

FFWPU UK: Interview On Easter Family Camp - Register For Summer Family Camp

Michael Balcomb
May 18, 2022



We thought that instead of speaking to the organisers, we'd better talk to someone who hadn't been to the Easter Family Camp before, to find out what it was REALLY like. It was hard to find someone who had fully recovered, but eventually we found this super-friendly communicator who helped us to understand what is going down at these camps.

FFWPU Comms Interviewer: So Farhad, how did it go?

Farhad Kong (FK): Yeah, it was amazing. I'm still recovering - we've all got withdrawal symptoms...the sunsets, the fields, the food, the - just all of it.

Interviewer: So it was your first time?

FK: Yes, I guess it was for all of us; there had only ever been the summer camp before. One of the mums just thought last summer, hey! why don't we all meet up for Easter too! and then we all said: cool idea! and yeah, I guess it worked out cuz we all met up.



Interviewer: Please tell me, what is the main point of the camp?

FK: Well, that is a loooooong story. It all began way back in the 80s or like at the end of the 70s, and

there was this guy who was a psychologist, his name was Dr Durst, he had heard a new spiritual teaching and he got this inspiration, and started something called the Oakland family; and they all invited people up to the top of this hill to something called Camp K. It was very successful. Then, later on, the HR system meant he was given a bigger role, so he passed the whole camp over to this group of students named after a fish.

They used to hang out, play sports, and do things like "secret pals", and something called the "day of heart", and then sometimes like talks in the morning. People say they experienced what it means to be a real family.

Then there were these three English guys, the three Amigos (Toby, Ashley and Simon R), who had travelled the world and experienced this amazing culture on that hilltop on that West Coast of the USA, and when they came back to England after many years, they brought some of that vibe back with them.

And then about twenty-something years ago, when the South London community...I think it has a new name now, it's still geographically 'South London' but now the river has taken on particular significance...River something.

Interviewer: Are you OK? Do you want a glass of water?

FK: Yeah, I'm cool, so where was I? Yeah, South London started a family camp, and they used to have lots of lectures. And then one day, Dolores - one of the mothers - said: "Could you just cut out all the lectures cuz the kids just wanna have fun?" And the three Amigos said: "Yeah, absolutely, it's done".

They were just happy to bring back to life all these crazy games and ideas they had picked up in Camp K. And so now, when you go to camp, there is a chance if you want to get up super early and study and discuss about life, the universe, and deep stuff, and then there is a 10-minute message for everyone before breakfast. The rest of the day is just about putting it all into practice.



Interviewer: So is that why you had a motto: 'Be the Change You Want to See'?

FK: Yeah, exactly! So true, I experienced that everyday. I saw all this stuff in the kitchen that needed washing, and I thought wouldn't it be nice if that was all sorted out and the kitchen was clean. And then I had a lightbulb moment, and I realised, it-just-needed-me to clean the things up, and yeah, that was when I got the motto.

OH! And then while I was doing all that washing-up, I realised some people are always late and arrive 5 hours after things have started, and if I want to change that culture, I need to lead the way; it basically starts with me.

Interviewer: Wow, so this sounds like it is solving the problem of having one person teaching, and sometimes too much with words, and instead all helping each other experience a shared vision in the present moment?

FK: So true. You just encapsulated what family camp is all about: all these things we want to experience as a community - we get to actually be an extended family for four nights, just spending quality time together, and having personal and meaningful conversations, instead of just nodding at people - like we do sometimes - when we see them at church or at work.

Interviewer: So what age group is it for?

FK: That's the wrong question, man! It doesn't matter how old or young you are; at family camp we go beyond this whole age thing. We have one elderly grandma who has been coming for years and is still able to show people who is in charge.

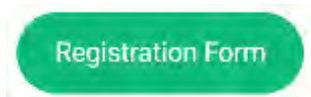
The youngest remind us all how to play, the older ones teach us how to be too competitive, and yeah, it's just another realm. All this stuff you hear about "2nd Gen this..." and "1st Gen that..." you don't really hear it at camp cuz that's not the sort of thing you say in a family, do you GET me? Oh, but sorry to contradict myself for one tiny moment, there were a lot of little 3rd gens there at Easter...and they were cool, they fitted in, got the whole being on top of a hill thing, and.....

Well, we had to end the interview at that point because Farhad Kong started to ask me if I wanted a discount on some Apple products, while simultaneously offering to build me an online marketing strategy.

If you want to find out for yourself, look at the invitation below for the Summer Family Camp.

