



Healing Trauma Retreats

San Flaviano · Umbria, Italy

Retreats May–September 2026 · Limited places remaining

Deep, Thoughtful Therapy — In a Place That Supports It



Small-group trauma retreat for women · maximum five guests per retreat

Why a Residential Retreat Works

In ordinary life, therapy tends to happen in fragments — an hour here and there between work, responsibilities, and the constant movement of daily life.

A residential retreat offers something different.

It creates protected time and psychological space in which the nervous system can begin to settle. Without the usual interruptions, it becomes easier to think clearly, understand patterns, and allow what has been painful to ease.

Women come not because they are in crisis, but because they are ready for steadier support with what they have been carrying. Many are outwardly functioning well — capable, responsible, and used to managing — yet internally tired or burdened by experiences that have not had sufficient time or attention.

The retreat provides a contained environment in which therapeutic work can unfold at a natural pace. Conversations are unhurried, and there is space between sessions for rest, walking, and reflection so that insights can land without pressure.

The intention is not emotional intensity, but clarity, relief, and a greater sense of internal steadiness. Many women arrive concerned that the experience may be demanding; most leave surprised by how calm and supportive the week felt.

The work is thoughtful and carefully paced so that change can happen without overwhelm. This is not about pushing through pain, but about finally having the time and support to ease it.

"I got more from this retreat in six days than I had from years of previous therapy."— Lauren, New Zealand





How the Week Unfolds

The retreat is carefully structured so that therapeutic work can deepen progressively across the week, without urgency or pressure.

Individual sessions are woven into a broader therapeutic framework that includes small group teaching, guided practices, and reflective time. Introducing key concepts collectively allows individual work to go further without repetition or fragmentation.

The structure is intentional: depth builds coherently rather than in isolated conversations.

The week is intensive, but not rigid. There is rhythm rather than timetable. Some days are quieter; others allow for more focused exploration.

The therapeutic process is not confined to scheduled appointments. It unfolds across the week — through structured sessions, workshops, informal dialogue, shared meals, and the steady relational presence that holds the retreat environment.

Each person is met at an appropriate pace, with space for reflection, integration, and rest between sessions. Meals are prepared, the surroundings are calm, and practical details are taken care of. This allows attention to turn inward in a way rarely possible in ordinary life.

By the end of the week, many women notice greater clarity and emotional steadiness. The work relies not on intensity, but on consistency, safety, and time.

Who This Retreat Is For

This retreat is designed for women who are functioning in their lives but carrying more than they would like to manage alone.

Many who attend are professionally capable and responsible, yet internally tired, overwhelmed, or aware that certain experiences have not been fully processed. Some come following a period of strain, loss, or transition; others arrive simply knowing that they need time and thoughtful therapeutic support.

You do not need to be in crisis to attend. You do need to be willing to engage in a week of focused therapeutic work within a contained and supportive environment.

The group is intentionally small, and the atmosphere is calm and respectful. Each participant is met individually, and the work unfolds at a pace that is appropriate for the person. There is time for conversation, rest, and integration across the week.

Why There Is No Group Sharing.

There is no expectation to share personal history within the group. Therapeutic work takes place in individual sessions, allowing experiences to be explored with privacy, care, and appropriate pacing.

Shared time is used for learning, orientation, and reflection, so participants can be alongside one another without pressure to disclose or explain themselves.

By prioritising privacy and individual boundaries, the retreat creates a setting in which each woman can remain connected to her own process while still feeling part of a small, respectful group. The work remains focused, contained, and thoughtfully held throughout the week.



Life at San Flaviano

San Flaviano is Tess Hunneybell's home — a restored 15th-century monastery in the Umbrian hills — and it is from this that everything else follows. You are not checking into a retreat centre. You are being welcomed into a place that is lived in, cared for, and held with care.

The monastery sits high above the valley, with long views across the hills and evening light that moves slowly over old stone. It is quiet here in the way that only somewhere truly private can be. Many guests describe feeling the shift on arrival — a sense of space, steadiness, and perspective.

Bedrooms are individual and thoughtfully prepared: simple rather than ornate, solid-walled and restful, with windows opening onto hills, gardens, or stone. The intention is not hotel luxury, but comfort and privacy — a home that holds people well.

Meals are shared around a long table, often with the valley stretching beyond the arches. The food is generous and rooted in Italian home cooking — seasonal vegetables, fresh bread, olive oil, fruit, espresso, and chocolate. A small team supports the kitchen and the practical rhythm of the house with quiet competence.

Guests do not need to organise or host. They can arrive, be looked after, and turn their attention inward.



The monastery draws its water from a natural mountain spring directly below — cold, clear, and alive. It is one of those small details guests tend to notice and remember, part of what makes the week feel grounded rather than manufactured.

