



**2020 / 2021 EURO LIFE Program
Living and Integrating Full Embodiment
with Robert Gonzales, Ph.D**

Curriculum Overview

I have found that to fully live with authenticity and compassion requires a conscious, embodied practice. As my personal exploration of NVC and spirituality deepened over the years, what has emerged for me are practices and processes that give me practical pathways to living in the fullness of my deepest authenticity — what I call **Living Compassion**. For me, the essence of Living Compassion lies in a spiritual practice that has two distinct and fundamental components: 1. Cultivating the beauty of my deepest essential self and, 2. Restoring myself to wholeness and compassion by transforming life experience when I am disconnected -- ***Living in Passion and Restoring our Wholeness through Compassion***.

The LIFE Program is a two-year, intensive program focused on the two-fold path of ***Living in Passion and Restoring our Wholeness through Compassion***. Each of the four retreats will introduce practices and processes that serve this integration and development. The program will follow a developmental sequence going from inner work to application in relationship and community.

Living in Passion: Practices to Deepen Awareness of the Beauty Inherent in our Needs

There is a basic life current or impulse resonating in and through us as a yearning of the heart. This current and yearning manifests as human needs. Needs are the Life Force; Life moving in and through us seeking fulfillment, aliveness, and well-being.

There is a vibrant quality of wholeness in each need. Cultivating a deep and intimate familiarity with this wholeness is an essential practice that supports us in being able to live our lives fully. I found that when we develop this awareness, we transform our relationship to our needs and by doing so, we transform our relationship to Life Force, to our very being.

The LIFE retreats will include:

- Daily times for silent integration, dyad inquiry process and small groups.
- Dialogues centered in beauty and living energy of our needs, values, longings.

Restoring our Wholeness through Compassion

The work of self-compassion requires that whatever we are feeling inside, whatever previously we wanted to run from, that we tried to fix and get over — we begin to approach in a different way. We begin to approach it with the recognition that that which is inside of us is not the enemy, is not foreign or not alien to us. We can start to feel it beyond anything we can label and we start to feel life energy, a life current that runs through the experience. When we allow rather than resist what is inside us, it begins to soften and we feel it as a fragility or vulnerability. This experience is a deeply felt experience, not something we can intellectually understand. The understanding comes from a deeper place. When we can approach the life in us with this kind of openness and spacious allowing, then there is an unfolding of life in us in ways that bring healing and transformation.

The LIFE retreats will include practices on:

- Self Compassion (unconditional acceptance of inner experiencing)
- Transforming the Pain of Unmet Needs to the Beauty of Needs
- The Anatomy of Protective Structures: Understanding the origins of separation, resistance, and core beliefs.
- Choosing and Staying in Life-serving Consciousness: The Illusion of Conflicting Needs

Living our Being in Relationship: Mutuality

Living Compassion helps me bring my inner world into the relational world. The specificity of language that the processes teach can be a conduit for the full flowing of life energy rather than an obstruction to it. I want to connect to life as it flows through me so that I can connect to life as it flows through you. It is the same life.

The LIFE Retreats will offer the following practices and processes for living in community with trust and compassion:

- Preparation for Authentic Dialogue
- Mutuality and Dialogue from Beauty and Fullness
- Empathy Practice from Beauty and Fullness
- Self-Healing Dialogues, a new approach
- Embodied Spirituality in Living Compassion: developing a spiritual life practice
- Development of a Compassionate Community

During Each Retreat:

There will be opening meditations, talks, demonstrations working with participants, work in pairs, in small groups and in the whole group, time for sharing, questions and answers, daily meditations in various forms and body movement time. Typically a variety of other contributions from participants are usually offered as optional activities in the evenings, as well.

In Between Retreats:

Each year, there will be 2 group live video-conferences on the Zoom platform to support the integration and practices of the LIFE Program.

Community Building and Cohesion:

An important feature of the LIFE Program is community. Sharing the vision and intention with a dedicated group of people deepens and accelerates the process of integration. Past LIFE groups have shared experiences of deep trust, openness and connection rarely experienced with other groups. The shared group intention seems to activate deeper potentials in participants and contribute to an intimacy and connection that I have found truly moving and inspiring.

- Robert Gonzales