

with Pir Elias Amidon and Friends

SPRING 2021

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

2-hour webinar sessions each Saturday and Sunday
over 4 weekends, April 17–May 16, 2021

In the **Being Mortal** retreat held in October 2020, we explored the territory of aging and its border with death, and how we might find steadiness and ease as we travel through it. In this **Coming Home** retreat we will turn more specifically to *how we may awaken to the sacred gifts* that our aging years and dying time offer us.

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 the ordeal 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 for what they are and then to step beyond them, opening to the unknown. When we do this, when we manage to open ourselves this profoundly, we are touched by the grace at the heart of reality, our Home.

What is this grace? It comes to us in many forms: love most of all, and gratitude, wonder, lightheartedness, a natural, spontaneous faithfulness, acceptance, connectedness, presence, peace, 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.

While it is not necessary to have participated in the 2020 **Being Mortal** retreat, watching the video recordings of that retreat can be a helpful preparation for this further journey. The **Being Mortal** videos will be available for all registrants of the **Coming Home** retreat.

The Setting of the Coming Home Retreat

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, once a week 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 asked 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 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.

The Schedule

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:

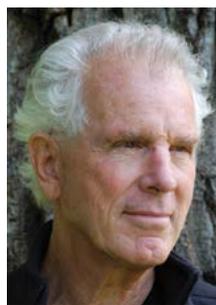
A scholarship fund has been established through the generous donations of past students. It is our hope that no one will be prevented from attending this retreat for financial reasons. To apply for a partial scholarship, or to acquire information for paying via Bank Transfer, please write to openpath@sufiway.org. 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>



Pir Elias Amidon is the spiritual director (Pir) of the Sufi Way (www.sufiway.org), a contemporary and non-sectarian inner school in the lineage of Sufi Inayat Khan. Pir Elias teaches and holds retreats on nondual spirituality and Sufism throughout Europe and the United States, and is known for his direct and experiential approach to spiritual realization. For over 20 years Elias led vision quests with his wife, Elizabeth Roberts, in the deserts of Utah, Spain, and the forests of northern Thailand—a rite-of-passage that embraces the mysteries of our mortality. He also worked for many years in the field of peace and environmental activism in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, and with indigenous tribes on land-rights issues. He is the author of *The Open Path: Recognizing Nondual Awareness*; *Free Medicine: Meditations on Nondual Awakening*; *Munajat: Forty Prayers*; and the forthcoming *The Book of Flashes*. He is co-editor with Elizabeth of the three anthologies *Earth Prayers*, *Life Prayers*, and *Prayers for a Thousand Years*.