

SITTING WITH DEATH

— AND CHOOSING LIFE —

THE CONVERSATIONS

SERIES TWO: TRANSFORMING LOSS



ROSE DIAMOND

Sitting with Death and Choosing Life

The Conversations – Series Two

Transforming Loss

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Introduction

Welcome to this second series of conversations in the *Sitting with Death and Choosing Life Programme*. Thank you for joining me for this inquiry into what it means to grieve well and how you can transform your hardest challenges into your greatest gifts.

Loss is a Natural and Inevitable Part of Every Human Life

This second series extends the focus of series one, on death and dying, by opening windows into six stories of personal loss, and how these losses have shaped and strengthened the lives of the people involved. In these recorded conversations, you will hear intimate accounts of a mother's excruciatingly painful experience of the death of a child; how a man is coming to terms with his childhood experience of his mother's suicide; and the courage it takes to face consciously into the real possibility of death following the diagnosis of a life-threatening disease. We also venture into other aspects of loss: the experience of living with a long-term illness; the gifts and losses involved in ageing; and how a profound spiritual experience can put one outside everyday reality and lead to testing life choices. Perhaps this doesn't sound like very cheerful listening, and yet, these are aspects of our shared humanity that may arise in your life or in the lives of those you love. For me, it has been liberating to bring these stories of suffering and courage out of the shadows and to breathe some fresh air through them. I hope they will touch and inspire you and contribute to a growing awareness of the gifts concealed within our darkest experiences.

Your healing journey is unique to you, yet grief and loss are natural and normal aspects of the human condition. It is how we relate to our inevitable losses that makes or breaks us. The Buddha's story of enlightenment began when he first encountered ageing, sickness and death, and yours can too. The six people in these conversations show how we can learn to grieve our losses in healthy, life enhancing ways, even within a culture which is not typically friendly to grief or kind towards the expression of intense emotion. Our most painful challenges offer opportunities for deep learning and psycho-spiritual growth. They can awaken us into our wholeness and higher potential and open us to the full range of our humanity.

Why is it So Important to Grieve Well?

The *Sitting with Death and Choosing Life Programme* began with my own grieving process two years ago when my closest friend, Woods, was dying of lung cancer. Six months later my brother, David, died too. He was my last remaining family member and I have been grieving for him and my family ever since. I brought to my grieving process several decades of experience as a whole person therapist and educator, combined with a similar timespan of spiritual practice. I've long been a deep explorer of the inner world, fascinated by the creative process of transformation, and working for positive change in the outer world. And yet, in the midst of my grieving, I was a complete beginner, stripped to the bone, and helpless in the face of loss and the reality of death.

This personal experience sparked an inquiry into what it means to grieve well, why we appear to have an epidemic of unprocessed grief in our western society, and how I might use my skills and life experience to raise awareness and help to change this.

I have come to the conclusion that most of us don't grieve well because we don't know how. We haven't been taught that grieving is an important part of healing and essential for our well-being. Most of us don't fully understand the natural process of healing, nor how to allow and release the emotions in safe and appropriate ways, so that their powerful energy may flow through us and complete its momentum. Many of us see emotions as troublesome and unpredictable eruptions that need to be controlled, rather than as an expression of the creative life force with powerful work to do. When we suppress our life force, over time, suffering is inevitable and we become mentally and physically unbalanced and eventually unwell.

The *Sitting with Death and Choosing Life Programme* is my attempt to address some of these gaps in awareness so that together we can learn how to face and move through our necessary pain and end unnecessary suffering. In my recent grieving, loss confronted me with raw helplessness and vulnerability, and broke my heart open, rendering me fragmented and empty for a while. From this experience, I know it is possible to develop the skills necessary for self-healing and to practice turning towards pain, rather than fearing, denying or suppressing it. In this way, we can bring the fragmented self together in new, more integrated and authentic ways, and become stronger and more resilient in the process.

It is with excitement, I invite you to join me in the practice of *Sitting with Death and Choosing Life* as a way to open to life's greatest challenges, with love, acceptance and compassion. There has never been a better time to realise our common humanity both within our suffering and in our courage to transcend it.

