

Overview

Grief & PBSP retreat
ahlay blakely & Linda Thai
assisted by Rain Webbert & Ibssa Abdo

In these times of a sorrowful world and all that we love simultaneously aching through our bones, it is a good time to come together to be witnessed in our grief. This is a confirmation for your place in our retreat. Please read the following when you have time and space for it to prepare yourself for our weekend together.

What to Expect:

This is a 7 day event. We will be on ritual time, meaning time is left at the door once you enter.

Our time together will be a combination of singing, poetry, movement, practice in sacred listening, witnessing and being witnessed and sharing with the whole group and in smaller groups.

This ceremony is informed by many tributaries of teachers, including the late Sobonfu and Malidoma Somé, Joanna Macy, the professional mourning women of Greece & Italy, the keepers of Ireland and Scotland, the Mikonenet from the Jewish lineage, Francis Weller, Martin Prechtel, Stephen Jenkinson, the immense amount of compounded grief of our times, Whales & so many more.

This space is an opportunity to share what is moving through us in whatever shape or form it comes in - perhaps numbness, shame, rage, trembling, stillness, wailing or something else.

Our work is also inspired by the five gates of grief from Francis Weller: *Everything we love we will lose, the places that have not known love, the sorrows of the world, the things we cannot even name that we ache for, and intergenerational or ancestral grief.* Together, we will lean into the vulnerability, trust, and surrender needed to remember how to grieve together as a community.

The vision for this week is that Linda will share experiential exercises from the world of the somatics of early human development, psychodrama and Pesso-Boyden techniques, in order to support container-building and our time at the grief altar, as well as to help us to ripen the fruit of grief. Two or three individuals to be centered in doing their own deep work, in service of funneling the group deeper towards grief.

We will then shift towards two communal grief rituals - the legacy of the late Sobonfu and Malidoma Somé - within which each individual can lean into the exquisitely excruciating and excruciatingly exquisite wild edge of sorrow.

There will be spaciousness for integration throughout the week, as well as on the fifth full day of our time together.

Getting there and back

Location: Mosswood Hollow Retreat Center

Note: Mosswood has received requests from eleven people for rides, and they are unable to accommodate this many requests. So, if you are local and have an extra spot in a vehicle for a weary traveler, please reach via the Self-Organizing tab within this document.



Address:

20215 320 Ave. NE

Duvall, Washington 98019

Phone: 425-844-9050

Email: mosswood@mosswoodhollow.org

Rideshares: Uber, Lyft, or other rideshare apps do pickup from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport to Mosswood. [Here is a link that details the pickup process for rideshares for SEA-TAC.](#) Rideshare pickup area is on the 3rd floor of the SEA Airport parking garage. Estimated costs around \$90-\$120 one way depending on demand.

Here are some contacts for folks who live at the adjacent property who are interested in offering rideshares. They charge \$75/trip. Reach out to coordinate:

- Enver Wong: +1 (425) 647-9434

Proposed schedule

Proposed Schedule

(subject to change between now and the retreat and also during the retreat in order to best meet the needs of the group)

For each of the five full days of this retreat, there will be time off in the evenings, so that you may metabolize, digest, integrate, move this work through....a gift that we rarely access in the midst of the busyness of our lives.

Arrive: anytime between 3-3:45pm.

Saturday, March 7th: Orientation

4-6pm followed by dinner

Orientation:

- To the land
 - Land acknowledgement by
- To the week ahead
- To the facilitation team

Container building:

- Group agreements
- Offering / receiving support

Sunday, March 8th: Container Building + Cooking the Grief

Breakfast Buffet: 8:00am-9:00am

Morning (10am-1pm): Getting to know you: Large group

- What is the horse that you rode in on?
- Linda - short lecture about PBSP
- The 5 basic needs according to PBSP: place, nurturance, support, protection, loving limits
- A foundational concept of PBSP: Shape / countershape

Lunch: 1:00pm-2:00pm

Afternoon (2:30pm-6pm):

- One psychodrama structure + debrief
- Small group experiential exercise

Dinner- 6:00-7:00pm

Monday, March 9th: Cooking the Grief

Breakfast Buffet: 8:00am-9:00am

Morning (10am-1pm):

- Check ins
- One psychodrama structure + debrief

Lunch: 1:00pm-2:00pm

Afternoon (2:30pm-6pm):

- One psychodrama structure + debrief
- Small group experiential exercise

Dinner- 6:00-7:00pm

Tuesday, March 10th: Cook the Grief, into Ritual

Today will be a long day, as the Grief Ritual will end whenever it ends. Pre-Ritual, there will be a light dinner. Post-ritual, snacks will be available.

