

Working with Polarity: Embracing Shadow and Light



“Our task is not in the end goodness – for the good we do may just as often arise from ... shadow or have unintended consequences – but rather wholeness. Wholeness can never be approached without the embrace of the opposite. Indeed, the wholeness embodied in the Self is made manifest in the opposites and in the conflict between them ...”

James Hollis: Why Good People do Bad Things

In our daily striving to “do things right” and to “do the right thing”, we often find it difficult to recognise or accept our stumblings, the ways in which our attempts to act fall short of our intentions. Sometimes we struggle to acknowledge – or even see – parts of ourselves that do not easily fit with how we think about ourselves, or would like to be seen.

Our shadow holds what is not-yet-fully-conscious in ourselves. Our longings, our fears, our resistances and defences. It is the container for all that lies unspoken, unexpressed within us. Often, we project onto others what we are unable to recognise in ourselves. Embracing our shadow means engaging with, releasing, and ultimately giving conscious expression to the remarkable creative energy that is contained in this unconscious realm. It means becoming more whole, more integrated, more fully ourselves. And this cannot be done without dancing between polarities, and experiencing the tension and challenge of working (and being) in the midst of these movements.

Equally, working with shadow releases aspects of our light which had perhaps hitherto been constrained, rendering us, ironically, less powerful than we could be – because light and shadow dance together so intimately that any change to one inevitably changes the other. Denial or avoidance of shadow, of those aspects of ourselves that are less than conscious, limits our light in unexpected and unforeseen ways. Releasing shadow releases light.

Underpinning the dynamic between light and shadow lies the energy of polarity, the continuum that lies between having too little and too much of something, the continuum that lies between elements – such as night and day – that appear as opposites although they actually belong to each other. In this three-day workshop we will explore the nature of polarity, and experience – through guided practices and conversations – our unfolding wholeness and creativity through embracing the energy of polarity.



Dates: 2nd -5th February 2014

Times: 4 pm Sunday to 4 pm Wednesday

Venue: St Francis Retreat centre in Hillsborough, Auckland

Cost: \$1350 plus GST (includes all meals & accommodation)

Early bird discount: \$1250 plus GST if paid by 30th November 2013

For registration/enquiries please contact Simin Williams velvet@xtra.co.nz
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