The Healing Power of Conversation

There are three series of conversation in the Sitting with Death Programme. The first focuses on *Grieving Well*, this second on *Transforming Loss*, and the third on *The Soul Journey*. All the contributors to these conversations affirmed how helpful it is to come together with others to share experiences of grief and loss, and to explore thoughts and feelings about death, dying and the healing process. It is part of the mission of *Tribe in Transition* to seed awareness of this need to hold deeper conversations in community and provide opportunities to bring people to together for such explorations.

Over the last ten years, as I've been pursuing my transformational work, I've held some 150 recorded conversations with those I call "ordinary extraordinary people" - it's one of the things I most like to do in life - and I've also facilitated many forums for deepening conversation in community. I'm always surprised by the wisdom, intelligence and insights that comes through when two or more people hold the intention for open inquiry and discovery. This seems to point to an unexpressed hunger for this kind of meaningful connection as well as a higher consciousness that is readily available when we take the time and space to be present and listen deeply.

There are multitudes of us journeying through very similar experiences of grief and loss: facing the death of a loved one, the falling away of a part of the self, or an aspect of life that has fulfilled its mission and needs to be let go. As Jan Cleghorn says in the first conversation, perhaps we are in the midst of a planetary cycle of grief and loss. And perhaps the many forms of anguish in our world at this time will be the catalyst for a global awakening of compassion, unity and respect for life. My hope is that this programme, a gift of my own healing process, will contribute towards the creation of a common language for grief, and map the movement into new and unknown territory as we heal and transform.

I hope these conversations touch you, as they have moved me. You will find information on how you can join the conversation and get more

involved here: <http://www.tribeintrastition.net/soul-sanctuary-circles/>
and see the entire Sitting with Death Programme here:
<http://www.tribeintrastition.net/programmes/sitting-with-death-choosing-life-programme/>

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How Living with a Long-term Illness Can Become a Path of Awakening, with Jan Cleghorn



Download the conversation here:

<http://www.tribeintransition.net/sitting-with-death-jan-cleghorn/>

Jan was a very active child growing up in New Zealand and she spent most of her time out of doors. She became a successful athlete locally and nationally throughout her school years. Then, aged 18, she had a serious concussion during a hockey game, resulting in a head injury. As a consequence, she suffered terrible headaches and a cascade of ill health, which culminated ten years later in a diagnosis of ME. A little later, Jan was also diagnosed with Irritable Bowel Syndrome and Fibromyalgia and has been living with osteo-arthritis since her 40's. Despite the devastating effects of these illnesses on her daily life, she raised a son as a single parent and trained in her 30's as a counsellor and family therapist, developing a small practice.

For those of us who are lucky enough never to have experienced a debilitating disease such as ME, Jan's account is eye opening. She

describes the onset of her illness as being devastating and “like a death”. Used to being very fit, active and spontaneous, she felt she had been stripped of her essential nature. As the awareness dawned on her that the illness wasn’t going away but was here for the long term, she had no choice but to surrender to her new conditions and learn how to live in, and take care of her body in new ways. Jan eloquently describes how her illness impacted her, and how she slowly learned to see beyond societal and medical judgments and her own self-criticisms about “doing nothing”. Through a slow process of reframing how she viewed the illness, she came to fully embrace her belief that “your life is your spiritual path” and that even the greatest challenges hold profound lessons and opportunities for spiritual growth. Her strong inner life and spiritual practice helped her to face into her grief and losses and find the meaning and gifts within them.

These are Some of the Gifts Jan Has Received Through Facing the Challenges of Long-term Disease:

- Continuing lessons in how to live with loss have helped her to turn limitation into self-acceptance and self-love;
- She has learned to let go of identifying with her illness and now knows: “I am more than this” and “it’s not the fact that I suffer that defines me but how I relate to suffering”;
- She has received a real-life training in learning to be compassionate and gentle even amidst self-criticism, social misunderstanding and judgment;
- Practicing being present, taking control of her mind, and where she puts her attention, and living fully in each moment, have resulted in daily gratitude.
- Instead of allowing isolation to diminish her she has learned to cherish solitude and the inner life.

