

WOMEN, POWER, SEX AND SOUL

A 7-day residential retreat for women in Southern France, 20 - 27 August 2009

THE FACILITATORS

Helena Løvendal-Sørensen was born in Denmark in 1958. After her education she travelled extensively and lived in spiritual and political communities. She worked as a social worker for adults with physical disabilities and later with families and children, prior to training as a psychotherapist in London, where she has been in private practice for nearly 20 years. She was a faculty member at The Institute of Psychosynthesis for six years before becoming a free-lance trainer and supervisor. She is a psychotherapist, supervisor and Sexual Grounding Therapist and Trainer.

Helena has been giving workshops for women since 1993 and is passionate about women reconnecting to their unique female qualities, beauty and strengths, while also learning to honour men and the masculine. She strongly believes that genuine equality between the genders is rooted in men's and women's ability to honour and respect difference. A first step towards this seems to be learning to honour and respect one's own gender's uniqueness, regardless of an individual's sexual orientation.

When not in London or working abroad, she lives close to nature in the deep south of France, learning how to grow plants and vegetables and live a sustainable lifestyle.

Tania Hosburn is an accredited and experienced psychotherapist, a qualified Contextual Couples Counsellor and has extensive experience working with families and children. She was a counselling trainer at Crawley College before becoming a free-lance trainer and supervisor. With her partner John, she is the co-founder of *Time2relate*, offering workshops and trainings for individuals and couples. She is a mother of three daughters, and is a proud and energetic grandmother. She has a passionate attitude to life and follows a Medicine path.

APPLICATION

Please send a deposit for £100 made out to The Centre for Gender Psychology to Helena Løvendal-Sørensen, Lengourp, 81190 Jouqueviel, France. Include a statement saying what you wish to gain from this week and email it to the address below.

VENUE & COST

The venue is a secluded, rustique former vineyard set in wild country on the banks of the picturesque River Viaur, 70 miles north-east of Toulouse, in the Midi-Pyrénées, southern France. The cost varies according to chosen accommodation, which is basic but beautiful.

Course and administration fees: £500

Accommodation: 7 nights' full board, lodging, (payable in Euros)
Shared twin rooms: €395 (limited spaces)
Private riverside camping: €255 (mattress provided)



TRAVEL

Travel to the venue is at your own cost. Ryanair fly London Stanstead to Rodez (one hour by taxi); Easyjet and scheduled airlines run regular flights to Toulouse - 80 minutes' drive, or an easy train journey. There is also a good overnight train service from London to Carmaux - 35 minutes' drive. Transfer to the venue at reasonable cost can be arranged. Full details will be available on booking. All travel must be insured in case of any eventualities.

THE CENTRE FOR GENDER PSYCHOLOGY

With her husband, Nick Duffell, Helena founded the Centre For Gender Psychology in 1996, offering workshops for couples and individuals with a focus on gender identity, relationships, and sexuality. They provide trainings in these topics for professionals in England and abroad, and offer specialised, post-graduate training in couple counselling. Their book, *Sex, Love and the Dangers of Intimacy*, was published by HarperCollins Thorsons in 2002. Their publications and full details of their workshops and trainings are available on the centre's website.

for further details and applications please contact:

cgphelena@btinternet.com

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What does it mean to be and live as powerful, sexual and soulful women in the 21st century?

As a woman, who are you? What do you care about? Why?

Do you think being a woman matters in the larger scheme of things?

How do you express your values in your life?

What is your experience of female power and beauty?

How do you loose or give away your deepest sense of yourself? How do you use your sexual energy?

THE QUESTION

The question "What do women want?" has long puzzled men, and over the years many answers ranging from the sublime to the ridiculous have been suggested - mainly by men. It's time that we as women seriously begin to contemplate that question for ourselves.

Individuals from previous generations bravely cleared the path for women to begin to speak up for themselves. Changes in the last 30 - 40 years paved the path so that now issues of women's rights are an integral part of our cultural and social landscape.

But how real is this celebrated liberation? How free are we to be women on women's terms? Do we even know what that means? Is it possible that in our lack of genuine role-models for how to embrace our new-found freedom and sense of female sexual power, women tend to revert to the most visible expressions for those qualities that we do have - that of men's? To what degree are we as women still influenced by deeply ingrained patriarchal values and attitudes - attitudes which at their core are rooted in mistrust and fear of the feminine - to the detriment of men and women alike?

In the struggle to gain equal status to men, are we in danger of becoming more like men, unwittingly dismissing our unique female strengths and qualities as second best? To what extent do we as women collude with actions and behaviours which add to the imbalances and distress, visible in so many areas of life? What stops us from trusting in our female wisdom and power? How do we recognise when our actions are informed by this deep knowing?

THE RETREAT

This week is for women who want to take some time to review how the changes in the last decades have effected them as women. It is for those who dare to revisit some of the traditional and stereotypical female qualities and be curious about the possibility of embracing those qualities from a different position. It is for women who are willing to consider the possibility that simply destroying the traditions of the past is not enough to truly empower us and for those who imagine that that the next steps on the path towards complete female emancipation may involve adding our new truths to those of more ancient traditions, lending the ways of our ancestors a new potential for growth.



METHODOLOGY

Through experiential exercises, sharing and rituals, participants will be invited to review their

myths about being women and stretch beyond their familiar self-concept. We will challenge and support each other to explore what it would mean personally for each of us as women to follow our hopes and dreams. We will spend silent times alone in nature, remembering our inter-connectedness with all life. We will share meals, swim in the river, rest in the grass and walk in the forest. We will talk, cry, laugh and dream together round the fire under the open sky and the stars. We will help each other remember what it is to be a woman.

The retreat is open only for women with some experience of personal therapy and/or personal growth-work. The week is led and facilitated, but there will be a strong emphasis on developing personal authority and responsibility. Expect to come away from the week with inspiration and nourishment to manifest and live a life that really matters to you.

see overleaf for more details

the centre for *gender* psychology

www.genderpsychology.com info@genderpsychology.com

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