Breakfast Buffet: 8:00am-9:00am

Morning (10-1pm): Cooking the grief ritual some more + the Grief Ritual itself.

Lunch: 1:00pm-2:00pm

Afternoon: (2:30-6pm):

- Triads
- Large group: gratitudes
- Make bundles for grief altar
- Shrine Building

Dinner- 6:00-7:00pm (Light buffet style dinner)

Evening- 7pm, onwards

- Grief ritual
-

Wednesday, March 11th: A Return to the Question

Breakfast Buffet: 8:00am-9:00am

Morning (10-1pm):

- Movement
- Full group harvest

Lunch: 1:00pm-2:00pm

Afternoon: (2:30-6pm): A return to the question

Dinner- 6:00-7:00pm

Evening off

Thursday, March 12th: Integration

Breakfast Buffet: 8:00am-9:00am

Morning (10-1pm)

Lunch: 1:00pm-2:00pm

Afternoon: (2:30-6pm)

Dinner- 6:00-7:00pm

Friday, March 13th: finish at 1pm

Breakfast Buffet: 8:00am-9:00am

Morning: (10-1pm): Integration, aftercare and closing ritual.

Preparation

ALTAR INVITATIONS:

- **Grief** - bring something that represents what you are grieving
- **Transformation** - bring something that represents what you are ready to transform (i.e. your relationship to something, something systemic, a behavior, a belief, shame, self critique, etc.)
- **Resilience** - bring something that represents what offers you resilience (i.e. turkey tail, rosemary, a rock, a photo of someone, etc.)
- **Ancestry**- Ancestry can be complicated. From the nuanced reasons for not knowing who they are, to ancestry being a mix of colonizer and colonized, enslaver and enslaved, witch and witch burner... We welcome the ancestors (blood + chosen) with your intention of healing, wholeness and breaking the cycles of intergenerational trauma both caused and endured by our people.

OPTIONAL RITUAL PREP:

—INTENTIONS

Spend some time considering your intentions for this ritual. What are your wishes and desires? What are you letting go of? Be clear about what and who are you inviting in as support, and explicitly, what and who you are asking to stay OUTSIDE your ritual environment.

—JOURNAL PROMPTS

I feel angry that...

It is unjust that...

My heart aches because...

—ENTERING/EXITING RITUAL SPACE

Spend a moment considering how you might mark the end of "linear" time, and the beginning of "ritual time." It could be as simple as taking a ritual bath or shower the day before you leave your home, or lighting a candle and speaking aloud your intentions you have established for this

ritual. And doing something similar when you arrive home. Our ceremony will also include opening and closing our ritual time together.

–RESOURCES

[pre & post care for grief ritual](#)

[grief & praise - martin prechtel](#)

[spotify grief playlist](#)

[Wails: Songs for grief](#)

[Anthems for an Apolocalypse](#)

BRING

- **A scent free body.** This will be a scent free space. Thank you.
- Altar items
- Handkerchief for nose blowing
- A bouquet of flowers if you are able to (roses VERY welcomed)
- Boughs of Cedar if you are able to
- A journal and something to write with
- Ear plugs and/or noise canceling headphones if you are sensitive to loud sounds
- Water bottle for drinking
- Comfort items: i.e. fuzzy blanket, pillow, stuffed animal, etc.
- Snacks to share at the snack table (labeled with ingredients)
- **Seating that feels comfortable for your body**
- Whatever you need to be comfortable sitting
- Mosswood does not require folks' remove their shoes when coming into the lodge, though some guests enjoy having slippers, especially in the colder months
- Extra sweater or shawl is advisable
- Bathing suit for hot tub
- Toiletries
- If you are camping or in the yurt, please bring a towel.
- If you are in the yurt, 3 inch foam mattresses are supplied: please bring your own sheets, blankets and pillows.