The Transformation of Consciousness is Never an Easy Path

Profound losses can strip you of your identity and your place in the world. You may start by battling and struggling against this reality and try to push life in the direction you think it should go. If you relate to what is happening as misfortune you will likely come across the deeply conditioned, and many times repeated beliefs, “I am not O.K.” or “Life is not O.K.” “There’s something wrong with me”, “Why is this happening to me?” Eventually, you finally realise this approach is futile.

Little by little, step by step, moment by moment, if you stay open, and listen deeply to your body and inner world, you will gather tools and practices that will lead you away from the habit of being controlled by the mind and towards the inner knowing "I am whole". Now you are on a conscious spiritual path or the path of mindfulness and transformation

As you let go of how you think life should be, and surrender into how life really is right now, eventually you arrive at a place of peace where you can say, "Actually, I can accept this moment. I'm O.K with this moment, I can live with what is." Then, you not only accept what is but you may also be suffused with an overwhelming love and gratitude.

The Key is Self-Responsibility and Choice

We have a choice in every moment: I am not going to be victimised by this, I choose to see whatever life throws at me as an opportunity.

As we choose to let go of self-criticism and practice loving kindness within the self, deeply listening to the body and hearing what we really need, allowing ourselves to rest and be, we begin to release our own suffering and deepen into compassion for the human condition. And we realise, "I am not separate and alone but part of the All One." This simple process of conscious awakening through mindfulness, activated now throughout the world, heals conditioning that has been passed down from generation to generation.

Ageing or Sageing? Join the Adventure of Life-Long Learning, with Rosemary Cozens



Download the audio here: <http://www.tribeintransition.net/the-sitting-with-death-conversations-series-2-2/>

Rosemary is a feminist counselling psychologist who has worked for over five decades with individuals and groups on their personal evolution. Her interests include community organising, women's groups, stress management, addictions, meditation, spirituality and a shamanic approach to healing. Her current work is in the field of bereavement where she studies and leads groups in coping with grief and loss. A mother and a grandmother, she lives in a small village in Ontario Canada.

I approached my conversation with Rosemary with a mixture of trepidation and excitement. In my world, the changes that happen as we grow older are not much talked about, unless by those of a certain age exchanging anecdotes about their ageing symptoms, which can at times be hilarious as much as tragic. I guess for the majority of people the prospect of ageing is something to be filed away for later; the older years tend to be put in the "too hard" basket and the wisdom of the elders ignored. Liberation means breaking out of these cultural cages. Rosemary and I touched on the losses involved in growing older - and there certainly are some - but we were much more interested in the gifts and wisdom we are harvesting in older age from approaching life as an adventure of life-long learning.

Here are Some of the Gifts of Growing Older We Identified:

- We have the opportunity to reinvent and re-language what older age is and we don't have to get caught up in dark and dingy stereotypes of growing older;
- In later life, we have more time freedom to do our inner work and this can lead to much greater self-acceptance and a deeper appreciation and acceptance of all aspects of being human;
- As the layers of identity that have fulfilled their purpose are stripped away we come into a much deeper knowing of the self;
- What appears to be a loss, when we give it time and space and sit with it, we may discover is also a gain;
- Older age can be a much more peaceful, less striving, more present time of life: a time to cultivate being rather than doing;
- A passion for lifelong learning and an attitude of curiosity enables us to keep facing into what is uncomfortable and finding the gifts in every aspect of life;
- Keeping the mind, the emotions and the spirit active holds us in the flow of life through the rhythm of giving and receiving, letting go and renewal;
- We awaken to ever wider philosophical horizons and unexpected vistas that can be surprising and take the breath away;
- It is possible, in older age to feel freer than ever before and to know we have a real contribution to make from a lifetime's wisdom and experience.

