

THE NATURE AND SPIRIT OF COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 2 (2 pm) – 9 (12pm-ish), 2019

Gigi Coyle with team – Win Phelps, Rob Dreaming and Tina Kansy
And council land hosts David Confino and Sally Bourne



This seven-day training, we dream to be a convergence of people who are learning and living the value and depth of community and stewardship of place. The practice and prayer we will seed here, together with those intending sanctuary and service on this newly purchased land, will contribute both there, and hopefully wherever we are and are called to be in the future. We see this journey contributing to a more grounded presence and preparation for responding together to the extreme conditions we are facing on a global level. In learning and listening through this practice and ceremony with all our relations, we are invited to move towards a more truthful, transparent, just and healthy, heartfelt world.

We come to Council to “re-member” as well as learn how to accept and embrace the unknown, welcome the mystery and trust the unfolding in a circle and in this world. We come with the commitment to fully do our part in the circle, in the healing, in the co-creation of a new story. With seven days, time alone and together, open to the teachings offered through the natural world – time in silence, in song, and movement – each participant we trust will find a renewed sense of wholeness and deep connection to all of life.

Your experiences and questions will inform our direction. We intend to explore the challenges of working alone, with a partner, and with an entire group in partnership - making decisions, accessing wisdom, opening to insight. The earth’s universal four directions, a map-of-wholeness, will guide and inform our day; the weather and wildlife will affect and influence our movement. From the valley to the waterfall, all of us will have some time alone to pray, to fast and confirm our paths, our ways of living council. Together, we will return as allies in our own unique expressions of this ancient/modern practice and discover what incorporation into our everyday lives truly means.

“For the western mind to allow for spirit, mystery, the natural truth and order of things to unfold it often has to un-train and let go of what it thinks it knows, in order to discover what’s really there. Through the practice of deep listening, presence and heartfelt awareness, we may all find a powerful way to collaborate, make decisions, and use our perceptions with greater wisdom and compassion.” Gigi Coyle

Location: Monte do Vale Porquinhas, Alentejo, Portugal

This small country estate, nestled in a secluded valley, offers solitude and the opportunity to connect deeply with nature. There are no close neighbors and the land includes rolling countryside, a 32-meter waterfall, diverse flora, signature cork oaks, a wealth of herbs, and wildflower meadows.

Tuition: Dana: suggested gift €400 – 900 - to cover team expenses. (Deposit: €200.)

Additional donation will be asked for food. NOTE: Camping offered and some indoor space as/if needed

Prerequisites: Completion of one council training or the equivalent ... working with council as a practice.

An intention to serve the healing so needed in our world and midwife the best of the new stories possible. Reading *The Way of Council* by Coyle and Zimmerman and the waysofcouncil.net website.

TO REGISTER: Contact: virginiascoyle@gmail.com

Virginia "Gigi" Coyle is a council trainer, rites of passage guide, community activist/consultant and facilitator. She is co-author of *The Box: Remembering the Gift* and *The Way of Council*. With an MA in International Relations, it is not by chance that Gigi's focus is both local and global, building partnerships and alliances for a healthier world. Travelling to 37 countries in the past 40 years, her work might best be characterized as citizen diplomacy, social justice, co-creating and building of visionary models for the future. Founder of a "cooperative," Beyond Boundaries, an inter-generational network of service, she continues to mentor and work with younger people in community leadership. Co-founder of many networks from the European Council Network, to waysofcouncil.net, Walking-Water.org and Youth Passageways, she gives her energy and time as part of a movement of change affecting all. Her interests and skills include healing modalities, permaculture, interspecies communication and being a student of every situation. She has co-founded four social profit organizations, served on the Board or as an advisor to many others and is learning what it means to be an "older" within local and global communities dedicated to life continuing on this planet.



THE NATURE OF COUNCIL

How do we remember all our relations, embrace differences, and find our own voices, while opening to others? It seems more than ever an essential time in our nation and around the world, to awaken this deep relational heart/mind.

Council is an ancient way and modern practice whose roots are within the natural world, spanning diverse cultures and religions. Here we remember and learn to listen to the whole: the people and the place, earth, water, fire, air the life spirit in all. This practice elicits an experience of true community, recognizing that each voice has value, that every person has a gift, a story to share, a piece of the whole.

Council offers a way of communicating that encourages attentive listening, as well as honest, heartfelt, compassionate expression. There is room for new insights and understandings, wisdom in decision making, and healing. As a personal practice, a group process and a life-pathway, council is an essential ingredient of our education at any age and especially important for community leaders, stewards of place, guides, teachers, therapists, caregivers or any individual whose work involves groups.

In all trainings, we introduce a variety of the uses and forms of council appropriate to different situations. The participants explore what it means to live in council, and work with what arises through time spent alone and together in nature. One may leave as a carrier of council, inspired to initiate councils in every facet of life. We may all return a little more awake to the moment, to the connectedness of all beings, to the impact and potential power of our actions and words.