Onsite logistics

Accommodations, weather, shower and toilets, accessibility, cell phone coverage, parking

Accommodations: Mosswood Hollow has twelve bedrooms with twenty-one beds. All the rooms are beautifully furnished in a bed and breakfast style, with many antiques. The beds and bedding were chosen to provide the utmost comfort for guests. Beds are made up with bedding, an extra throw, towel, and washcloth. Bathrooms are shared, one for every two or three bedrooms.

For those who want to pitch a tent, there are two bathrooms in the lodge with showers that have outside access (BYO towel). The yurt (where our workshop will be held) also has the capacity to sleep five people (thick foam mattresses are provided, please bring bedding and towel).

COSTS/NIGHT per person (includes accommodation and meals):

- **Single Room (6 rooms available with either a queen or a twin bed):** \$1,894.27 (6 single rooms are taken)
- **Double Room (3 rooms available, with two twin beds in each room):** \$1,357.93 (3 twin rooms taken)
- **Group Room (4 in a large room with 4 twin beds):** \$1,071.04 (4 beds of 4 taken)
- **Camping/yurt (4-6 participants):** \$870.88 (3 camping spots taken, 1 yurt spot taken)

The reason that there is some ambiguity in regards to the number of Single and Double rooms available is because there is one room that could be a single or could be transformed into a double, depending on our groups' needs.

Includes 11.2 % WA state tax for rooms, and 8.7% for meals.

To book your accommodation, please fill out this Google form that Sandie and Paul (our Mosswood Hollow hosts) have made for us:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zNHeliYfqLzNb_a24YjX7YtXIJbfDpycYmxEfChuWWI/viewform?edit_requested=true

Weather in Duvall, Washington in March:

Average high temperatures are usually around 48-55°F (9-13°C). Average low is around 34-40°F (1-4°C). March is typically wet. Snowfall is possible, but rare. Humidity is high, and overcast/gray/damp-chilly days are common. March often brings a mix of drizzle, mist, and cloudy skies. The weather can be unpredictable, so layering + rain jackets are smart. Wool is highly recommended for cool, wet weather.

Shower and toilets:

Bathrooms are shared, one for every two or three bedrooms. There are hairdryers in all bathrooms. Hand soap and shower gel is provided but beyond that bring your own toiletries.

Other Amenities:

- **Hot Tub:** There is a 6 person hot tub located out by the vegetable garden, 150 yards from the house for your use.
- **Walking Trails:** There is an approximately one mile trail around Mosswood's beaver pond. While it does have boardwalks over low points, which in the rainy season fill up with water, it is still wet and slippery in the winter so you may want shoes to sport the walk. If you are interested in a longer run or walk, there is a lake close by to which you can get by paved road. From Mosswood Hollow to the lake and back is 2 miles and it is 4 miles if you add going around the lake.

Accessibility: There is one step into the entry porch to the lodge where we will be eating and sleeping. There is a ramp they can place if needed. There is a road that goes to the big yurt, where we will meet, and a handicap ramp going up to the deck. There is a small step into the yurt from the deck. There are 2 bedrooms and a semi-handicap shower/bathroom on the first floor of the lodge.

Cell phone coverage: Wifi & cell is reliable

Parking: If folks can carpool, it is recommended, but there is good parking. Rain will help direct folks as they arrive to park for maximum efficiency.

Other Notes: There are year-round residences at Mosswood. They know it is a retreat center, so they expect folks to be around. They are asked to give participants space. From the lodge and the parking area to the east, where the yurt is, is all workshop space. From the lodge to the west is residence space. There is a mile-long trail around the pond that passes some resident yurts and cottages. It is fine for retreatants to walk through that area. They will be briefed about the nature of the workshop and will have an understanding about the healing sounds of the grief ritual.

Food logistics



Meals: Great care and creative inspiration goes into the selection, preparation, and presentation of all food offered at Mosswood Hollow. Menus are drawn from seasonal offerings, utilizing local and organic when available.

Lunch and dinner are served at the table, restaurant style.

Breakfast is a bountiful and varied spread, served buffet style.

Mosswood Hollow makes every effort to accommodate people's dietary needs when given advance notice, and there is space to provide such information during the registration process.

TEA & COFFEE:

Hot water for tea will be available 24 hours a day. Coffee will be available first thing in the morning until early afternoon. If you would like coffee later in the day, just let the staff at Mosswood know and they will make you up a pot.