Sitting with Death Enables Us to Re-invent Ourselves

The Lakota Indians believe that a natural human lifespan is 135 years and earlier death is caused by a broken heart manifesting as heart disease, cancer and other fatal illnesses. Most people experience a broken heart at least once during a lifetime. To mend our broken hearts, we can practice processing and completing with our lives as we go. We are part of the natural cycles of life and death and we can choose to move with these cycles. As we practice reviewing our lives, weeding and composting and lightening up the earth of our being, we travel more lightly. It's a natural organic process of letting go and making space, recycling again and again through loss to new life. When we resist this natural movement, we are likely to become unwell.

We can grieve for those we love who are gone, for the prospect of our own mortality or for aspects of our lives that have run their course.

When the goodness of what is gone has been integrated into our being and whatever is no longer serving us has been let go, the authentic self is revealed and this is really a deep rootedness in the human condition arising from greater forgiveness and compassion.

Having an Adventurous Spirit Keeps Us Young

“I had no idea when I was younger what a gift learning is and how it is an entrance, a doorway, into a room that I would always cherish. That it would make life so much richer and that it would carry me for a long, long way. It’s led to the strong belief that it’s wise for me not to turn away from anything that’s uncomfortable. Life is often disappointing and difficult, and without the belief that we’re here to learn, and that we can turn things around and find the gold in everything, life would be impossible. Having an open, adventurous, curious spirit is what keeps us young. Lifelong learning keeps the mind active and in the flow of life. As we learn we also give back. We can leave a legacy and sow our seeds of wisdom into the world community. Awakening can be a major gift of older age – a widening of philosophical horizons, and coming across unexpected vistas that take your breath away. There seems to be no limit to the vistas.”

Within these opening vistas, and the recognition that nature is continually cycling and re-cycling, we realise that everything goes on forever in some form and death is part of this recycling through formlessness to new forms.

Whatever our age we can keep exercising our choice to continue learning and to connect with the beauty and community that are here within and between us.

Facing a Life-threatening Disease with Trust, with Maureen McKain



Download the conversation here:

<http://www.tribeintransition.net/the-sitting-with-death-conversations-series-2-3/>

Maureen McKain has been teaching Yoga since 1979 and has continued to study and deepen her knowledge. She has taught thousands of students in many parts of New Zealand, including the very popular “Yoga on the Beach” in Nelson. She also led ‘The Great Yoga Adventure’ into Nepal and the Himalayas in 2012. A respected Gong Master, workshop leader and keynote speaker, Maureen holds the title of Ambassador of Peace granted by His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar in Bali 2007. She has been Co-ordinator for 12 International Health and Lifestyle Festivals.

With a lifetime’s experience of being a healer, taking care of her body and mind with yoga, and being a source of inspiration for thousands of people, two years ago, Maureen was diagnosed with an aneurism on the brain and the possibility of imminent death. She decided to go ahead with surgery and it was successful. There were more difficult decisions to come as she chose to leave the home, community and work she loved

and move closer to her family. It was Maureen's spiritual faith and practices, and above all her skills in positive thinking and conscious intentional choice, that have enabled her to move through her fear and losses to a place of surrender and trust. She talks with me here about how she has supported and nurtured herself through this ordeal:

- Drawing on the philosophy of integral yoga, ancient wisdom and Buddhism has given her a bigger perspective;
- Practicing meditation has helped her to learn to be present in the moment, and to let go, trust and surrender;
- Using prayer and conscious intentional choice to respond to whatever life serves up, helps to positively shape her experience;
- Gathering the support of family, friends and community keeps her connected in a flow of mutual benefit;
- Living a life of service keeps her on purpose;
- Being non-judgmental opens her to the abundance of life;
- Preparing for death consciously, by planning her funeral and making a "death box" for her children, are acts of self-responsibility and preparedness.

Yoga, Meditation and Positive Thinking Give Rise to Trust and Resilience

People on a meditative path are better prepared for both life and death because meditation trains the mind to be present in the moment and to accept, let go, trust and surrender. Yoga will not guarantee a perfectly healthy life but if health problems do arise, it will help your attitude. Some diseases are hereditary but yoga trains the mind to find positive ways to work through the pain and fear, and build resilience.