[Farhad Kong is a fictitious person and while certain aspects of the interview might remind you of a dear friend that is purely coincidence]

Friday 22nd to Wednesday 27th July 2022



If you are wondering how to make some special memories this summer for yourself, your family, or with your extended family - your community, then you can [register now!](#)

We want to ensure we have all registrations finalised as much as possible by 31st May, so if you are planning to come we would be grateful if you could complete the sign-up form ASAP - that will help us enormously, to prepare well and make sure everyone has the best time possible.

The dates are:

Arrivals: Friday 22nd July afternoon/evening

Departures: Wednesday 27th July midday.

Location: Cleeve House, Seend, Wiltshire

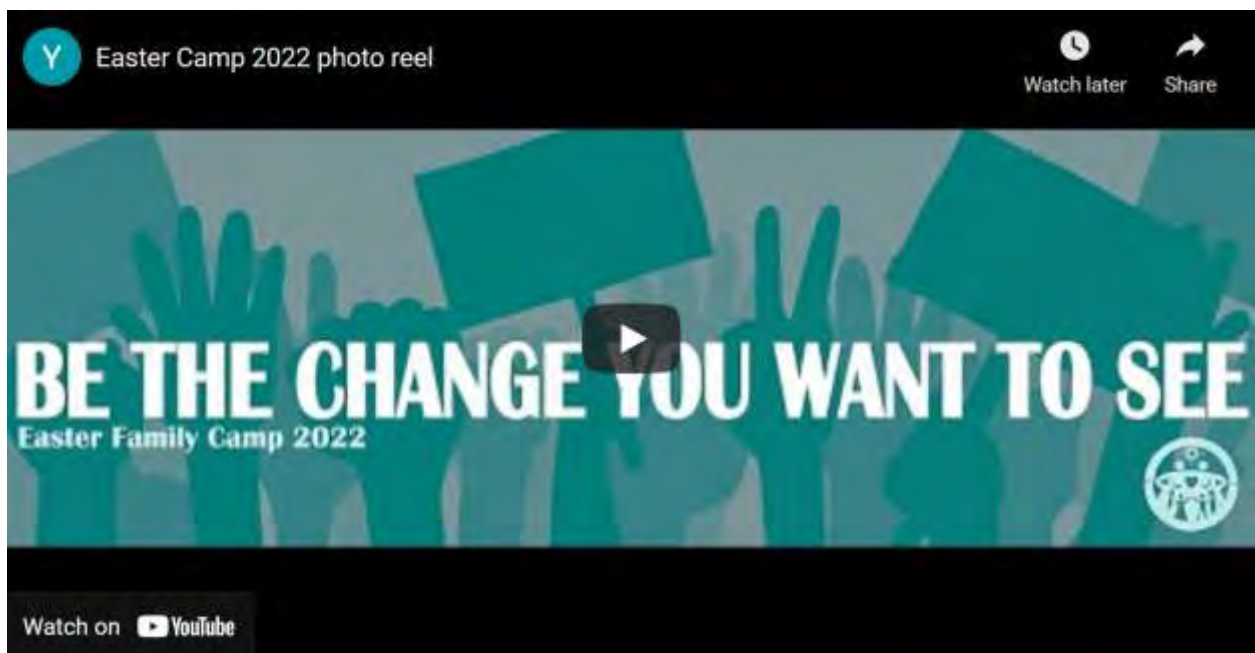
Cost:

£98 - per person (2 years and under go free)

£358 - max price per family

(£20 surcharge if sleeping indoors)

If you are wondering whether it is for you, or you feel like "I used to come with my family but I've grown up and don't know whether this is meant for me", remember, summer camp is all about being with people of all ages, as you can see from the Easter Camp video:



One feedback we get from so many people is that it means a lot when they see their elders come back just to take part and be around for conversations and sharing food and sports together. In the end, if we want to experience being part of a community then we need time together.

So, finally for those of you who are not sure or who have not been before - ask yourself, what do you want from this summer?

- time to sit out in the sun and gaze across the English countryside
- traditional Iranian BBQ
- a bonfire, with camp side side songs and marshmallows
- crazy competitions, volleyball, water sports, football, etc
- ingenious, edgy and creative live entertainment
- delicious and nutritious meals
- an option and a chance to study and have meaningful and open discussions about spiritual life every morning
- to experience being part of a big extended family

Those are some of the things that will be available at Cleeve House at the end of July.

And very lastly, if it helps, here is the [feedback from the Easter camp](#) from a selection of 28 people who completed the anonymous questionnaire once they got back home.

