

# Spring Forward 2024:

## An Inside/Outside Emergence Retreat

28th – 31st March 2024

at

The Barn in the Dyfi Valley, Near Machynlleth, Mid Wales, UK  
With Facilitator Guides/Artists: Fern Smith & Philip Ralph



Spring Forward 2024 is a respectfully held, spacious, guided, small-group retreat intended to support an intentional decision to: *'Step into the Light, Marking the Moment, Making an Intention.'* The retreat takes place to coincide with that special time in the UK when the clocks are turned forward one hour and we mark the start of 'British Summer Time'.

***This is an extra special year in that the Spring Forward retreat also coincides with the Easter weekend. This gives the retreat a particular focus of also being available to noticing and marking what is 'dying' and what is 'being born' in you.***

The retreat invites guests to spend time both inside AND outside... We will come together in the beautiful environs of our home, an eco-converted farmhouse in the hills above Machynlleth in mid-Wales. We will guide you through meditation, creative ritual, walking with an intention, embodiment practices and solo time alone in nature. We frame the weekend as marking a Rite of Passage at this transitional time of the year. What wants to be marked and honoured in your own life. Is it a *Severance* or *Separation*? Is it liminal, transitional, *Threshold* time? Or are you *Incorporating* a new state, ideas or information into your life? We will draw on the practices of the Ojai Foundation's 'Way of Council', Joanna Macy's 'Work That Re-connects' and 'The Four Shields' teachings from The School of Lost Borders during the retreat. It is our profound intention that each participant will leave us and return to the world rested, re-invigorated and with a fresh sense of purpose.

*"I enjoyed it so much, coming home nourished and relaxed, excited and recharged and most of all, open to change." Retreat Participant*

## Time INSIDE

The retreat gives time to mark and witness how and where each of us are in our lives at this great time of transition and turning. There will be opportunities to share time and space with a small and supportive group: to rest; to plan; to unravel; to dream, to be... There will be quiet time alone to slow down and for solo reflection, as well as time for witnessing one another and group sharing.

## Time OUTSIDE

There will be time to explore the area in which the The Barn is situated which has immediate access to a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest). The site consists of a glade of trees, steep-sided ravine with a 'Celtic Rainforest' zone of Ferns, Lichens, Mosses, Ash, Beech and Oaks. The gardens of The Barn include vegetable beds, big skies and far-reaching views across the hills to Cadair Idris in the distance. There are public footpaths from the front door into the nearby countryside. As part of the process, we invite the group on a 'walk between the worlds' - to make pilgrimage to a powerful ancient place where we meet the wide open sky.

*"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." Retreat Participant*



## Booking your PLACE

Cost ranges from £300 - £400 depending on accommodation options. Solo occupancy room in The Barn is £400, camping in our lovely garden and grounds with access to all inside spaces is £300. This includes all food which will be vegetarian and communally prepared. The retreat is limited to between 4 and 6 participants.

**Spring Forward** is specifically designed as a 'paired retreat' with **Fall Back**, taking place on the weekend when the clocks change again in the autumn. We offer a discount for those interested in booking both retreats in advance for 2024. Contact us for more details.

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



## Retreat GUIDES

The retreat will be guided by Fern Smith and Philip Ralph. 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. Fern also works as a craniosacral therapist, celebrant, coach, facilitator and vision fast guide. Phil works as a script writer for film, theatre and television as well as being a facilitator and vision fast guide. We hope that you will consider joining us for what promises to be a truly special retreat.



*"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 to in the knowledge of being safe, warm, comfortable." Retreat Participant*

# Practicalities & Booking

## Travel

We are 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. We will send exact location on booking.

## Food

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

## 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.

## Spaces

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 burner. We also have a quiet library space with a wide range of books on nature, spirituality, transformation, and sustainability. There are many beautiful sitting places outside in the garden and on the surrounding land which you will explore as part of the week.

## Arrivals and Departures

We invite you to arrive between 2pm and 4pm on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March. 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 will finish with a shared lunch on Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March leaving plenty of time to travel onwards or return home. We will happily coordinate lifts and pick-ups to and from Machynlleth station.

### **Dogs**

We have two very friendly, small Jack Russell terriers who enjoy company, walks and strokes. They are part of the community at Nant-y-Gwenill and will be throughout the retreat.

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

Fern: [fernismith@gmail.com](mailto:fernismith@gmail.com)

Phil: [philiparalph@gmail.com](mailto:philiparalph@gmail.com)

**We look forward to welcoming you!**

Spring Forward 2024 is an Emergence Initiative.

[www.emergence-uk.org](http://www.emergence-uk.org)

*Emergence creates transformational spaces for self, other and nature connection*