



## *STARWALKERS*

### How do we do what we do?

*Starwalkers offers transformation.*

*Starwalkers program does everything in our power—your power and ours-- to help change you and change society.*

*That's pretty ambitious.*

*How does transformation happen?*

#### **Change is deep and organic**

The change that takes place is atomic, that is, it happens on the level of protons, neutrons, and electrons whizzing around in an atom, or the stars whirling around in space. Or you could say, change is cellular. Or you could say that change is organic.

These physical and biological metaphors capture best the way that transformation happens through Starwalkers. Transformation takes place deeply, from the inside out, in the way that



two or more atoms join to become a molecule, in the way that amino acids combine to form a protein. Participants start by looking deep inside. We examine and reflect on who we are and who we have been, our values and our actions, our beliefs, our hopes, our fears, our relationships with others, our physical self, our spiritual self.

Activities help us look inside—dreamwork, creative expression, time in the natural world Building a life with other community members helps us look inside.

The role that Starwalkers' educators and other community members play is not directive. Our role is not to impose any direction or path or identity on a participant, or to program a member in a cult-like fashion. Our goal is quite the opposite. It is to draw out each member, in the original sense of the word "to educate." We work together by asking each other questions, by talking with other, by posing challenges at critical moments, and by sustaining each other in a loving community.

The process of reflection is following by a process of imagining possibilities. So much is possible in the world, and it is sad to see when people just "make do" with a life in which they are miserable. Starwalkers uses similar activities to imagine these possibilities—dreamwork, creative expression, time in the natural world, and making a life in a community. Asking questions, talking with each other, challenging each other when we need to be challenged.



The next step of the program is manifestation—bringing what we imagine into practical reality, into practice. Added to the discussion sessions are brainstorming strategies to make dreams become a reality, to secure resources to bring the possibilities to life, outline steps to achieve one's goals, make connections with others who have similar goals, to face and resolve problems and roadblocks that arise. The community and educators continue to offer support throughout this process.

## **Metamorphosis**

Transformation through Starwalkers has some resemblance to the metamorphosis of rock. When exposed to intense pressure or heat, rock can recrystallize. Chemical components can recombine.



The intensity, the “heat,” of Starwalkers is the focus and attention that is required. Participants can not pretend or deny or look away from what they see inside. Participants pay attention to every action, even the smallest, such as peeling a carrot or washing their face. Acts are meditative, conscious and thoughtful.

The pressure is the challenge to be conscious and authentic, to not play games or manipulate or fool ourselves and others.

One significant difference in the analogy is the degree of choice that participants have. Nothing *happens to* participants. Participants are creators of themselves and their lives with others in the world.

### **A mysterious human process**

Finally, the process of transformation that Starwalkers offers is a human process—deeply complex, mysterious, neurologically entwined, biologically rich, long, in fact, never-ending, although the time that people participate in Starwalkers has a beginning and an end.

Starwalkers enables entry into realms of being, in the physical world, in the spiritual world, and the interior life of the soul, that have rarely been experienced in our lives. It is by being fully in the physical world that the spiritual world and world of the soul open. Our addictions, our distractions, our false selves leave, and what remains is the intensity of the moment and deep attention to every task, even the most mundane. Being fully present is eloquent, and reveals what is inside and around all things. We do not experience the apple or the bird in quite the same way. We step outside of ourselves and join other beings, other objects, other spaces in other times. When we die to the life that we have known—our hurried, superficial, petty, acquisitive, fearful life—we come to life in the present that we never have imagined, or that we imagined, but never realized how we could make a reality.



How often have we walked outside and felt the wind, really felt it with all of our being and all of our senses? In that brief moment of being fully present, all of our cells have been alive, and the world is larger than that moment. The experience passes quickly, and we are thrown back to the small space we usually live in, the nagging worries about money, the noise at the intersection, our aching feet. Starwalkers opens us up to live each day with that life breathing on us and in us. In real terms, that means living authentically, wholly, lovingly, and acting responsibly so that what we do henceforth will change the rest of the world.

## A simple and basic process

The process sounds esoteric and inaccessible. But it is actually quite simple, though profound, and basic. Imagine us, sitting down to the table to eat. An ordinary event, but quite extraordinary, and unusual. We have prepared the meal together. We have paid attention when we cut the carrot, because slicing the carrot is quite sensuous, and how we slice the carrot will feel differently in our mouth. We know when the carrot is done by its subtle change in color and how easily the knife pierces it. We have felt the steam on our hand and in our face when we put the knife in the pot to test the carrot. When done, we drain the carrots and put them in the bowl, watching the steam rise up into the air.



It is the same with the people around the table. We have studied their faces and their gestures and responded to their moods and actions. We have looked and noticed, listened, really listened, and asked questions with love, or looked hard at what puzzles someone, or comforted them, or stuck around when there was an argument, even when afraid or feeling deeply frustrated, until a solution was found. We have looked deeply at and into ourselves in the same ways.

And we have planted carrots, and thinned carrots, picked carrots, cooked carrots, and eaten them over and over, and never gotten bored, be-

cause each cell of each carrot we have known deeply, as we have come to know and experience each other and ourselves in our lives together.

So the transformation is incremental and deep, long-lasting and life changing.

***Cells dividing, molecules forming, rocks melting and metamorphosis.***

***Carrots growing. People changing.***

***The energy that moves us and moves within us is the same that moves the stars.***

# STARWALKERS

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