We will be sending out an information email with more details for everyone who is registered on 1st June - we have taken on board lots of the helpful feedback from those who left comments about the last camp.

Any burning questions, please contact:

Simon C. - simonlcooper@googlemail.com

Simon R. - energy1@btconnect.com

Enjoy the rest of May, and whatever you do this summer, we hope you have a wonderful, uplifting, and healthy season.



Summer Family Camp Registration form 2022

a chance to unwind, relax, and enjoy being together in the heart of the English countryside
Friday 22nd July afternoon/evening - Wednesday 27th July midday



* Required

Full Name *

Your answer



Email *

Your answer

Phone number *

Your answer

If your spouse is attending, please give their name too.

Your answer

Name, Age and Gender of child 1

Your answer

Name, Age and Gender of child 2

Your answer

Name, Age and Gender of child 3

Your answer

Name, Age and Gender of child 4

Your answer

5/6th+ Child's Name, Age and Gender

Your answer

Accommodation

Tent

Indoors (+£20 surcharge)

Both

Other: _____

Number of people in tent

1

2

3

4

5

6

Other: _____

Number of people indoors (+ £20 Surcharge)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- Other: _____

Do you need to borrow tent?

- Yes
- No
- Other: _____

How will you be travelling to Cleeve House?

- Train/Bus
- Car
- Car and able to offer a lift if needed by someone
- Need a lift
- Other: _____

Can you make a £50 deposit latest by 30th of June?

- Yes
- No

If yes: Bank details:

Account name: Simon Cooper

Account number 37414844

Sort code: 60-24-06

Please put reference: surname - family camp

Per person: £98

Max price per family £358

Surcharge of £20 per person if sleeping indoors (there are tenting grounds)

If you need help with anything or have any questions let us know:

Call Simon Cooper on 07879 474732 or Simon Rosselli on 07770 231794

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Easter family camp - feedback

take as little as a minute to give us some feedback on the Easter weekend at Cleeve House



* Required

Email *

Your email

What was your overall experience?

1 2 3 4 5

close to disaster close to perfect

How would you or your children rate the team activities?

1 2 3 4 5

dull and boring lots of fun and stimulating

how would rate the meals and snacks?

1 2 3 4 5

unhealthy and tasteless nourishing and delicious

What did you think of the accommodation and facilities

1 2 3 4 5

insufficient and inconvenient comfortable and cozy

Did you appreciate the morning sports?

Your answer

If you took part in the early morning reading and discussion, how did you find it?

Column 1

irrelevant and dull

a bit hard to get into

okay but nothing special

stimulating, relevant and thought provoking

sublime and deeply transformational

we had quite a lot of music through out different parts of the day, what was that like for you? Please tick any of the below that you think convey your thoughts.

- not great and difficult to get into
- not bad to listen to but not my kind of thing
- the arrangements were well thought out and it really contributed to the atmosphere
- I enjoyed singing new songs and the old favourites
- the band really drew us in and brought us all together

How did you find the morning talks after the morning sports?

1 2 3 4 5

endlessly long and dull

to the point, engaging,
meaningful, and right for the
overall audience mix

What were your and/or your children's favourite moments and/or parts of the schedule?

Your answer

As they say, the devil is in the detail, and perhaps if that is the case, then so is God, What could you tell us to help make anything easier or better for you and/or your family, however small? e.g. it might be the queues for the meals, etc.....

Your answer

Would you recommend to your friends and family to come next time?

Choose



Do you think you would plan to come to the Summer family camp from 22nd July - 27th July?

Choose



Do you think the goal of creating an environment where people with a range of different types of relationship to the FFWPU organisation could comfortably and positively interact was achieved?

- Yes
- No
- to some extent

Did you think it was good value for money, or to put it another way, do you think the registration fee was fair and reasonable.

1 2 3 4 5

no, not really, bad value and too expensive

yes, for sure, good value for money and reasonably priced

accommodation issues, please tick any of the below that you agree with:

- Even though we slept indoors, we would give camping a go in the summer
- I don't think me / my family will ever camp
- we struggled with the limited availability of showers
- I was not really bothered about shower availability
- we would sleep in a tent at Easter even if we had not been so lucky with the weather
- next Easter if we were to have the same number of families we should find a different location where everyone can sleep indoors
- we appreciate accommodation will always be a challenge with large numbers and we can just cope
- it would be a good idea to build log cabins purpose built for accommodation in the grounds, and we would be happy to pay a little extra to help cover the future cost of improving accommodation

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