"It is the challenges in life that help me to develop spiritually and, as I choose to keep being positive, I create hope. In every moment, we can choose to put our attention on fear or love, and wherever we put our attention, that is what grows in our lives."

By letting go of judgements, criticism, self-criticism and assumptions, we can move into a space of not-knowing and choose to live in trust. This is not a trust that we will get what we want but trust in the process of life and death.

How the Unbearable Pain of Losing Your Child Can Enrich the Soul, with Margie Austen



Download the Conversation Here:

<http://www.tribeintransition.net/the-sitting-with-death-and-choosing-life-conversations-series-2-4/>

Margie is a practitioner of Kinesiology, a teacher and practitioner of Tai Chi Chuan, and a student and practitioner of the philosophy of Vedanta. She is a wife, a mother and a grandmother and lives in the South Island of New Zealand.

Last year Margie's son Kris died, aged 48, after a long journey of alcohol dependency. Two years before he died he revealed to his parents that he had been sexually abused by the clergy while a boarder at a Catholic college. He then embarked on a courageous mission to take on the Church and seek justice, which culminated in a soul-destroying result. Although he wanted, at this point, to move on with his life, it was already too late and he died soon after from multiple serious medical conditions, including irreversible liver damage. In this conversation, Margie describes how she is finding her way through several years of devastating grief, heartbreak, anxiety, trauma and despair, and how she has moved from having no hope, to wondering if there is hope, to hoping there is hope, and now to daring to believe there's hope.

In the early stages of grief Margie describes herself as “inconsolable, nothing worked, everything inside me was broken down”. Here are some of the ways she has supported herself:

- Offering support to her family and helping them through their grief;
- Maintaining close connections with those who loved Kris the most;
- Keeping up with daily practical responsibilities such as cooking;
- Recognising and responding to a need for order in the home;
- Taking time to cocoon herself in solitude;
- Talking with friends who have undergone similar grief;
- Attending grief counselling;
- Taking anti-depressant medication to help her to sleep and regain her energy;
- Noticing and celebrating benchmarks for her progress;
- Committing to self-care and dedicating this to Kris and her grandson;
- Not being afraid to show her emotions in public and finding when she did so she was met with kindness.

Opening to Soul

The death of a close loved one can open us to other dimensions of experience beyond the everyday and rational. We open to the soul dimension and to the mystery of what it means to die, and where we go after death. This puts us outside the mainstream of daily life.

“Gradually, we come into a new reality; it may not be the reality I want but it is a reality deeply enriched by profound experiences. It is experience we come here for. I can count all these experiences as gifts because although an experience may not be what I would call “good” or “happy” it is an experience nevertheless, and I do think that enriches the soul.”

Non-Attachment

Losing one’s attachment to life does not mean we cease to care nor that we have less commitment but it means holding everything within a bigger perspective. This is very much a gift because it takes away the fear of death.

“Death appears to be another dimension of consciousness and, although I don’t know what is going to happen after I die, from the place of not knowing, there is no fear in it for me now, and that’s a great source of comfort. The smaller identity has died and I’ve moved into a more spacious identity where I’m less attached to this physical reality. From this perspective, I’m not drawn into worry and anxiety about world events. Even though I’m hugely aware of the chaos and suffering in the world and I can feel it in my heart, at the same time, it doesn’t scare me. I’m holding everything in a bigger spaciousness and I’m less attached, while at the same time doing my best to be 100% here.”

The Grieving Process is Part of our Soul Work

Perhaps those of us with decades of personal growth, spiritual practice and skills, are not grieving only for our own loved ones and families but undertaking healing work that changes consciousness for everyone. Grief is both very personal and also transpersonal and it can give rise to a deep compassion for humankind.

It Takes as Long as it Takes

Grief is a process that unfolds in its own time and in its own way. It is unique to every individual and a key to healing is to learn not to judge any part of our experience but to welcome it all with love. Grief is so powerful and compelling, you are helpless in the face of it. You can only surrender to it sooner or later and accept that this painful unravelling is part of being human. The most important thing we can do when grief is here, is to give it space and be with it. It takes patience, having no expectations, allowing the process, and a commitment to feeling everything as it arises.

