Soul Injury: A New Paradigm for Responding to Trauma
October 19 and 20, 2016
Agenda & Learning Objectives

Day 1:

1.5 Hours: **Peace at Last** Peace at Last: Stories of Hope and Healing
Deborah shares personal stories about how 10,000 dying veterans fundamentally changed her over her 30-year VA career. Soul Injury and “Warrior Wisdom” attained from facing the aftermath of war will be highlighted from her book, *Peace at Last: Stories of Hope and Healing for Veterans and Their Families*. Forgiveness issues that sometimes surface as veterans prepare themselves to “Meet their Maker” will also be explored. Prepare yourselves for an eye-opening experience that awakens you to the aftermath of war and the potential for healing.

Break

1.5 Hours: **Soul Injury: Liberating Unmourned Loss**
The mental and emotional injuries that accompany trauma are readily identified. Less recognized are the *insidious* wounds that occur with trauma and, indeed, with all of us whenever we lose a sense of our own goodness/inner beauty or we think we are inadequate or defective. Whether traumatic or insidious, these “soul injuries” cut us off from the energy of our deepest self, robbing us of the essence of our being. Connecting with the part of self generating the emotional pain, paradoxically, restores wholeness. Thus, soul restoration includes learning how to re-own and re-home scattered pieces of self by cultivating *personal* intimacy with the part of self carrying our emotional pain. Learn how the heart can be disarmed through love, forgiveness, and self-compassion, starting a process that “restoreths the soul.”

Lunch

1.5 Hours: **Liberating Unmourned Loss**
“Those Who Grieve Well, Heal Well.” This famous saying seems oxymoronic. In a grief-fearing American culture, loss is perceived as failure and grieving is viewed as destructive. Just the opposite is true: grief is creative. Grieving helps us let go of what was so we can open up to what is. Grief is the natural, normal expression of loss; UNMOURNED loss is the destructive culprit. When we box up our emotional pain, our vitality, personhood, and passion get boxed up as well. Learning how to develop a different relationship with the part of self carrying our emotional pain is the secret for living a passion-filled life. Expand your viewpoint about self-compassion, personal intimacy, normal grief vs. complicated grief, grief vs. depression vs. chronic sorrow, therapeutic value of rituals, and the unique loss experience of Veterans and their families.

Break

1.5 Hours: **Caregiving: Self-Compassion, Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder**
Caregiving, whether personal or professional, takes a toll! Caregivers encounter emotional pain on a regular basis. Understandably, we often disconnect from the pain. By disconnecting from the part of self carrying the pain, we unwittingly contribute to the loss of energy, emptiness, and compassion fatigue that might ensue. This session provides a restorative experience of self by re-owning and re-homing parts of self that may still be carrying unmourned grief. It is 3-dimensional providing education for the mind, safety for the heart, and courage to develop a new relationship with weariness in the soul.
Day 2:

1.5 Hours: **Soul injury & PTSD**
Research now shows that PTSD is in the head – the traumatized brain is remarkably different than it was prior to the trauma. Attention, perception, and memory are radically altered in the fear-based brain. Recovery measures that focus on re-setting the emotional brain to respond appropriately to danger and to recover its capacity to experience safety and relaxation have been found to be the most effective. Resetting the brain includes developing self-compassion, awakening parts of the body where memories are stored, transforming the brain by installing new “software,” and cultivating honesty, courage, and humility to do the work of recovery. There is also a pervasive, unaddressed, unassessed problem that needs attention: soul injury. Soul Injury includes a spectrum of wounds that range from traumatic to insidious characterized by a shrinking sense of inner goodness and beauty, or worse, a haunting sense of feeling defective or worthless. Learn the contrasts and mutual enhancements between PTSD and Soul Injury.

Break

1.5 Hours **The Hero Within: Restoring Wholeness**
Do you find yourself in the same situations over and over without effective tools to change? Are you curious about how you can move from sole to soul? Would you like to recover the energy of pieces of self you may have knowingly or unknowingly scattered from: self-disregard, heartache, neglect, abuse, chronic illness, trauma, death, or war so you can inhabit yourself more completely? Deborah invites us to penetrate defensive, intimidating inner terrain that often prevents us from encountering our loving, grace-filled, compassionate self that hides its vulnerability in our depths. We can achieve what poet Derek Walcott so eloquently describes: “The time will come when, with elation, you will greet yourself arriving at your own door, in your own mirror, and each will smile at the others’ welcome.”

Lunch

1.5 Hours **Forgiveness: Re-Vitalizing the Wounded Soul**
If peace on earth begins with me, then how do I make peace with everyone and everything causing me unrest? Have you ever considered that your anger could be a gift, guiding you into the forgiveness process? Learn essential steps to facilitate the forgiveness process, common mistakes that are made that interfere with forgiveness, false forgiveness, enabling, as well as the relationship between irrational guilt and helplessness. Tools to promote healing will be addressed and forgiveness exercises provided, including self-reflection, therapeutic letter writing, and integrative rituals.

Break

1.5 Hours **Soul Restoration**
This experiential session is a 3-dimensional program that provides education for the mind, safety for the heart, and courage to develop a new relationship with pain or weariness in the soul. Recover the energy of pieces of self you may have knowingly or unknowingly scattered through: self-disregard, heartache, neglect, abuse, chronic illness, trauma, death, or war.
Learning Objectives

Day 1

- Contrast ‘normal’ grief, ‘complicated’ grief, chronic sorrow and depression.
- Verbalize at least 3 ways to provide support with people experiencing loss and change
- Define soul injury, its characteristics and populations at risk
- Contrast the treatment between soul injury and PTSD
- Identify at least 6 ways that traumatized people and their families can respond to the pain of soul injury.
- Identify the fundamental role of rituals in facilitating grief recovery.
- Distinguish between martyrdom, heroism, codependency, and being the ‘perfect caregiver’.

Day 2

- Verbalize the relevance to PTSD of the brain circuitry –especially the amygdala, as well as the ‘Me’ brain.
- Contrast pre-trauma brain behaviors with post-trauma brain behaviors
- Define forgiveness, its value and the effects of non-forgiveness
- Identify tools that facilitate forgiveness.