BRINGING YOUR OWN FOOD:

There is no kitchen access. There is a small refrigerator and a microwave available on the covered porch. There is hot water available 24 hours a day. Please bring your own plates, bowls, or whatever utensils you may need.

Self-organizing: Field a request

Rides to / from Seattle Airport:

Addition 2/9 from Linda: if you are requesting a ride from the airport, could you please be more specific about day, time, and your willingness to share a cab fare to the venue (\$70-\$110).

Addition 2/15 from Linda: Mosswood has said that **eleven** of you have asked for a ride from the airport, which is more than they are able to accommodate. Could we ask that you self-organize, so that our community can take care of each other?

Name	Best Contact	I am requesting.... or I am offering....	Please check Y once your request has been connected with
Lanna	lannarmackay@gmail.com	I am requesting a ride to and from the Holiday Inn Express & Suites Seattle-Sea-Tac Airport by IHG Seattle located at 19621 International Blvd, SeaTac, WA 98188, on March 7 in the morning and March 13 whenever we are done. I would be happy to share a ride. I also have an inquiry with Mosswood.	
Lauren	lauren.patterson.wor k@gmail.com	I am requesting - happy to share a ride too and split the fee - I also have an inquiry with Mosswood. My flight gets in at 11 am on the 7th - I am flexible on when heading to	

		Mosswood as long as there on time	
Natasha	parfyonova08@gmail.com	I am requesting a ride from the airport. I am arriving at SEA-Seattle-Tacoma Intl at 11:49am on March 7 (United 2099 from Chicago). I will be happy to share a ride and split a cab fare with folks. Mosswood asked me about the details of my flight 2 days ago. I assumed it is related to this thread. I will go with the most economical option. Also, I will be happy to share a ride on the way back from the retreat (May 13, 8:00 PM flight).	
Amy	amykatethompson@gmail.com ; 406-249-7082	Requesting - happy to share ride *coming in on Amtrak on March 6th, happy to meet anyone wherever that wants to ride share - Mosswood shuttle or share a cab? Looking for best economy (and big hearts)	
Luisa	cinder.ella572@gmail.com	I am requesting a ride from and to the	

		airport- happy to share rides. My flight arrives at 12:58 p.m. On March 13, my flight departs at 5:50 p.m. I noticed a ride option on Mosswood and also have an outstanding inquiry in with them. Thank you!	
lisa anne	text me @ 503-449-7115	Offering: ride to the airport for 2 people on march 13th after the retreat. My preference is to be able to move slow/not rush around departure if needed, so preference for people who don't have flights too close to our end time.	2/23 update: One spot taken, one still available
Courtney	604-728-5949, courtney.d.pankratz@gmail.com	I would love to do a ride share from the SeaTac airport on March 7 - I arrive around 10 am - i'm happy to wait until others arrive. It would also be lovely to do a rideshare back to the airport on March 13 - my flight leaves in the evening, so flexible when to head over.	
Arren Lenau (zie/zir, they/them)	206-430-0352 arrenlenau@gmail.com	I live on Capitol Hill in Seattle and I will be driving to the retreat.	2-3 spots available depending on luggage.

		I have a Prius and have room for 2-3 people, depending on how much luggage there is. The trunk is a decent size. I plan to leave at 2:30pm or so, but could leave earlier if needed. Because I live on Capitol hill, folks coming from the airport could take the Light Rail from SeaTac airport to Capitol Hill, and walk to my apartment, which is only a 2-3 minute walk from Capitol Hill Station.	
--	--	---	--

Pre-retreat accommodation

Name	Best Contact	I am requesting.... or I am offering....	Please check Y once your request has been connected with
Amy	amykatethompson@gmail.com ; 406-249-7082	Requesting, night of March 6th (coming in on Amtrak)	

Post-retreat accommodation

Name	Best Contact	I am requesting.... or I am offering....	Please check Y once your request has
------	--------------	--	--------------------------------------

			been connected with
Amy	amykatethompson@gmail.com ; 406-249-7082	Requesting, night of March 13th (leaving on Amtrak next day)	
Luisa	cinder.ella572@gmail.com	If anyone would like to coordinate a return ride to the airport, I'm happy to share the ride, my flight is March 13 at 5:50 p.m.	
Lauren Patterson	lauren.patterson.wor k@gmail.com	Return to the airport - my flight is at 8 pm but was planning to head back to the airport after we are done - happy to share a ride back and split fair	
		I will be happy to share a ride from the retreat to the airport (SEA-Seattle Tacoma) on May 13th . My flight is at 8:00 PM.	

