



Convergence Newsletter

Nr 65 — January 2023

Welcome to the first Drumbeat of 2023! This newsletter starts with info about the Waitangi weekend gathering on Banks Peninsula (all welcome!), followed by several people's reflections on the latest Convergence, a lovely poem by a convergee, and upcoming offerings from convergees. We hope you enjoy it and look forward to seeing you at Waitangi weekend.

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Convergence notices and newsletter

Send notices you would like to have included to info@convergence.net.nz

To receive the newsletters ask info@convergence.net.nz for it.

This newsletter comes out roughly 4 times a year. Please send contributions to info@convergence.net.nz. Upcoming deadlines will be announced by email prior to newsletter.

Gathering near Akaroa on Waitangi weekend

3-6 February 2023

You're invited to a Convergence style gathering at David Guthrey's family holiday home right by the sea in Lushingtons Bay, Takamatua, near Akaroa. This'll be a great chance to keep the Convergence energy going, and catch up with convergees in a beautiful peaceful place.

For the safety of all, everyone please do a covid test before you come.

Details

When? Friday 3 to Monday 6 February 2023. OK to stay 2-7 Feb if arranged with David.

Where? 107 Lushingtons Bay Rd, one of three houses in the bay.

Food? Bring your breakfast, and food for shared lunches and dinners. 2 kitchens available.

Bring? Repellent, sun protection. Deck chair. Personal things + bedding.

Staying over? 5 bedrooms, 3 toilets and showers, room for campervans, and flat lawn for tents.

Activities

Swimming and boating! Walking, talking, connecting, sharing, eating, converging... Safe sandy beach for swimming. Deep sea caves to explore. Small yachts, kayaks, other watercraft available. Spectacular walking tracks to other bays.

More questions? Contact David Guthrey on 021 670 451. Please RSVP or phone before you go.

Getting there

<https://osm.org/go/uonvyujQ?m=>

Turn off to Takamatua Bay before Akaroa, then take Quail Crescent, then Kingfisher Road, then Kotare Lane, then Lushingtons Bay Road—total 2km from the main road to the end—a blue house on the right.

A 200m stretch on top of the cliff might not show as a road on the map, but there is a drivable shingle road (through a gate), then 500m down the private road.

— David Guthrey

Contributors

Thank you so much to the many who have contributed their writing this time. The newsletter is never possible without you! Please don't stop. If you have not yet written about your experiences at Convergence, musings or thoughts about Convergence, or an event you're running and feel passionate about, please send it (address on front page). We have always published everything we've been sent, except for events that have been over before we could get a newsletter finished.

Convergence 2022/23—The love is palpable...

Juliana had been there less than a day and it was there, people bringing themselves in, saying hello, a warm welcome and a noticeable shift in pace. Convergence for me is a place of diversity and unity. Convergence works for me because it embodies generosity, co-emergence and trust. The highlights this year include:

The raising of the marquee as part of the welcome; the glorious sun bathed leisurely mornings of connection and ease; the stimulating workshops and circles that rise out of the ground of collective inquiry; the thoughts and bright feelings aroused around death and dying consciously; days bookended by sweat and connection (the sauna) and river; and finally the two dances, one to the courageous men who showed up and secondly to the inquiry that explored chaos, order and the systems of emergence that birth new cultures of wholesomeness, it was a highlight to be a part of it.

Ju and I made new friends, went deeper with older friends, connected with nature. We left almost tearful, full and overflowing. Thank you to the ones who made it possible by giving their time to organise things behind the scenes. For me this is a wonderful exploration into human flourishing, that good things happen when experience, innocence, honesty and generosity come together with nature.

— Jamie

Serendipidising

At every Convergence it always takes me a few days to get into the flow of what's actually going on—for me, and how I relate with everyone there and the event itself. At this event it took me about 3 days.

I had spent that morning sitting in the Heart Sharing circle, over the river, where deep sharing had been taking place. I left and was wending my slow way back to our caravan when I serendipitously met Frank striding down the hill from the top field. I asked him what he was doing and he replied: “Serendipidising!”

I instantly realised that this word perfectly described a state into which I have been getting for over maybe 30 years, at events such as Convergence and also “out there”, when I have put aside my practical, logical mind and surrendered to the “flow of the moment and the place. On checking with Frank I discovered that he, also, was experiencing something similar—but no doubt in his own way.

That morning, in the circle, I had stated that I had unresolved issues with 3 people at Convergence which I needed/wanted to resolve. At 4 o'clock I went to the men's circle and, no sooner had I sat down than No. 1 of the 3 sat down right next to me and within minutes, with facilitation, we had resolved our differences.