Sitting with Death is also a recipe for life; a field of practice for conscious living and conscious dying. The gift at the centre is that when we practice being with everything that arises and, however painful or uncomfortable, allow it to be and not judge it, this allows us to integrate all aspects of our humanity into the self. This integration is healing, it gives rise to new life and regenerates us.

How do You Recover from the Trauma of a Suicide in the Family? With Dan



Download the Conversation Here:

<http://www.tribeintransition.net/the-sitting-with-death-conversations-series-1-5/>

Dan is a musician and former nurse with two beautiful daughters. He lives in the South Island of New Zealand.

When he was 12 years old Dan's mother took her own life. This very significant and traumatic death was surrounded by the deaths of several other family members, making him feel that "death was always present in my life." He was given no help to grieve or to come to an understanding of what had happened. This conversation, twenty years later, describes the effects of this tragic loss on his life and how he has gradually come to understand how trauma lives on in the body stealing happiness and vitality. He has also seen how the consequences of trauma are passed down from one generation to another and he is now learning how to heal himself. We hope this conversation will touch others who are living with the trauma of a suicide in the family and make it more possible for us all to talk more openly about our suffering.

“I’ve had to find some peace and beauty within the darkest places. And in that darkest place, although I tried to be alone and isolated so I wouldn’t have to feel, I found I was with so many people other people on the planet who are really hurting. The more I was feeling my own pain the closer I was feeling to all these people. I’d go outside and look someone in the eye, and for a split second there was a meaningful and deep connection within the glance.”

“The more willing we are to go into our own suffering the more we connect, not only with our own full humanity, but through compassion, with everybody else as well. This being human is a journey we’re all on together, and it isn’t all just a jolly ride, it’s tough, and a big journey, and it takes a lot of courage to be here on earth. That’s been true throughout history, but right now we’re here in this particular moment of chaos, change and possibility.”

So many of us are walking around with so much pain inside but when we meet on the street or over a cup of coffee our pain is the hidden part of the iceberg of being human. Our culture tries to keep all our difficult emotions and pain out of sight and out of mind in the hope it will go away. But, of course it doesn’t go away, it lives on in the body and in the mind and keeps coming back and demanding attention. We need to attend to our grief and learn to love and accept those hurting parts of ourselves and others.

Working out our life story is a slow process of choosing not to identify with the guilt and shame and suffering that has been passed down through the generations. It’s a courageous process of reclaiming our lives.

The skills for transforming grief are very simple and natural and yet, as a culture, we’ve moved away from the simplicity of knowing how to be with ourselves, and each other, when we’re hurting. Our emotions are our life force and full of creative potential. If we were educated, at school, about the naturalness of death and grief, and taught how to allow our emotional energy to flow, surely everything would change?

Dying and Soul Choices, with Maggie



Download the Conversation Here:

<http://www.tribeintransition.net/the-sitting-with-death-conversations-series-2-6/>

Maggie is an artist, a philosopher, a teacher, mother and grandmother. She currently lives in England.

Maggie's life has been shaped by two personal experiences of death. When she was four, she drowned and experienced an overwhelming feeling of unconditional love and homecoming, before she was resuscitated. In her twenties, from a place of despair and, believing it was the right thing to do for the wellbeing of her children, she chose to take her own life. She was pronounced clinically dead but her consciousness lived on. She was shown how her choice would adversely affect her children and that she had not yet completed her soul's mission; she then chose to come back to continue her life.

These experiences have shaped her life and given her a lifelong passion for all aspects of death and dying. She has come to see life as a soul journey and is dedicated to living an inquiry into what it means to be a soul having a human experience. She is passionate and curious about the human condition and its potential for conscious evolution.

A Spiritual Emergence Can Be Difficult, Painful and Fragmenting.