Additional requests / offerings into our communal space:

Post-retreat resources

POST-RITUAL PREPARATIONS:

--SELF-CARE. We ask that you plan for spaciousness, and plenty of self-care after the ritual. Instead of defaulting to “business as usual”, please plan a light week for yourself. Some suggestions include: allowing solo-time each day to take a bath, sit in contemplation/meditation, to go for a walk or a swim, to journal, to eat slow, nourishing meals. Make a list ahead of time of the activities and people that will set up the most encouraging conditions for integration in the days following the ceremony.

--ESTABLISHING COMMUNITIES OF CARE. Please consider letting a handful of your most-trusteds -- be they beloved friends, family, counselors or clergy, grief workers, bodyworkers, energy workers, etc. -- know that you will be going through a weekend ritual grieving process, and ask them to hold you in their thoughts and prayers. You might even put some dates on the calendar to reflect with them in the weeks after the ritual.

Resources:

- The Five Gates of Grief in the book [The Wild Edge of Sorrow](#).
- Prep and Post Care reminders [here](#).
- Martín Prechtel's "Grief and Praise" talk:
 - [Part 1](#)
 - [Part 2](#)
 - [Part 3](#)
- [Grieving and Recovery](#) - Sobonfu Somé
- [Council to Honor Sobonfu Somé](#)
- [Wails: Songs For Grief album](#)
- Some playlists on Spotify
 - [Wails](#)
 - [Grief Tender](#)

Feedback: We believe that actively seeking feedback is part of what helps us grow and broaden our perspective of this radically diverse Earth we steward and share. If you feel called to share, you can fill out this [feedback form](#).

Please remember to be gentle, tender and kind with yourself as you reintegrate and metabolize our weekend together.

P.S. Tithing from our grief rituals go towards [The Sonder Project](#). If you are financially able, please support sending (literal) water back to the source from where many of these teachings originate.

Additional book recs:

- *Of Water and the Spirit: Ritual, Magic, and Initiation in the Life of an African Shaman* by Malidoma Somé
- *The Spirit of Intimacy: Ancient African Teachings in the Ways of Relationships* by Sobonfu Somé
- *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals* by Alexis Pauline Gumbs
- *The Smell of Rain on Dust: Grief and Praise* by Martín Prechtel

Got questions? Ask them here!

Got questions? Ask them here!

Your questions and curiosities may also be questions or curiosities on someone else's mind-heart. An open-forum format may be helpful for the community. That said, if you don't feel comfortable asking your question here (no reason is necessary), you can email Tyler (Linda's operations manager): assistant@linda-thai.com or Rain (ahlay's person-in-service-of-grief-and-gratitude): grief.healingattheroots@gmail.com

Protagonist selection

Protagonist Selection

There will be capacity for 2-3 protagonists, who will be centered in doing their own work. There will also be a few small group experientials, for you to experience the power of asking for the words that you need to hear, accompanied with supportive contact.

For more information on psychodrama structures, you are welcome to check out [this webpage](#), as well as watch two demo videos [here](#) and [here](#).

(Please know that how I lead structures is different to how Bessel leads them, mostly because I am trained in multiple somatic modalities.)

Should you wish to be considered for a protagonist spot in the psychodrama structures portion of this retreat, please email linda@linda-thai.com and we will set up a Zoom call to discuss this possibility.

For transparency, here is the selection criteria / questions that I will be asking:

- What area of un-resolution would you like to address?
- How comfortable are you being witnessed and supported by 27 other people in your process, and including them in your process?
- Are you able to feel and express your feelings in real time? (This is in service of ripening the fruit of grief for the group. It's not as potent if someone is staying cerebral with their work.)

Please know that protagonist selection is in service of ripening the fruit of grief for the group.

This, as well as the small group experientials, are in service of building group cohesion and building group capacity to care for each other genuinely in preparation for the grief ritual.