

Beyond Patriarchy

We live in a cynical and self-critical era, full of insecurity and lack of confidence in human wisdom – a result of thousands of years of patriarchy. My friend, Pat Webb and I have put together a weekend workshop which looks at the architecture of patriarchy, the specific external oppressive behaviors that keep it in being and the nature of the internalized oppression it promotes. We explore antidotes for each aspect of this system and engage participants in various innovative processes. The aim of these lively experiences is to help us:

1. Challenge outdated assumptions about life and each other;
2. Reclaim our own authority;
3. Recover our sense of beauty, appreciation, play and laughter; and
4. Transcend the divisiveness at the root of enemy-making. We are out to build our confidence to create change.

My co-leader, Pat Webb, was with us at the bioregional gathering in Mexico in 1995. She is a poet and lifelong contemplative. In her role as an Oklahoma Artist-in-Residence she has made poets of students of all ages. Following the Zen tradition of her teacher, Thich Nhat Hahn, she co-founded and directs the Silence Foundation which has offered mindfulness retreats and ongoing sanghas for the past decade. Pat also creates and leads Journaling, Play Shops, and Mind of Love Retreats.

I see my bio as having spent decades becoming “untrained” by vipassana meditation, Sufi dance

meditation, Inquiry, Interplay, Tai Chi, and Christian spiritual exercises from Ignatian and Benedictine traditions. I've had a lot of experience passing along what I don't know in a number of group settings.

Our new workshop had a trial run in June here in Bonham, Texas. This description of the retreat by a participant gives a flavor of the response: "The Patriarchy workshop was provocative, contemplative, and most timely, and is a polished, professional workshop that would be appreciated by any forward-thinking group anywhere. I'm so glad I was able to experience it."

We will be presenting Beyond Patriarchy in September in Santa Rosa, California where Jeanne Marie Manning is making the arrangements and then in Oklahoma City in October.

~ Joyce Marshall

Joyce Marshall, co-founder of Realistic Living, did her university training in music and education with a deep passion for literature and feminine values. She is an avid reader of fiction and nonfiction books, and she reviews the best of them for the Realistic Living Journal which is published semiannually. She is one of the few living teachers of an innovative drama method called EcoTheater. More at <http://realisticliving.org>