



# *Coming Home*

## *Awakening through Aging and Dying*

with Pir Elias Amidon and Friends

*A retreat with online teachings, meditation, and small group discussions, written materials and individual practices*

*April 17 - May 16, 2021*

*The experience of aging and dying* is a rite of passage, and like all rites of passage it's an ordeal that holds the potential for transformation. Many of us suffer this ordeal of growing old unconsciously and miss its transformative blessing.

This is not a transformation of "self-improvement" but of self-release. It asks of us a willingness to recognize our fears of dying and loss, and then to step beyond them, opening to the unknown. As we manage to open ourselves this profoundly, we are touched by the grace of awakening in this life, now.

What is this grace? It comes to us in many forms — love most of all, and gratitude. We experience the wonder and lightheartedness we may not have allowed ourselves earlier. There comes to us a natural, spontaneous faithfulness, a sense of our abiding connectedness, and a capacity to bless.

Acknowledging the limitations of an online retreat, especially with such a subject and deep intention, we will do our best to transcend these limitations and relax into the present moment where direct experience can be our guide. To aid us, in each two-hour session we will share teachings, practices, guided meditations, intimate conversation, poetry, music, and silence.

The video recordings of our earlier retreat, *Being Mortal*, held in October, 2020, can be a helpful preparation for this further journey, and are available for all registrants of the *Coming Home* retreat.

### *The Setting:*

We will meet online for two hours on Saturdays and Sundays over four weekends, mid-April to mid-May (see schedule below). Recordings of each session will be made available within a few hours in case you cannot attend the live event. These online sessions will be presented primarily on the Zoom Webinar platform, which is different from Zoom “Meeting” in that your video and audio will not be live. This helps provide a calm and focused atmosphere to our gathering. Pir Elias will be joined at various times by one or more “conversants”—senior teachers and friends of the Sufi Way—to add their perspectives and experience to our retreat.

Because everyone taking part in this retreat has a unique contribution to make to our mutual deepening, each Wednesday there will be a one-hour, small-group session held on the Zoom Meeting platform. This format gives the opportunity to discuss issues that are arising for us personally.

The retreat will also occur offline. In-between the first and last two weekends there will be **an open weekend** with no online sessions. During that open weekend (May 1–2) you will be encouraged to set aside time to engage in contemplative exercises that can deepen your experience.

Also offline, you will have the opportunity to engage in a daily practice of about 20 minutes a day during the month of the retreat—several practices will be suggested which you can choose from, or you can carry on with your own practice if you have one. You will also receive contemplative readings during the month, suggested writing practices, and a bibliography of books that may be helpful.

All of this may seem like a lot to fit into your daily life from mid-April to mid-May. At best you'll be able to treat this as a month-long retreat focused on one of the most important times in your life. However, that may not be possible, and you're welcome to find your own level of engagement with what is offered here—there are no tests! We ask only that you bring your sincere presence to the sessions you attend and to this momentous topic that we will explore together.

### ***The Schedule:***

The weekend sessions will start at 9am Pacific, 10am Mountain, 11am Central, 12pm Eastern, 5pm UK, 6pm CET. Recordings of the sessions will be available in case you miss one. The Wednesday small group sessions will be divided into US and European participants so that each group can determine a time most suitable to their location.

**Saturday, April 17:** 2-hour online session

**Sunday, April 18:** 2-hour online session

**Weds., April 21:** Small group meeting

**Saturday, April 24:** 2-hour online session

**Sunday, April 25:** 2-hour online session

**Weds., April 28:** Small group meeting

**Saturday, May 1:** Offline exercises

**Sunday, May 2:** Offline exercises

**Weds., May 5:** Small group meeting

**Saturday, May 8:** 2-hour online session

**Sunday, May 9:** 2-hour online session

**Weds., May 12:** Small group meeting

**Saturday, May 15:** 2-hour online session

**Sunday, May 16:** 2-hour online session

### ***Retreat Fee and Registration:***

The fee for the Coming Home Retreat is €220 / £200 / \$250.

A deposit of €40 / £40 / \$50 is required to register. Full payment is due by April 14.

**Cancellations:** If you have to cancel, please let us know as soon as possible since we will be arranging the small groups and we hope to have seven people in each group. If you cancel and have already paid the fee, you will be refunded the fee minus your deposit.

**Scholarships and Paying through Bank Transfer:** A scholarship fund has been established through the generous donations of past students. It is our hope that no one will be prevented from attending this retreat for financial reasons. To apply for a partial scholarship, or to acquire information for paying via Bank Transfer, please write to [openpath@sufiway.org](mailto:openpath@sufiway.org). If you are applying for a scholarship, please describe your financial circumstances and the amount you feel able to pay. And if you can contribute to the scholarship fund, we would be most grateful.

**To register:** There are three separate portals for registering, one for each currency: Euros, Pounds Sterling, and US Dollars.

For **Euros:** <https://sufiway.regfox.com/coming-home-eu>

For **Pounds:** <https://sufiway.regfox.com/coming-home-uk>

For **Dollars:** <https://sufiway.regfox.com/coming-home-us>