“When I entered the psychiatric system very few people at that time within that system had any understanding of what was happening in me, and I didn’t know either. Later, on reading Stanislav Grof’s book, *Spiritual Emergence* and resonating totally with it, I discovered a context through which I could begin to understand. I knew I wasn’t crazy, I knew something deep and profound and soul-led was happening but there was nobody for me to talk with and that’s why I ended up where I did.”

Here Are Some of the Gifts of Maggie’s Experience:

Dying was a profound spiritual experience which reminded her that:

- The true and essential nature at the centre of the human being is unconditional love;
- We are souls who have a body rather than bodies who have a soul; and death is not the end, the body might die but the soul continues its journey;
- This knowledge and the connection with unconditional love has stayed with her throughout her life, giving comfort and direction. It is at the heart of all religions and spiritual paths;
- The fear of death is a major obstacle to the evolution of humanity;

Having a profound knowing or spiritual emergence, such as this can, in some ways, make life more challenging, as it places us outside the consensual, rational reality of the culture. Such experiences, which come in many forms, can be very confusing and make us more sensitive to the cruelties and paradoxes of human nature. Finding the meaning within a profound spiritual experience may take a lifetime and become a vehicle for learning to live authentically, from the truth of one’s own soul.

Like Maggie, many people who make the decision to take their own life do so from the belief that removing themselves will make it easier for their loved ones to be happier. We hope this conversation will open a space to talk more freely about all aspects of human suffering and that the silence, prejudice and shame that surround mental imbalances and suicide will dissolve.

Join the Conversation

Choosing to live life in alignment with a higher purpose and with the true essence of what it means to be a human being is a big mission and takes enormous courage. More and more people are now getting glimpses of expanded states of consciousness and bigger perspectives on reality; these are positive signs of evolution and yet the transition can be confusing and painful.

There are few public forums where we can talk about our painful confusions. There are twelve more of these conversations in the *Sitting with Death and Choosing Life Programme*. All of the contributors believe that a great deal of suffering would be alleviated if opportunities for conversations in a space of unconditional acceptance were readily available.

The mission of Tribe in Transition is to contribute to the renewal and ensouling of our world through bringing together learning communities that nurture higher states of consciousness and creativity.

As part of the *Sitting with Death and Choosing Life Programme*, we offer monthly *Soul Sanctuary Circles* for online conversations in small groups. This book of conversations is intended to kick-start your inquiry; an intentional conversation in a group can expand understanding exponentially. I invite you to join me to explore the themes and issues raised in these conversations and in our e-books.

<http://www.tribeintransition.net/soul-sanctuary-circles/>

The Sitting with Death and Choosing Life Programme

The programme offers simple pathways for transforming grief and loss and inter-connected learning modules to support your inquiry and healing process. In addition to the *Soul Sanctuary Circles*, you can, if you choose, follow up with the support and simple experiential practices, which you will find in the healing modules. Find out more and get involved here: <http://www.tribeintransition.net/programmes/sitting-with-death-choosing-life-programme/>

About the Author, Rose Diamond



Born in England, Rose has lived and worked for 19 years in Scotland, 3 years in Virginia USA, and 17 years in the South Island of New Zealand. She is currently back in her homeland in Wales, UK.

With more than 40 years' experience of working in educational, therapeutic and professional training contexts, with people from many different backgrounds, Rose draws on her expertise as a whole person educator, psychotherapist and professional development trainer, to

design and deliver experiential learning programmes which help people to connect more fully with their own wisdom, soul inspired motivation and authentic truth.

She believes all the answers and solutions we need are already within us, and between us, and can be accessed through intention, presence, focused inquiry, deep discovery conversations, creative expression and a heart-felt desire to pass on our gifts.

She offers her wisdom and skills to guide and facilitate people through the shifting sands of psycho-spiritual transitions, so that troubled times can become the deepest wellspring of healing, wisdom, life purpose and creative empowerment.

Find out more about Rose here: <http://www.tribeintransition.net/about/>

Thank you so much for listening, I hope the seeds in these pages will grow and blossom and I look forward to meeting you as a participant in Tribe in Transition.

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