



**DESERT INSTITUTE**  
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL  
PARK ASSOCIATION

+1-760-819-4714  
desertinstitute@joshuatree.org  
55922 Twentynine Palms Highway,  
Yucca Valley, 92284

# LANDSCAPES OF THE SOUL: AN IN-FIELD WRITER'S WORKSHOP FOR EVERYONE

FIELD WORKSHOP / FALL 2023

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A tree is not just a tree; the elements of Nature represent more than just their physical attributes. Artists, philosophers, writers, and storytellers of all kinds know that the imagery of our planet expresses our inner landscape as much as our outer world. In this workshop, you will learn how to use a mythological lens to experience Joshua Tree like you've never experienced it before. In addition to learning how the symbolism of the landscape is used in psychology and storytelling to provide meaning, you will also explore its specific meaning to you through a writing practice called Active Imagination. This form of automatic writing does not require any writing experience; it is a meditative writing technique that will give you a new understanding of how our desert landscape speaks to you in personal and meaningful ways.

## MEETING LOCATION

[Live Oak picnic area](#) in Joshua Tree National Park approximately 6.5 miles from the north entrance station in Twentynine Palms.

## DATE and TIME

Friday, September 22, 4:30p to 6:30p

*Please arrive on time; we start classes promptly, and in the case of hikes or other classes on the go, we cannot wait for students who arrive late.*

## ACTIVITY LEVEL: LEISURELY

No physical activity required, but participants will be encouraged to find a quiet, isolated spot to write, which may involve wandering off path on uneven terrain. Please contact us if you have questions about accommodations or your ability to participate.

## EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

None

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Admission to Joshua Tree National Park (please download or print your park pass ahead of time, or you will have to pay fees at the gate!)
- First aid and emergency supplies for the group

## WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Meals
- Lodging
- Transportation

## GET TO KNOW YOUR INSTRUCTOR: Cindi Anderson, PhD

Cindi Anderson has her doctorate in Mythology and Archetypal Psychology, specializing in emerging themes and symbols in our personal and collective stories – think Dan Brown’s character, Robert Langdon, in the Da Vinci Code. After an extensive career in the music and television industries, she became a professor, teaching Creative Writing, Story Mediums & Genres, and American Cinema to emerging artists and storytellers. Her particular focus is the West’s changing relationship with Nature and where civilization and wilderness intersect. She returned to Joshua Tree to advance her studies, because there is no better place to experience the magic of our landscape, which holds hidden meaning for us all.

## PROGRAM AGENDA

We will start by gathering at the picnic tables at Live Oak for a talk about the desert landscape’s meaning in psychology and mythology, and explain how we will use the Active Imagination technique to “commune” with elements of the landscape. Each participant will find an area that speaks to you, and you will be given 45 minutes to reflect and write. We will close the workshop as a group and share with one another what we experienced.

## SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

There is no cell service in the park! Print or download your park pass ahead of time, and please allow ample travel time to arrive at the meeting location—extra time if you are meeting on a weekend morning or afternoon (see FAQ notes about late arrivals.) Please make sure you check the weather ahead of time and dress accordingly. **All participants must complete the [health questionnaire and liability waiver](#) ahead of the program start date.**

## WHAT TO BRING

### The essentials for all field courses

- Water, between 3 and 4 liters per person for a full day outing
- Food and snacks, easily packed and eaten in the field, for the duration of your course
- Close-toed athletic shoes or hiking boots; no sandals, not even hiking sandals!
- Sun protection: hat, sunglasses, sunscreen; light-colored long-sleeved shirts are recommended and very effective on hot days
- Warm layers for cooler mornings/evenings (it can be surprisingly cold!)
- Backpack to carry food, water, and any personal items you need for the day

### Required

- Notepad or journal for writing
- Pen or pencil, or preferred writing tools

### Recommended

- camp chair or blanket to sit on

# FAQ

## WHO DO I CONTACT IF I AM RUNNING LATE?

Please call our main line: 760-819-4714 and if no one answers, please call the Desert Institute coordinator, Benny Lopez: 949-241-9693.

For classes meeting in the park, please take into consideration the time it will take to go through the entrance gate—on weekends after 9am, you may wait up to 45 minutes! (15-20 minutes is typical.) For afternoon activities, you will also want to allot time to park, as parking lots tend to be congested between 10am and 4p in the busy season. **There is no cell service in the park**, so please plan accordingly!

## WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL?

Desert Institute will provide a full refund if we are notified 14 days in advance. If we are notified less than 14 days in advance, we are unable to process refunds for any reason. (But we would like you to notify us if you are unable to attend.)

## DOES DESERT INSTITUTE CANCEL ACTIVITIES FOR WEATHER OR LOW ENROLLMENT?

Desert Institute runs classes rain or shine, with the exception of astrophotography classes, which require mostly clear skies in order to be successful. If we do not meet our minimum of 4 registered participants for any given activity, we will cancel the activity with 48+ hours notice. We recommend that you purchase travel insurance, as we are unable to reimburse for expenses you incur due to a canceled class, such as airfare and hotel.

## ARE THERE ANY THINGS I NEED TO DO TO PREPARE?

All participants must return the completed [health questionnaire and signed waiver](#) before the day of their activity. **Failure to do so will cancel your registration.** If your course enters Joshua Tree National Park, you must **download or print your park pass** ahead of the class, or you will pay the entrance fee at the gate, which is currently \$35 per vehicle.

## CAN I BRING MY KIDS? MY SPOUSE? PETS?

Only registered participants may attend Desert Institute activities unless noted in the activity description. If this is a kid-friendly activity, please make sure your child(ren) meets the age requirements. As much as we love our pets, we don't allow them in the field with any of our activities.