

A Space for Change 2025: Emergence Summer Retreat and Rite of Passage

*Based on the Four Shields of Human Nature**

The Dyfi Valley, Mid-Wales

12th –19th July



A powerful encounter with what is alive in you. An exploration of life, death and the space in between.

Space for Change participant

We warmly invite you to join us for a unique retreat at our home in the peaceful surroundings of the mid-Wales hills. A Space for Change, is guided by Fern Smith and Philip Ralph, artists and rites of passage guides. **This retreat offers an opportunity to experience a week of deep rest, reflection and inquiry.** It also represents a powerful initiatory process through working with the **'Four Shields of Human Nature' and 'self-generated ceremony'**. We purposefully keep our groups and retreats small in order to create sufficient space and time for each participant to respectfully settle into depth and connection with themselves, the land and the group.

As the world's systems of balance, governance and climate spin ever more out of control, many of us are reflecting on where we are in our own lives and how we might change to meet and serve the demands

of life on earth in the 21st century. A Space for Change offers space and time to drop deeply into the territory of soul and nature. It is also an opportunity to ask **“what is my path, my purpose and what are the gifts” I bring to the earth at this time of great upheaval.**

We offer a space for change if:

You are at a point of change in your life;

You want to kick-start a period of transition;

You feel blocked or stymied in your life, work or creativity;

You are asking yourself deep questions about your role in these transitional times.



Group Room at Nant y Gwenill

Fern and Phil have spent decades working in the creative industries of theatre, film and television. We have both undergone deep processes of transformative change through immersing ourselves in myriad practices of ritual, rites of passage, spiritual inquiry, coaching, meditation, facilitation and nature connection. We offer Space for Change at our beautiful home and retreat centre at Nant y Gwenill, supporting you to dig deep into your own personal journey around transition and change, renewal and rebirth.

Thank you so much for your wonderful hosting and facilitation; it was such a luxury to spend that time with you; it was so invigorating to have this time to feel solid, vulnerable, strong, connected. The land around you is very welcoming and 'nutritious' and the house is like a cocoon, a haven one can return too in the knowledge of being safe, warm, comfortable.

Space for Change Participant

On A Space for Change, we will come together in the beautiful environs of a comfortable, sympathetically modernised, eco-converted farmhouse in the hills above Machynlleth in mid-Wales. We will live in community, cooking, eating, walking, creating and dreaming together with periods of spacious solitude and silence. It is our profound intention that each participant will leave us and return to the world re-invigorated with a fresh sense of purpose.



View of the landscape around Nant-y-Gwenill from the summit of nearby Moel Fadian

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*The teaching is inspired by and draws from the **'Four Shields of Human Nature'** as offered by **The School of Lost Borders** in which tradition we have trained and had extensive experience in guiding. The retreat includes a powerful 'solo' experience in nature. Daily medicine walks, nature-based practices, as well as speaking and sharing in 'council' will be offered enabling you to deepen into your time here. We support each retreatant to frame their own unique 'intention' to guide the process of enquiry.*

We hope that you will join us for what promises to be a truly special week's retreat.

We spend so much of our lives running away from things. Space for Change is one of those rare and powerful opportunities to face your reality as it is; I celebrated what is truly alive, honoured some things that had died and shone a little more light on all I am and can be.

Space for Change Participant

To discuss further and to secure your place, please contact us:

Fern: 07528 527836 – fernsmith@gmail.com
Phil: 07791 975820 – philiparalph@gmail.com

www.emergence-uk.org

We look forward to welcoming you.

Logistics

Travel

Nant y Gwenill is four miles outside Machynlleth in Powys, mid-Wales. Machynlleth has a mainline train station, two hours from Birmingham and four hours from London. We can collect and drop off at the station so you can travel to us via public transport. Alternatively, if you come by car, we have space for you to park on or near site.

Cost of Space for Change

Costs range from £600 to £725 and includes accommodation, all meals for 7 days and guiding fees. The choices are £725 (single occupancy room – 3 spaces available) or £600 (caravan/camping – 5 spaces available)

Deposit & installments

This is a small group retreat with upto 8 spaces. We ask for a non-refundable non-transferable deposit of £200 at the time of booking. The remainder can be paid in two further instalments or as one payment. Full payment is required one month before hand.

House & Food

The house has three indoor bathrooms available for those staying in The Barn as well as for campers.

We will pre-plan a menu for the whole time we are together which will be vegetarian, organic and locally sourced where possible. We buy all ingredients beforehand to facilitate this. We bake sourdough wheat/rye loaves on a daily basis. Please let us know when booking if you have any specific food needs.

Aside from personal sleeping arrangements - we have several spaces available to you during the retreat including a large, beautiful, sun-drenched room used as our group space for meditation and council. Inside the house we have several sitting areas with comfy sofas and wood burners. We also have a quiet library space with a wide range of books on nature, spirituality, transformation, and sustainability. This space will be open at all times. There are many beautiful sitting places outside in the garden and on the surrounding land which you will explore as part of the week.

Guiding

We have both spent the last several years immersing ourselves in a variety of spiritual traditions, communication techniques, nature-based practices and rites of passage. Fern has trained as a wilderness rites of passage guide with the [School of Lost Borders](#) in California as well as working as a life coach, craniosacral therapist, facilitator and celebrant. Phil is an artist and writer and has trained in the Buddhist lineage of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, he has worked with Pip Bondy of Ancient Healing Ways and taught at [Schumacher College](#).

The teaching and holding we intend to offer on this retreat will be light-touch, drawn from multiple traditions, and geared specifically to enabling each retreatant to dig deeply into their own personal process. We will offer: a variety of meditation practices; sitting together using Way of Council (a means of deep listening and speaking); medicine walks and nature-based practices; time alone for

contemplation; and the opportunity for individual discussion and coaching. This will culminate in a day-long period of solo ceremony for each retreatant before we close our time together by sharing stories, reviewing our individual and collective journeys and finally going forth.

What to Bring

The weather in this part of Wales can be unpredictable and we do intend to be spending time outdoors in nature, so we highly recommend bringing waterproofs, walking boots/shoes and warm clothes.

If you are camping, we ask that you bring a sleeping bag and mat etc.

And, obviously, you'll need toiletries, any medications and a towel.

We also recommend bringing journals, pens, crayons and anything you might want to use to record your experience and process.

Nant-y-Gwenill sits in an area without mobile phone coverage. We are on a landline and can be reached by families and friends in the event of emergencies.

Arrivals and Departures

We invite you to arrive between by 5pm on Saturday 12th July. We will welcome you, show you your accommodation, orient you to the house and area before we all gather for our first meal together and then sit in circle to commence the retreat.

We end with a shared lunch on Saturday 19th July.

We will happily coordinate lifts and pick-ups to and from Machynlleth station.

Dogs

We have a very friendly, small Jack Russell terrier called Jaffa who enjoys company, walks and strokes. She is part of the community here and will be with us throughout the retreat.

Small Group

If we are a small group, in order to make the retreat financially possible to run we will run the retreat with one rather than two guides.

A Space for Change is an Emergence Initiative.

www.emergence-uk.org