There is time to sit in the garden, walk the surrounding paths, read, rest, and watch the light move across the hills. Nothing is hurried. Nothing is demanded.

It is a home that holds both depth and gentleness — and the particular gift of spending a week within it.

Tess Hunneybell

Retreat Lead · Trauma Psychotherapist



"But it is Tess that you really go for. Her one-to-one sessions are hard to describe but brilliantly, inexplicably powerful. You sort of become more empathetic towards yourself."— Ellie, USA

I lead the therapeutic work of Healing Trauma Retreats and carry responsibility for the clinical frame, pacing, and psychological safety of the week.

For over fifteen years, I have designed and held small-group residential retreats for women seeking depth, steadiness, and meaningful integration. Across that time, I have facilitated more than 14,000 hours of residential retreat work. My work is trauma-informed and relational, grounded in careful assessment, nervous-system awareness, and the principle that processing must remain tolerable in order to be sustainable.

The retreat is not structured around isolated therapy appointments. Individual sessions are woven into a contained week of structured workshops, guided reflection, embodied practices, and space for quieter integration. This slower rhythm allows insight to settle without overwhelm and supports change that is steady rather than dramatic.

I am onsite for the duration of the retreat and available across the day. The work unfolds not only in scheduled sessions, but through steady, relational presence — conversations, shared meals, and careful attention to what is emerging for each guest.

I draw from a range of therapeutic approaches, selecting and weaving them together according to what is most appropriate for each guest. This integration is shaped by many years of clinical experience, ongoing study, and extensive retreat-based practice.

Healing at this depth requires steadiness, structure, and care. That is the work I hold.

Further information about my work can be found at tesshunneybell.com

Therapeutic Team



Eszter Balázs

Somatic Therapist · Yoga Teacher · Reflexologist

Eszter supports the body to release patterns of tension, protection, and long-held fatigue at a pace that remains tolerable and safe. Her work is rooted in nervous-system awareness rather than performance or intensity, allowing regulation to emerge gradually rather than being forced.

Through breath-led movement, somatic attention, and reflexology, she helps guests reconnect with bodily signals that may have been muted or overridden. Her approach invites listening instead of pushing, building steadiness and renewed trust in the body.

Her presence is calm and attentive. Sessions are responsive and carefully adapted to individual need, often creating the physiological stability that allows deeper therapeutic work to unfold without overwhelm.



Viktoria Varga

Senior Yoga Teacher · Holistic Massage Therapist

Viktoria supports the body's natural capacity to soften and restore. Her sessions are invitational and carefully adapted, meeting each guest exactly where she is rather than requiring physical effort or intensity.

Earlier in her career, Viktoria worked in the circus, developing a refined understanding of balance, alignment, and the body in motion. Today, that embodied knowledge expresses itself not through performance, but through steadiness, precision, and attuned support.

Through therapeutic yoga and holistic massage, she works gently with breath and alignment to reduce chronic holding and support nervous-system regulation. Her warmth, kindness, and quiet vitality bring lightness to the week — offering balance when many guests arrive carrying sadness or fatigue.

The Healing Trauma Workbook

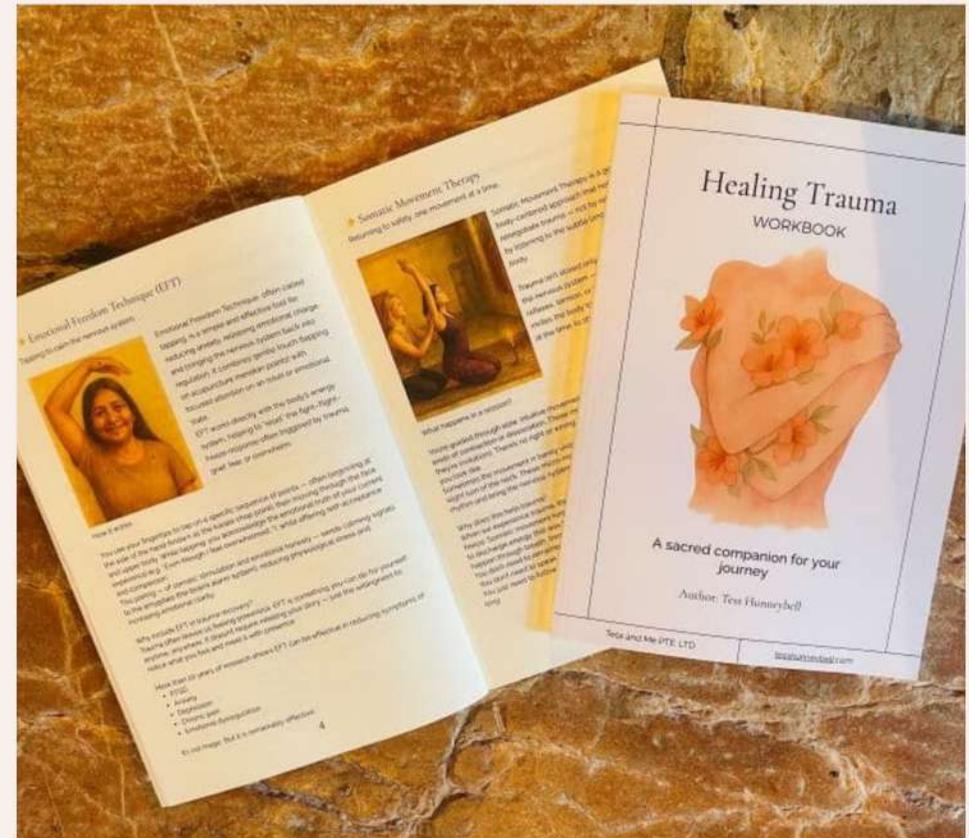
Each participant receives a 97-page Healing Trauma Workbook, created by Tess Hunneybell to accompany the retreat.

