

Welcome Home Ritual

by Caffyn Jesse

from a process co-created with Tricia Bowler and Michael Haines



If we can bring witness and loving touch to parts of ourselves that have been hard to hold – for ourselves and others – a kind of magic happens. A part that has been rejected and denied can begin to speak its truth, and show you how and why it exists. Though we have seen this part as a problem, something to hide or fix, something unwanted, it often brings great gifts.

Safety shapes and conditioned tendencies give us superpowers! They can also have great costs. In contracted, reactive parts of our nervous systems, we are always managing threat. Intimacy is inhibited. Lasting, loving relationships feel inaccessible. We are fearful, collapsed, dishonest, righteous or resentful. We cause harm. We don't live according to what we deeply want and value.

In a Welcome Home ritual, we invite a problematic part of ourselves to come home. We offer a gentle inquiry as to its embodied presence, asking about temperature, density, colour, vibration, and sensation. What words might it say, if it had a voice? We ask the part of us that wants to be better known today how it would like to be touched, and offer safe and wanted touch that is specifically requested by this part. We co-create an embodied experience of celebration and welcome for this part we thought was so unlovable – even though we don't want this part to rule our lives. The embodied experience of being welcomed deepens capacity for intimacy, and self-intimacy. We don't have to leave parts of ourselves out of relationship, because they need to be hidden, or fixed.

"Welcome Home" is a principle and a practice underlying all my work and play. BTW, it is delicious to explore in groups of three, with one person at a time in the centre! The inquiry can be resourced by psycholitic doses of an empathogen.

By doing this ritual with each other in a regular rhythm of many years, we have co-created an embodied experience of feeling loved and loveable in our most hidden – and sometimes harmful – parts. The regular practice of supported self-inquiry has helped us weave more courageous accountability and radical kindness into all our lives and loves.

Welcome Home Ritual, Step-by-Step

1. Intention. Each of us feels into what part of ourselves wants to be held (perhaps a shameful, messy, problematic, harmful, uncomfortable, or frighteningly magnificent part) and sets that intention for the ritual.

2. Ritual Container. Set a ritual container with clear intentions, time agreements and sacred space. Co-create a prayer. Invoke ritual guides.

3. Going In. Take turns in the center tuning into and sharing more about the part of you that wants to be held. It may have stories. Go beneath the story, tuning to how it lives inside you at the level of sensation.

4. Going Deeper. In the role of welcomer(s), inquire about the part that wants to be witnessed and held. Learn about its shape, colour, density, pressure, temperature, vibration. Repeat back what is offered, using the same language. Don't offer solutions or reassurance. What words might this part say, if it had a voice?

5. Being Held and Being With. Does this part want to be touched? If ritual participants can offer the requested touch with full heart, touch only as guided. Learn about the gifts of this part, its motives and capacities (with permission of the recipient, offer reflection on any gifts you witness). Honour the superpowers this part manifests. Inquire as to its costs.

6. Conscious Ending. Find conclusion for each person in the time container you have set. Include time for each person to savour the experience of being a focus, and transition time. Give thanks. Take turns in the center, and then ritually open the circle.

7. Harvest. Make time for an integration conversation, and reflections when you meet again about how the harvest of the previous ritual has been integrated into your life.

More details: [Varieties of Welcome](#)

Video

A video of a brief, fully-clothed version of "Welcome Home" can be seen at this link: <https://vimeo.com/549694968>

Acknowledgements

A "Welcome Home" ritual draws on learnings from Katie Sarra's Body Poem and the Being Held teachings of Tricia Bowler and Michael Haines, and understandings from the Strozzi Institute on conditioned tendencies and safety shapes.

Being Held is a program created by Tricia Bowler and Michael Haines www.beingheld.ca

Body Poem is the work of Katie Sarra, teacher of Sexological Bodywork, UK <http://bodypoem.co>

Trauma and Resilience is a course written by Staci Haines and offered through the Strozzi Institute <https://strozziinstitute.com/> as well as through Generative Somatics <https://generativesomatics.org/>