

*Join me this spring for Courage & Renewal® Retreats in the heart of England at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, Birmingham, United Kingdom*

*About these retreats...*

**Journey Toward Wholeness and Transformation: A Courage & Renewal® Retreat, May 15-19, 2016 (Sunday-Thursday)**

Based on the work of Parker J. Palmer and the Center for Courage & Renewal, this retreat series explores issues of transition, vocation, life passion, purpose, meaning, direction, aging, relationships, and underlying life patterns, to live in alignment with one's deepest values and the courage to act with integrity and authenticity. In a safe, quiet, nurturing, and confidential environment, this retreat promotes reflection, clarity and insight. Guided by core principles and practices, which include the belief that everyone has an inner teacher, an inner source of truth, we will engage in contemplative practices to support personal and societal transformation.

Using seasonal themes and metaphors we explore poetry, prose, music, gentle guided movement, video, journaling, stories from various wisdom traditions, periods of silence, mindfulness meditation practices, and the natural beauty of Woodbrooke. The retreat includes periods of quiet self-reflection, and large and small group discussions, as well as much laughter and lightness.

Clearness Committees, a Quaker process of discernment is the capstone of this retreat.

***What people are saying about this retreat:***

- *"...profoundly moved to a deeper level of "getting it"."*
- *"It is an amazing spiritual journey where you can learn more about yourself and experience the capacity of love of humanity. It's life changing and uplifting."*
- *"The program helped me go beyond what I thought I was seeking and give clarity to my questions."*
- *"It was marvelous! You must do this for yourself."*

***This retreat is designed just for you...***

- Are you in transition, facing questions of life purpose, direction, meaning, or vocation?
- Are you wrestling with issues of retirement, relationships, or underlying life

- patterns?
- Do you want to create greater alignment between your inner values and your outer actions, and live with the courage to lean into action with both integrity and authenticity?
  - Do you long to learn new life skills that empower you to speak and listen in a way that fosters greater authentic connection?
  - Are you curious about the Courage & Renewal Approach to leading a more authentic life?

**For more information:**

<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses.php?action=course&id=10648>

**Open Heart, Peaceful Mind: A Retreat for Rest & Reflection, May 20-22, 2016  
(Friday-Sunday)**

Relax into a time of serene rest and renewal. Connect with like-minded people and practice mindfulness meditation in the tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh to the rhythms of daily life with sitting, walking, and eating meditation, as well as mindful dialogue. Savor sustained periods of silence, quiet reflection, and engage with poetry, prose, and stories, small and large group discussion, creative arts, laughter, gentle Kundalini yoga, and deep relaxation. Restore body, mind, and spirit for greater calm, clarity, insight, and energy.

***This retreat is designed just for you...***

- Are you seeking rest and renewal, a time set aside just for you?
- Are you interested in strengthening or developing a mindfulness meditation practice?
- Have you read books by Thich Nhat Hanh, and now want to take the next step in understanding mindfulness practices in the Plum Village tradition?
- Do you want greater calm and clarity to handle life's stress?

**What people are saying about this retreat:**

*“Valerie creates the space in which all feel safe and nourished---and through which personal expansion and growth (as well as fun and joy) flow seamlessly.”*

*“I can personally attest to the care, patience, and support Valerie gave me in the face of my own triggers and resistance---a wide berth to do my own inner looking and resolution---allowing me to return to full participation in a most uplifting and transformative retreat. I am delighted to not have missed that opportunity.”*

*“Every soul who passes through this rich and spirit-filled container of love and awareness that Valerie exquisitely creates and lovingly facilitates will leave with a thankful heart.”*

**For more information:**

<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/courses.php?action=course&id=10649>

### ***About Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre...***

Woodbrooke is Europe’s only Quaker Study Centre. It has a long and distinguished history of providing broad-based spiritual education to people from around the world. Founded in 1903, the former home of chocolate maker, Henry Cadbury, Woodbrooke consists of a historic manor house, organically-managed woodlands, arboretum, walled gardens, and elegant and extensive conference facilities, including art studio, library, abundant meeting spaces, lending a palpable sense of peace and spaciousness. Local, organic and delicious, meals at Woodbrooke accommodate a variety of dietary requirements. Located in central England, Woodbrooke is within easy reach of the stunningly beautiful Lake District, as well as the cities of London and York.

### ***About Valerie...***

A popular Pendle Hill teacher, Valerie Brown is a retreat leader, writer, and Principal of Lead Smart Coaching, LLC, specializing in mindfulness and leadership ([www.leadsmartcoaching.com](http://www.leadsmartcoaching.com)). She transformed her high-pressure career as a lawyer-lobbyist to human-scale work with individuals and groups to foster trustworthy and authentic connection. Valerie is the co-author of *The Mindful School Leader: Practices to Transform Your Leadership and School*, named one of the ‘best books on courage’ in 2014 by the Center for Courage & Renewal. *Friends Journal*, in a recent book review, said, “This important book will become a real aid to school leaders everywhere...” She is writing her third book, on the topic of remaining true to self.

How to register: <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk>