

Learn, heal and grow at

# THE SCHOOL OF LIFE THERAPEUTIC RETREAT: HEALING EMOTIONAL PAIN

30<sup>th</sup> August – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024

**THE  
SCHOOL  
OF LIFE**



IN-  
PERSON  
EVENT



THESCHOOLOFLIFE.COM

## 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 cordoning 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.

# Overview

Day 1 —

Understanding Emotional Pain

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Day 2 —

Resources and Resiliencies

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Day 3 —

Finding Pathways to Healing

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Day 4 —

Reflections

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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, an art-inspired, self-affirming activity will encourage a deeper exploration into how we came to be who we are today, appreciating that

our identity transcends mere life events, encompassing our worldview and the values that hold significance for us. This empowering experience encourages us to recognise and embrace the qualities we value in ourselves, many of which may have emerged from challenging moments.

Later in the day, we'll be 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 is centred on summoning up, and bolstering, our psychological resources for coping with difficulties.

The 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 are registered in the mind and body, an experienced EMDR psychotherapist will then teach us some advanced therapeutic techniques aimed at visualising our emotional struggles, zeroing in on our strengths and taking stock of our inner resources.

Continuing from our exploration of tuning into the body, we will take a walk through the forest to the

tree house, followed by the Lake Experience. These activities provide further opportunities to understand our bodily reactions and emotional responses, allowing us to immerse ourselves in the mysteries of nature and its evocative challenges.

The afternoon session will address the challenges posed by experiences of shame, a powerful emotion that can block the path to healing. An experiential letter writing activity will allow us to express feelings of hurt in a thoughtful and considerate manner.

As the day winds down, we'll celebrate the importance of play, sharing stories that highlight the playful side of life and helping us connect with our true selves in our unique ways.

Day 3 —

## Pathways to Healing

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

What follows is a series of inspiring and emotionally resonant activities designed to propel us forward along the pathways of healing.

It involves releasing the weight of past judgments, moving towards self-appreciation, and expanding our self-understanding and compassion for others as well as ourselves.

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.

# Timetable Days 1-2

Book your retreat here: [theschooloflife.com/online-psychotherapy/retreats](https://theschooloflife.com/online-psychotherapy/retreats)

If you have any queries you can contact us at: [therapy@theschooloflife.com](mailto:therapy@theschooloflife.com)

## Day 1

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### Morning Session

- 10.30 – 11.00 Arrivals, Check-In
- 11.00 – 12.00 Welcome, Orientation, Setting the Context
- 12.00 – 13.00 Introductions Using Art Therapy
- 13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

### Afternoon Session

- 14.00 – 14.45 Understanding Emotional Pain
- 14.45 – 15.15 ‘Lying Confessions’
- 15.15 – 16.30 Emotional Timeline
- 16.30 – 16.45 Break
- 16.45 – 17.30 Silent Walk
- 17.30 – 18.15 Free Time / Individual Sessions

### Evening Session

- 18.15 – 18.30 Messages of Judgement
- 18.30 – 19.15 Who Am I?
- 19.15 – 20.00 Dinner
- 20.00 – 21.00 The School of Life Cards & Games *(optional)*

## Day 2

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### Morning Session

- 8.00 – 9.00 Breakfast
- 9.00 – 11.00 EMDR: Accessing Strengths
- 11.00 – 11.30 Break / Individual Sessions
- 11.30 – 12.45 Tuning into the Body
- 12.45 – 13.30 Lake Experience
- 13.30 – 14.15 Lunch

### Afternoon Session

- 14.15 – 15.15 The Experience of Shame
- 15.15 – 16.30 Experiential Letter Writing
- 16.30 – 17.30 Break / Individual Sessions

### Evening Session

- 17.30 – 19.00 The Importance of Play
- 19.00 – 20.00 Dinner
- 20.00 – 21.00 The School of Life Cards & Games *(optional)*

Please note, that this schedule is subject to change on the day, depending on weather conditions.

# Timetable Days 3-4

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## Day 3

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### Morning Session

8.00 – 9.00	Breakfast
9.00 – 10.45	How Music Can Heal Us, Dance & Movement
10.45 – 11.15	Group Drawing
11.15 – 11.30	Break
11.30 – 12.30	The Meaning of Life
12.30 – 13.15	Mindful Walk
13.15 – 14.00	Lunch

### Afternoon Session

14.00 – 15.00	Letting Go of Judgements
15.00 – 16.00	Love and Self-Love

16.00 – 16.30	Messages of Appreciation
16.30 – 17.30	Free Time / Individual Sessions
<b>Evening Session</b>	
17.30 – 19.00	The Ending Ceremony
19.00 – 20.00	Dinner

## Day 4

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### Morning Session

8.00 – 9.00	Breakfast
9.00 – 9.30	Check Out
9.30 – 10.30	The Circles of Reflection
10.30 – 11.30	Commitments and Qualities Meditation
11.30 – 12.00	Feedback and Departure

# 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](mailto:therapy@theschooloflife.com)



*The Farmhouse*



*The Deer Cottage*



*Luxury Glamping*



*The Library Barn*



*The Hermitage*



*The Swallows Nest*

# 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 supervises 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.

