



17 March 2020

## **Important WellSpring Centre information regarding the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)**

### **We're closing but staying connected**

As you are well aware, the development of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is evolving rapidly, and the impact is being felt in all parts of our lives. This Australian and Global health emergency has required WellSpring to respond to the latest health advice.

The Board authorised the Executive Committee (Liz Johnson, Chair; Ben Norman, Treasurer; and Ann Lock, Director) last week to respond as required to the health emergency to ensure the safety of our staff, students, volunteers and community.

On Monday 16 March 2020, the Victorian Government declared a state of emergency in Victoria over COVID-19. On this declaration, the Executive Committee met yesterday and considered a range of issues and the assessment to ensure a social distance of 1.5 metres. A decision was made to take a precautionary approach until **13 April 2020** to reduce the risk of spread of the coronavirus. Our plans will be continuously reviewed and updated as further information about coronavirus emerges. It may be necessary to extend the closure of WellSpring beyond 13 April 2020. Monique has created a page on the WellSpring website to help us stay in touch. Details are at **[www.wellspringcentre.org.au/coronavirus](http://www.wellspringcentre.org.au/coronavirus)**

We know these are unsettling times and we will explore some creative ways for the WellSpring community to stay connected as much as possible. As we move through these days and weeks, let's continue to care for each other, our families, friends, communities and the earth.

The following measures will be implemented from Wednesday 18 March 2020:

- **WellSpring Centre facilities and offices** (10 Y Street Ashburton) will close from Wednesday 18 March 2020.
- **WellSpring Centre staff** will work from home from Wednesday 18 March 2020; these plans are being discussed with our staff and implementation is underway.
- **University of Divinity** education offerings: The units WellSpring offers through Whitley College are under the directive of the University of Divinity and we need to comply with

their instructions. We will continue to monitor these instructions closely and keep in touch with our students.

- The Art of Spiritual Direction Intensive will continue this week with significant modifications. We will implement measures to ensure social distancing, and reduce the Intensive to one day, **Saturday 21 March 2020**. Further details will be discussed directly with our students as soon as possible.
- Australian Spirituality will be provided online. Further details will be discussed directly with the students as soon as possible.
  
- **WellSpring Spiritual Directors** are asked to cease seeing pilgrims face-to-face from Wednesday 18 March 2020. This requirement covers spiritual direction in any location, not just at WellSpring. To maintain spiritual direction with your pilgrims during this uncertain time, we encourage you to use telephone and/or video conferencing (such as Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, WeChat, FaceTime etc.) and will assist you as much as possible to make the transition. More information will be provided for spiritual directors in a separate email.
  
- **Building Bridges 2020** program commencement with our partner schools will be postponed. We are currently exploring contingency plans.
  
- **All other WellSpring Centre events and activities** will be suspended from Wednesday 18 March 2020. We will contact those who have booked and paid for events during this period to offer a refund or credit for a later event.
  
- You are very welcome to contact me via email at [ann.lock@wellspringcentre.org.au](mailto:ann.lock@wellspringcentre.org.au) or mobile 0410 556 436 if you have any questions or will experience financial hardship because of the measures above.

With blessings for peace and health for each person,



Ann Lock  
On behalf of the WellSpring Board