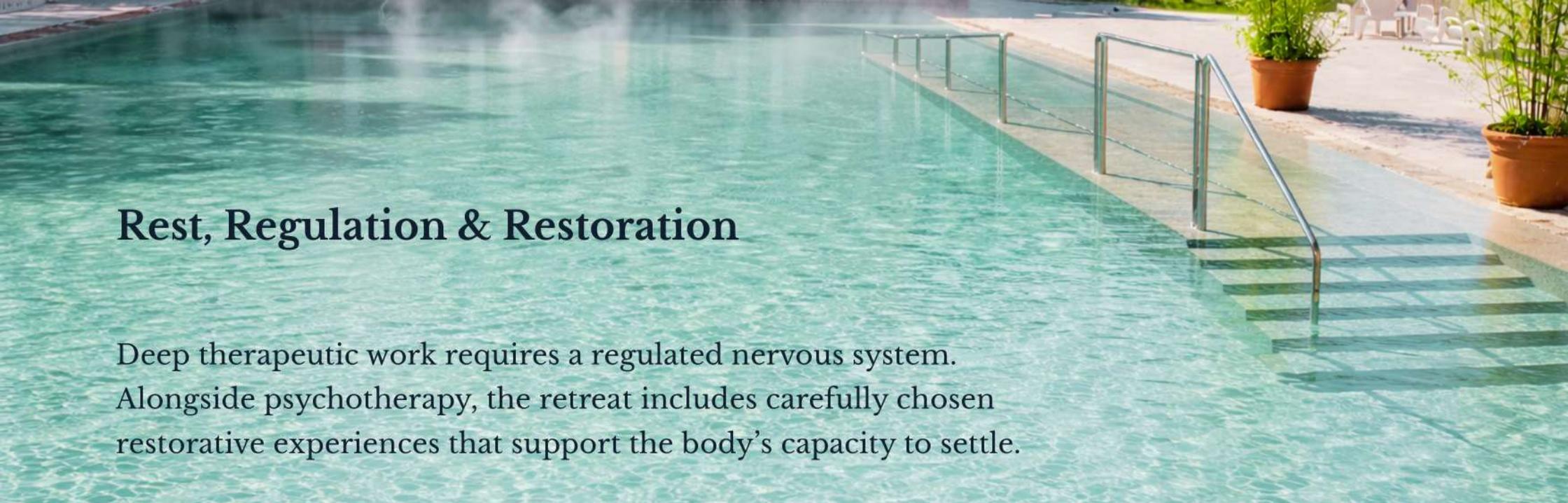
The workbook is designed to be used selectively. There is no expectation to complete it in full and no pressure to “keep up.” Guests are invited to dip in and out of sections that feel relevant at different moments during the week.

It offers structure, reflection prompts, and gentle guidance between sessions. There is no need to remember everything or take notes; the framework is already held for you. We do not work through the entire book together. Instead, there is space for private reading and for returning to particular sections as they become meaningful.

For many women, the workbook becomes a quiet companion in the weeks and months that follow. Guests often revisit certain pages when life brings new challenges or moments of clarity. In this way, it creates continuity between the week at San Flaviano and everyday life — offering orientation without pressure.

What you write remains entirely private and your own.





Rest, Regulation & Restoration

Deep therapeutic work requires a regulated nervous system. Alongside psychotherapy, the retreat includes carefully chosen restorative experiences that support the body's capacity to settle.