# About The Venue



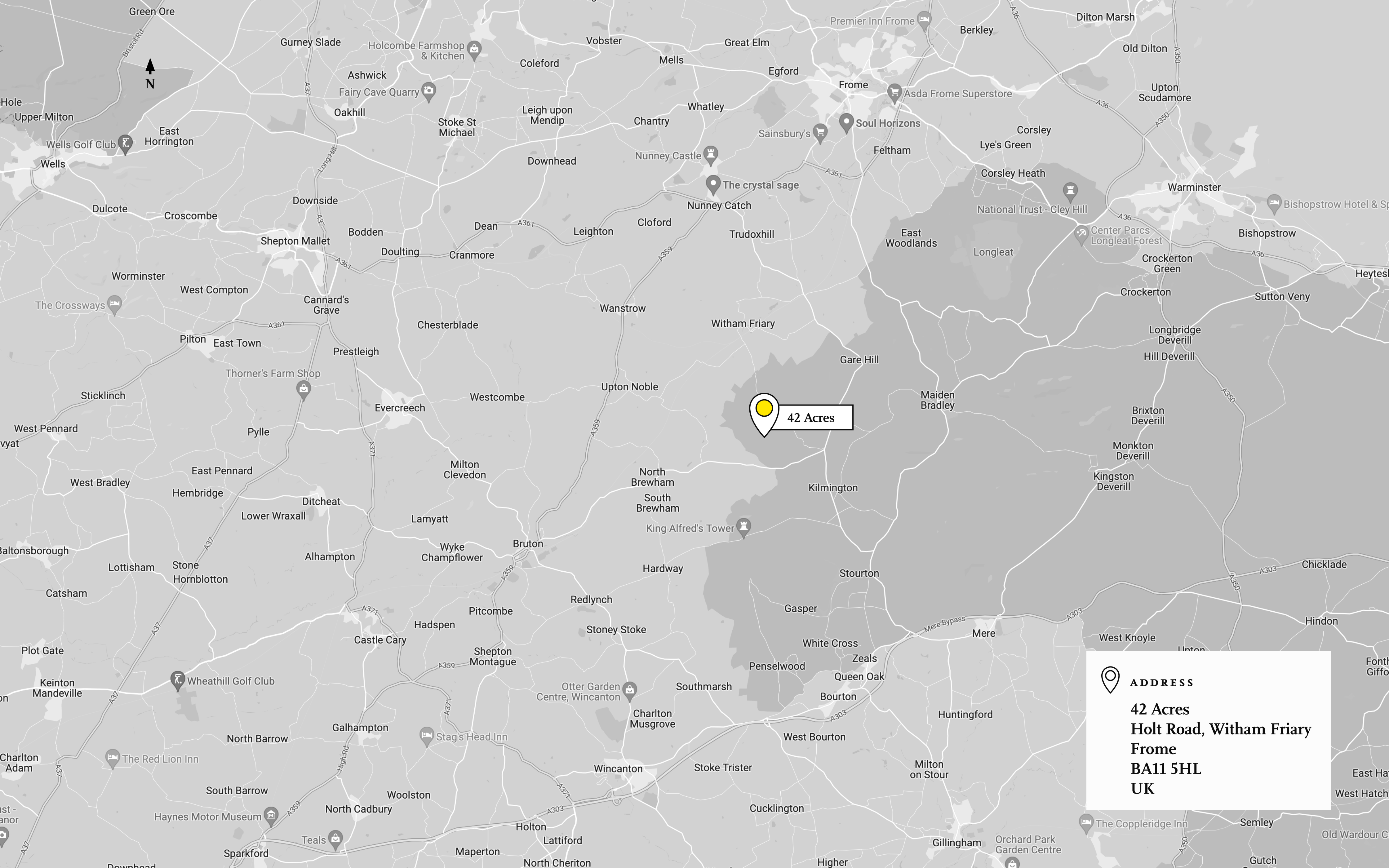
## ADDRESS

42 Acres  
Holt Road, Witham Friary  
Frome  
BA11 5HL  
UK

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.



42 Acres

**ADDRESS**  
**42 Acres**  
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