuning into their signals and learning to decipher the messages they send us. To understand how trauma and stress is registered in the mind and body, an experienced EMDR psychotherapist will then teach us some advanced therapeutic techniques aimed at visualising our pains, zeroing in on our strengths and taking stock of our inner resources.

In the afternoon, we’ll head outdoors once more, using objects we find in nature to symbolically represent those aspects of our lives and personalities which we have often found difficult to express by more traditional means. This will in turn lead to fascinating and revelatory discussions among the group, led by our therapeutic team.

The afternoon sessions will involve reflecting on experiences of stigmatisation and cultural stereotyping, followed by an experiential letter writing activity.

We’ll start to practise some techniques for healing in a group: drawing on the wisdom of everyone present to collectively devise a range of possibilities for effective self-care.

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Our third day is centred on summoning up, and bolstering, our psychological resources for coping with difficulties.

At the start, a series of art-driven activities will help us to map out our support systems and devise a means of utilising the strengths and capabilities we already possess but have perhaps not, to date, leaned on as effectively as we might have wished.

With the background of The School of Life’s bespoke music, we will engage in gentle dance and movement therapy exercises to convey and share deep emotional experiences in a non-verbal manner.

The day ends with a closing ceremony, where each participant is invited to convey their experience of the Retreat through a creative medium of their choice. These presentations will amount to a testament to all we have learned and experienced together.
Day 4 —

Reflections

After breakfast, we’ll share a reflective space together and conclude with some final remarks capturing our experiences and what they have taught us. There will be an opportunity for opening up about those individuals with whom we have exchanged particularly deep connections, as well as with the group as a whole. We’ll also have some time alone to reflect on the Retreat and write up some notes to remember in a journal.
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<td>12.00 – 13.00 Introductions Using Art Therapy</td>
<td>13.00 – 14.30 Lunch</td>
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<td>14.30 – 16.00 Understanding Emotional Pain</td>
<td>15.45 – 17.00 Experiential Letter Writing</td>
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<td>16.00 – 17.00 Locating Emotional Pain in Time</td>
<td>18.00 – 19.00 Self-Care Practices</td>
<td>17.30 – 19.00 The Ending Ceremony</td>
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<td>18.00 – 19.00 Group Exercises in Nature</td>
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Room Options

The ticket price of the Retreat includes accommodation, food and activities for the duration of the Retreat. The Retreat starts at 11am on Day 1.

There are a range of accommodation options available at our Retreats, including luxury glamping, rooms with a double bed and ensuite, rooms with a double bed and shared bathroom and twin rooms for 2 guests to share.

Please head to our Retreats webpage and check out our dedicated Eventbrite pages for ticketing and room options, fees and further information.

Please contact us for more information:
therapy@theschooloflife.com

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The School of Life Therapeutic Services

ALAIN DE BOTTON is the founder and Creative Director of The School of Life. Alain was born in Zurich, Switzerland and now lives in London. He is a writer of essayistic books that have been described as a ‘philosophy of everyday life.’

He’s written on love, travel, architecture and literature, including the titles How Proust Can Change Your Life and The Consolations of Philosophy. His books have been bestsellers in 30 countries and his latest, titled The School of Life: An Emotional Education was published by The School of Life Press.

DESA MARKOVIC is the Clinical Director at The School of Life Therapy service. Desa has created this unique therapeutic Retreat experience and will lead this Retreat. She is a psychotherapist specialised in working with sexuality and relationships. Desa published articles, chapters, and a book on various psychotherapy topics, and has presented her research at numerous national and international conferences. She held senior academic and management roles at several training institutes in London. She currently sees clients and supervisees in private practice and teaches on different levels of psychotherapy & counselling courses.

ROBERT CUMING is the Head of Therapeutic Services at The School of Life. He has a background leading teams within the psychotherapy and wellbeing sector and also practices as a psychotherapist. He is passionate about building strong teams and enabling people to be the best they can be. He runs a private practice in Hertfordshire with a focus on: relationships, couples and is a practitioner in EMDR and attachment focused EMDR, which seeks to reduce the emotional distress of trauma and PTSD.

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42 Acres is a wellbeing Retreat & regenerative farm stay in rural Somerset. Our accommodation, experiences and events all share one vision: to promote living in harmony with nature, self and others.

The land is surrounded by ancient woodlands, a beautiful lake suitable for wild swimming and an abundance of wildlife. Some of our furry friends include beaver, wild boar, pine marten, red deer, squirrel, hare, canada geese, kestrel, buzzard and much more! With over 170 Acres to explore, it’s the perfect place to connect with self, nature and others.

Our accommodation leads the way in sustainability without compromising on comfort or style. We serve fresh, homemade, seasonal, organic and foraged food that is nourishing for the body and kind to the planet. Above all, it’s delicious. All our vegetables and herbs are grown on our regenerative farm. When it comes to food quality, you won’t find better.
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