

Stories for Life:

DEEP LISTENING SKILLS FOR
EMBRACING CULTURAL DIVERSITY



A FULLY FUNDED RESIDENTIAL TRAINING COURSE

6TH – 15TH DECEMBER 2022



Co-funded by the
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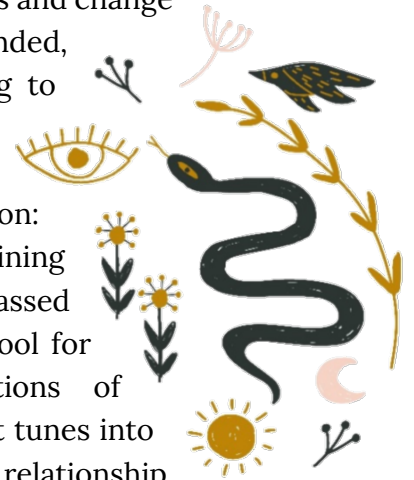
ASHA CENTRE
INSPIRATION • CONNECTION • PURPOSE

"We are all storytellers. We all live in a network of stories. There isn't a stronger connection between people than storytelling."

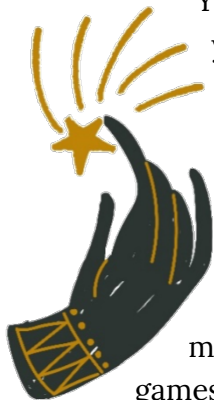
-Jimmy Neil Smith, founder of the School of Storytelling, USA

We are looking for youth workers, community leaders, educators and change makers from across the UK and Europe to participate in a fully funded, 10-day residential training course on how to use storytelling to deepen our engagement with cultural diversity.

The course takes as its focus the hidden half of communication: listening. Folktale and myth ask us to tune in with a deeper ear, mining the ancient wisdom and symbolic teachings that have been passed down for generations. This course explores storytelling as a tool for intercultural communication that can transcend limitations of nationhood or identity and broaden dialogue and acceptance. It tunes into the expansion a story's heartland can lead us to, sharpening our relationship with the human and the more than human world.



You are asked to bring a myth or folktale from your own heritage, or one that you identify with. We will share this diverse range of stories, learning to shape, deliver and apply their wisdom.



You will practice core communication skills, create projects and learn new tools through a balance of theory, practice and authentic presence. This course offers experiential learning, and through it we will share The ASHA Centre's educational framework, using non-formal educational methods that include presentations, artistic expression, group work and games. You will be given opportunities to lead and facilitate, with space to reflect on the methodologies in order to grow your own 'toolkit'. You will be asked to create dissemination projects in your home communities and to share the experience with your networks.

The work involves a strong element of personal reflection and welcomes you to bring your authentic self to the experience. This is a holistic course that works on deep listening rather than performance training or manual-based content. You don't have to be an articulate storyteller to reach an audience, this is about how to bring storytelling to your communities with presence and authenticity, while strengthening our capacity to allow, listen and receive each other fully.

Why storytelling?

Storytelling is a natural currency between humans and our old stories say a huge amount about where we come from and what we value - heroism, courage, humour, inspiration. Functioning as a kind of collective memory, engaging with our myths and folktales uncovers common stories, moral systems and shared heritage. They give us the chance to listen deeply to what matters and what lasts.



These stories have an immense value in a changing world, and making sure they are shared is a valuable way of engaging in and strengthening cultural exchange. And while we do it, we practice the art of storytelling which improves a whole range of important skills in public speaking, personal impact and leadership.

Who can take part?

We are looking for a group of people from across Europe and the UK to come together and share stories. We are hoping to attract a diverse range of languages, cultures, nationalities and perspectives so we actively welcome anyone with broad cultural heritage, living outside their culture or identifying as displaced. This work is ideally suited for those working (or intending to work) in the field of youth work, community leadership, intercultural communication, community building, education or activism.

We welcome all cultures, ethnic origins, races, skin colours, accents, cultural identities, histories, herstories, spiritual practices, religious affiliations, spiritual walks, gender identities, sexualities and life experiences.

We are committed to equal opportunity and inclusivity, and will readily discuss any access or special educational needs you might have.



We ask for:

- A genuine passion for participating in the course and for storytelling
- The willingness and capacity to bring a specially chosen folktale to the course
- A willingness to take part in sessions in the garden and local forest
- The capacity to bring appropriate clothing/footwear for the outdoors
- Good English-speaking skills
- People 18 years and over

What to expect

The training will run from 9:30am until 6pm each day, with two tea breaks, a lunch break and rest period. Each day offers reflection time, including discussion on working methodology and curated space for silent study. You will have the chance to offer activities over several mornings and evenings. Training is delivered by ASHA's training team and visiting experts, with work inside our studio, the surrounding gardens and forest.

Rooms are dormitory in style and furnished to a high standard, with three home-cooked meals plus snacks provided each day. You will be welcomed into the working community at ASHA, sharing meals and given opportunities to integrate and interact with staff and volunteers. You will be welcome to volunteer in our organic garden in your breaks.

Our courses tend to involve a certain amount of interpersonal work, outdoor activity and physical contact. If this might raise any challenges for you, please let us know in the application form, so that we can discuss how to support you best.

Day 10 is a travel day only and does not involve training content.

Travel reimbursement

ASHA reimburses 90% of your overall travel cost. We feel that a modest contribution from participants to the overall costs of a project helps to create a sense of investment and ownership. However, if you feel that you are a motivated participant who would be unable to come without greater travel support, please let us know in the application form, so that we can consider supporting your participation. Training, accommodation and meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) are all provided free of charge.

COVID-19 and how it affects your participation

COVID-19 is an ever-changing situation posing challenges to organisations and participants alike. We appreciate that in making your decision to attend a residential course at The ASHA Centre you will have assessed the risks based on your personal circumstances and health relating to the current pandemic.

ASHA staff, course facilitators and volunteers cannot take liability for participants contracting the virus. However, we are working hard to ensure our centre is as safe as is reasonably possible. ASHA's COVID-19 safety regulations and procedures have been developed based on the UK Government's guidance.

How to apply?

Please follow the link below and complete the application form:

<https://forms.gle/25rrvvZzrBWA5nGc9>

We (The ASHA Centre), or our partner organisation in North Macedonia (CET PLATFORMA SKOPJE), will be in touch with you shortly after the application deadline.

We look forward to receiving your application and can't wait to welcome you to ASHA.