Next morning, just as some of us were assembling in the circle, No.2 came in, still wearing their night attire, saying “I don't know why I'm here but I know I have to be”, or words to that effect. Straight away, the two of us moved into a process of reconciliation which was deeply satisfying to both of us. That person was never in the circle at any other time during the event.

Later I was asked to support a person to resolve an issue with another person and, whilst that was going on, a succession of people wandered past with whom I had wonderful connections. (The

person I was theoretically supporting was doing quite OK without me being involved.) And then along came No. 3. I greeted that person with an honouring of whom he is. We had a beautiful, heart-filled connection with much stuff being discussed.

I had a scientific background, my siblings were also both scientists but my father was a philosopher and a minister of religion of a church which involved “mystical” stuff. Thus I find myself in two worlds. I love my logical practical self, but I also love that part of me that knows that “magic” can happen—way beyond what is explainable by the devotees of that great religion, “scepticism”, with their words “coincidence” and “statistics”.

In all those 3 re-conciliations the common factor that I observed was the dropping of our facades, personas, shields, whatever you want to call them, so that Love was allowed to shine through for those (sometimes brief) moments of unguardedness. For me it’s all about allowing myself to drop into the flow of “what is”. That is where I find pure, unconditional love and community with everyone and everything. In that space there is no room, or requirement, for rules, management, or control, everything just IS. My personal way of doing that at Convergence is to open myself up every morning in the safest place I know across the stream, so that I can wander through the rest of the day allowing serendipity and love to happen as it will.

Personally I have been to many really unorganised gatherings which had heaps of love and “magic” happening. Indeed I believe that moving through disorganisation and chaos are necessary components of achieving personal and group community. Retreating back using control and “Order! Order!” are shields put up by societies, groups and individuals as protection against their fear of the unknown, which, for them, is uncontrollable and dangerous and must be stamped out, allowing a pretend community to continue. I want Convergence to be a real community, not a pretend one. How about you?

So—thank you Frank, for the serendipitous meeting where you gave me a new word to describe part of Who I Am!

— River

How would you like your life to end?

At this year’s Convergence, about 50 lovely humans attended a workshop co-facilitated by Kerry Sunderland and Frank Kueppers called “How would you like your life to end?”. It was a renegade Death Café of sorts, in that we had a set topic and a Q&A with Frank, who recently gained certification as an assisted-dying physician.

Kerry promised to share links to the resources mentioned. First up is her podcast, Deathwalker’s Guide to Life, and here’s a link to the episode that featured her kōrero with Frank about practitioner-assisted dying: <https://deathwalkersguidetolife.com/conversations-with-patients-about-dying>

In addition, there are another 20 episodes available, covering topics from living with a brain tumour through to singing to those who are dying, and everything in between.

Kerry also mentioned Zenith Virago’s End of Life and After Death Care Plan template. You can request a copy of this at <https://deathwalkersguidetolife.com/contact>

Standing on the mountain top

This is a poem from the cabaret—many thanks to its creator for sharing it here.

Standing on the mountain top
gullies surging seawards
complementary, harmonious silhouettes
that pull you out, stretched
as a wet sweater
drying on the line
basking in the fires golden glory

Yet
minuscule
vulnerable
in the earths vastness

Are you
alive?

Surging up, in the delicate moments
textured stillness
enveloping your being
into
the soft caress
of the senses
with an added element

Giving

— Briar

✦ ✦ ✦

Impressions of the Last Convergence

My first impression is that this was a small Convergence at under 100 people. This made it an intimate gathering, where everyone met everyone else and there were no strangers.

It was the intention of the pre-Convergence group to move the event back towards its roots. It has always been a co-created festival, but this was enhanced this year. People were expected to participate in creating the food and, with fewer people in attendance, all hands were needed to create and run the event. It felt like there was a greater sense of cohesion and community this year.

This was perhaps helped by the absence of many of the more outspoken personalities who chose to be elsewhere this time. The quieter souls were able to shine a little more brightly, and people who had perhaps not had the opportunity before were able to show their talents. While personal crises still happened, there seemed to be a gentler process of resolution or letting go.

There was also perhaps an unspoken understanding that with fewer people some things just might not happen and that for the event this was an opportunity for a new start and to try some different things. Nobody put energy into a morning meeting—so there was no morning meeting and the event still functioned. Announcements happened pre lunch and dinner, to the disappointment of those who wanted the food hot, but this was a big incentive for speakers not to ramble on. The metal tent and fire tent never got erected and the fire baths stayed in storage. And while the pump failed on the water supply, enough water to keep going somehow kept getting supplied (The Miracle of Convergence!).