Triponzo Thermal Spa

Guests visit the historic Triponzo Thermal Baths in the Valnerina. Built over ancient Roman foundations, the spa sits where river water meets natural sulphur springs, surrounded by woodland and mountain air. Warm mineral immersion supports parasympathetic activation — the physiological shift from vigilance to repair. Time at the spa is not an indulgence added onto the retreat. It is part of the work of regulation. For bodies held in long-term tension, this softening can be significant.

Bodywork & Reflexology

Trauma is carried not only in memory, but in muscle tone, breath, and reflexive contraction. Optional sessions during the week include a 75-minute full body massage (€90) or 60-minute reflexology (€70). The bodywork uses steady pressure, assisted stretching, rhythmic compression, and breath-led movement to increase grounding, reduce chronic guarding, and support nervous-system regulation.

Aerial Thai Massage

Supported in a suspended silk hammock, the body is guided through gentle stretches and subtle rocking. Freed from gravity, tension can release in ways rarely possible on a treatment table. Optional 75-minute sessions (€90) are available during the week. For women accustomed to holding everything together, the experience of full support can be unexpectedly settling.



Food & Nourishment

The Kitchen at San Flaviano

The kitchen at San Flaviano is known for its food. Meals are generous, colourful, and deeply satisfying — rooted in Mediterranean cooking and prepared with care. Seasonal vegetables, vibrant salads, grains, fish, legumes, handmade pasta, fresh bread, olive oil, fruit, espresso, and yes, chocolate all find their place at the table.

Seasonal produce is sourced locally wherever possible, and dietary requirements are welcomed with ease.

The Shared Table

Breakfast, lunch, and supper are shared each day. There is always something fresh, something warm, and something sweet.

Meals are unhurried. The long table fills with colour and conversation — sometimes laughter, sometimes quiet reflection. No one needs to organise. Guests sit, eat, enjoy their espresso, share chocolate, and allow themselves to be cared for.

Food here is joy.

San Flaviano sits above a natural mountain spring. The water running through the monastery comes directly from this source — clear, cold, and pure.

What Your Retreat Includes

This is a fully held, all-inclusive residential retreat. From the moment you arrive, the practicalities of daily life are taken care of, allowing your attention to turn toward the work of the week.

The Therapeutic Week & Nourishment

- 6 nights at San Flaviano Monastery
- Private room (or shared option if selected)
- Individual therapeutic work woven throughout the week
- One-to-one sessions integrated within the retreat structure
- Small group teaching and guided practices
- Somatic therapy and gentle yoga
- Guided meditation and regulation practices
- The 97-page Healing Trauma Workbook
- All meals, refreshments, fruit, tea, coffee, and snacks
- Complimentary Triponzo Thermal Spa visit (for direct bookings)
- Optional guided walks

Practical Arrangements

- Italian toiletries in each room
- Fresh towels and linens
- Hairdryers provided
- Laundry available if needed
- Chauffeur collection from Spoleto station on arrival
- Return transfer on departure

There are no additional costs once you arrive.

Everything required for the week is here. You do not need to organise, prepare, or manage beyond your journey. Once you arrive, you are held within a carefully designed environment that supports depth, steadiness, and rest.

Rooms, Fees & Dates



Private Room in the Monastery

A quiet, private bedroom within the monastery walls — a calm and personal space to rest, withdraw, and return to yourself between sessions. Each room has its own bathroom and offers a restful atmosphere throughout the stay, supporting depth and integration between sessions.

€2,995 · early booking · all-inclusive

Deposit: €600



Shared Room — Church Mezzanine

A generous twin room set within the restored 15th-century church mezzanine. Spacious and characterful, with exposed stonework and beams, this room offers privacy within a shared setting. Beds are arranged for comfort and separation, with access to two bathrooms.

€2,850 per person · early booking · all-inclusive

Deposit: €500

2026 Retreat Dates

20–26 May · 3–9 June · 17–23 June

8–14 July · 22–28 July · 5–11 August

26 August–1 September · 9–15 September (*Fully Booked*)

Wednesday arrival — Tuesday departure Maximum 5 guests per retreat

Taking the Next Step



If something in this brochure is speaking to you, get in touch. Ask whatever you need — you'll quickly know whether this is the right retreat for you.

Making contact can feel significant.

For many women, the decision to attend is not made lightly. It can bring questions, hesitation, even a quiet voice wondering whether this is really the right thing to do. If you recognise yourself in that uncertainty, you are not alone.

"When I first arrived in Italy, I was so nervous that I even thought: what if this retreat doesn't exist? I felt relieved when the car showed up. But then, sitting in the car with three women I didn't know, I couldn't help but think: what have I done... Looking back now, I smile at that moment, because what awaited me was one of the most meaningful and life-changing experiences I've ever had."

— Mirelle, Switzerland

Contact Tess

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