Yet some traditions were still observed. The weather provided some rain, but mostly sunshine. A New Year ceremony and dance were had, and the music wasn't to everyone's taste. A series of delightful and interesting acts made up cabaret night, which finished before midnight. Days were warm but nights were cold, some say the coldest they can remember. A mug of mine died at the last Convergence and someone ran over the replacement at this one. It seems that I will always be a mug down. Nobody got flooded out, the sandflies were okay and the sauna was impressive—even more impressive to be the only one in it while Convergence is running—and That Bug didn't run through us all.

Personal highlights this year for me were working in the kitchen and witnessing how well the new set-up worked, the sauna (thank you, thank you to all those who made it so brilliant), our revised Sacred Touch—now Bliss Night—which again with more co-creation was so easy and fun to run, the New Year Ceremony (can the walk down to the river get any better, and the brazier), the grounding space of the men's circle, and the teens—this year they really were amazing. Aunty SCU (Serious Crash Unit) from the cabaret was a stand out. I will never pass “Riverside”, “GreyPower”, “Frauburg” or “Lower Frauburg” without a chuckle, nor can I stop assessing any wwoofers for their “beautiful minds”.

Speaking of the sharing circles, next year I will be asking the men's and women's circles to make some kind of early public statement about the inclusion of differently gendered people. Sorry, but “This is how we do things at (some other) event, so you can't come”, just isn't good enough for Convergence. The circles are new each year, and the circles at Convergence decide.

Some things could always have gone better. In my case there was an erection failure of my tent. Fortunately the rooms at Leigh Lodge were now available, so it was a different camping experience.

The kind you get when you don't actually camp. Mind you, not minding if it rained in the night was a bonus.

My main impression is that the spirit of Convergence is alive and kicking, and evolving. People still value what the event has to offer and are willing and keen to make it happen. Here's to the next one.

Much love,

— M

Post-Convergence Picnic

Gatherings after Convergence have a long tradition, and this year we decided at short notice to keep the tradition going. Over 20 people gathered in the beautiful Mona Vale gardens at the lily pond for a picnic on a hot sunny day.

It was lovely to reminisce with those who had been to this Convergence and to catch up with those who hadn't, or might be at the next one. Everyone agreed that we should gather again later this summer. It's great to see the Convergence community thriving.

Lost & Found

Every year during pack-up the things that are left behind keep piling up. This year we had suggested that there may be nobody looking after these items until their owner is found, and it seems to have had a positive influence on responsibility for everyone's belongings.

The number of owner-less items was much smaller, reducing the burden on those still at Journey's End to transport these items off site. A very few things with names on them were returned to their owners, and some were taken away by whoever had a use for them at the end of pack-up. People generally liked the idea of the remainder being taken to op-shops.

Thank you very much everyone!

Putting your name on things you care about gives you some chance of getting them back after Convergence. Also, named items are unlikely to be moved during pack-up if you put them down somewhere.

+ + +

Earthcare Permaculture Design

10-28 February 2023, Tui Community, Golden Bay

Earthcare's annual residential PDC will run in February at Tui Community.

Main tutors of this course will be Robina McCurdy and Guenther Andraschko, who bring extensive practical and educational experience to this course.

The course covers the standard 2-week international Permaculture Design Certificate curriculum, over an extended 18-day period, taught in an integrated hands-on way, culminating in a comprehensive land-use design project. Upon completion, a Permaculture Design Certificate will be issued by The Institute of Earthcare Education Aotearoa.



Find out more:

<https://earthcare-education.org/earthcare-education/pdc/>

Communicate 4 Connection

Sat 18 & Sun 19 February 9:30-5 pm, Ilam, Ōtautahi/Christchurch

This interactive weekend adds life to your conversations and relationships (including the relationship you have with yourself) using the foundational awareness and tools of non-violent communication (NVC).

Convergees Jim Lovell-Smith and Valerie Wycoff, Certified Trainers of NVC, lead the course.



We hope you'll jump in to the February weekend (we won't be offering it again in Canterbury until September or later). Early registration means we can anticipate and plan for your arrival, and the course goes ahead. We offer a sliding payment scale (\$200 to \$400) depending on your free will and circumstances. Beginners and deepening learners are all welcome. Be in touch if you have any questions.

Valerie 021 295 3979

Full details

<https://www.bodyvoicealive.nz/communication/communicate-with-compassion-workshops/>

The Centre for the Great Turning

Jaime and Juliana have founded a charitable trust called the Centre for the Great Turning. The aspiration is to support the work of helping children and adults cross threshold of life stages with support and insight. There is more information here, www.centreforthegreatturning.org. In the spirit of supporting community to flourish we have two events this year that we would like to share.

moMENTum Gathering: A Five Day Journey to Empower Men

29 March - 3 April 2023, Tui Events Park, Golden Bay

A journey for men young and old who hunger to free themselves from limiting beliefs and behaviours. This is for men who want to feel more empowered and able to stand up for what matters, it is about showing up for ourselves, our family, friends and society.

The five days will:

- Inspire you to become more connected with your body and feelings.
- Build understanding of masculine and feminine energies and how they play out in our relationships.
- Explore wounds around toxic masculinity from society, parenting and male sexuality.
- Deepen our connection with brothers, ancestors and the land.
- Learning to include and move our bodies and have fun together.

Facilitators Jamie Howell, Victor Santos, Gary Smith.

www.centreforthegreatturning.org

Touching the Earth

19-25 June 2023 solstice retreat, Wangapeka Study & Retreat Centre

All the mytho-poets say the same thing—we must leave the village, enter the forest and return with the gift. Touching the Earth is a guided journey inspired by the work of Bill Plotkin and Joanna Macy. It is a nature-based journey of soul; a retreat to embody your true belonging, confidence, resilience and creativity. It will lead you ever closer to a conversation with the living earth.

We will explore together through Open Floor movement inquiries, non-dual meditations, guided nature reflections and dreamwork. We will aspire to bring together our bodies, hearts and minds with instincts for wisdom in service to the Great Turning away from an Industrial Growth society towards a Life Sustaining one.

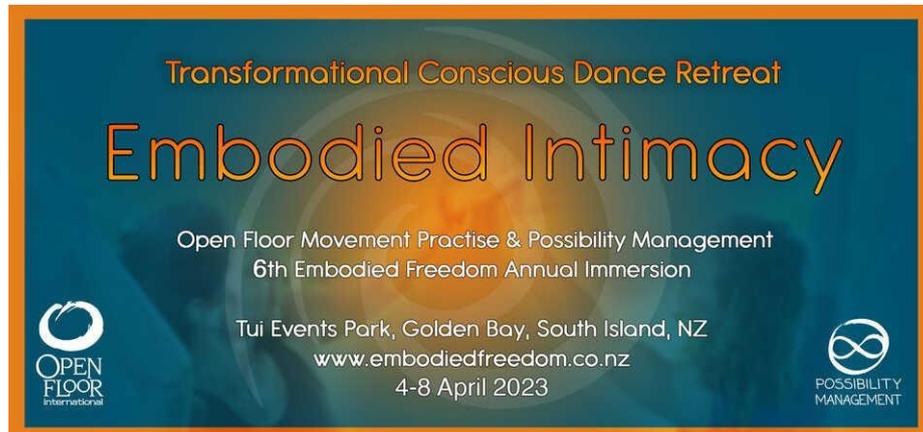
Facilitators Jaime Howell, Rene Aish & Juliette McConachy.



Embodied Intimacy

4-8 April 2023 (new date!), Tui Events Park, Golden Bay

In a world that is busy & loud many of us can't hear the deeper whisper inside of our authentic self. In this 5 day deep dive journey you will enliven your skill of relating & negotiating; be supported to explore & transform how you express your feelings & arrive in the moment in all your bodies, the emotional, physical, mental & energetic.



Tuesday, 4 April 4 PM - Saturday, 8 April 2023 5 PM, additional day for integration till 9 April available. (Pick-up from Nelson airport by request.)

Super Early Bird Price: until 31 January – \$690, Early Bird: Until 1 March 2023 – \$750, Full: \$810.

Celebrating the opening of stage 1 of “The Pirate House”

Sybill, Jay and the team have opened and are beginning to use the new kitchen space and training space, and the project continues with a fireplace planned for winter as well as another shower and more accommodation being created.

Support us: Be part of our project to create a beautiful venue for our wider community to evolve and connect. Please share and stay in touch with our project! Our intention is for this to be an asset and space for you and us to share.

Come and visit! We are open to renting out rooms, hosting your events/retreats and taking you on tours of Tui community.

Fundraising page and info about the finishing of this “Sanctuary in Wainui Bay” (The Pirate House)

<https://www.embodiedfreedom.co.nz/the-pirate-house-fundraiser>

