



What is Spiritual Direction?

Spiritual direction, sometimes referred to as spiritual guidance, spiritual friendship or spiritual companionship, is an ongoing relationship in which a person seeks to be attentive to their spiritual life by meeting with a guide on a regular basis, typically about an hour, once a month.

Spiritual direction specifically supports the directee in becoming more attuned to God's Presence in all of life. Each meeting focuses on the directee's relationship with God as it is reflected in and challenged by all aspects of life.

A spiritual direction session creates a prayerful atmosphere where both present can be attentive to the Holy Spirit, the true Director. The guide may question, challenge, suggest, or support, as seems called for by the Spirit, but it is the directee's responsibility to determine if the insights and actions prayerfully pondered fit with their sense of true self and the movement of the Spirit in their life.

Spiritual direction is the process whereby one person offers a listening, prayerful presence to another while they journey together with God. The spiritual director is one who, most simply, walks alongside another person helping them listen to what God is saying in their lives and recognize God's action.
- Bill Haley

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"God's Spirit is ultimately the sole source of spiritual guidance, comfort and knowing."
- Henri Nouwen

What's the Difference Between Spiritual Direction and Therapy?

Therapy and counseling deal primarily with problem areas of one's life and attempt to bring healthy resolution to issues. Spiritual direction focuses on finding and responding to God in the midst of the myriad experiences of life. Central to spiritual direction is prayerful listening rather than practical problem solving.

In the ministry of spiritual direction, there are not right answers, only clearer visions and ever deeper answers.
- Margaret Guenther

Are You Ready for Spiritual Direction?

You may be ready for spiritual direction if you seek a deeper relationship with God or if you desire to share with a trusted other your dreams and the recent stirrings of your heart. You may be ready for spiritual direction if you desire a more expansive understanding of prayer, you notice yourself attracted more and more to silence and solitude, or your old ways of understanding God seem suddenly too small. You may also be ready if you're feeling nudged or drawn toward change and growth.

As a spiritual posture, discernment entails fostering a contemplative attitude that helps us to spot the presence of God in the concrete events and experiences of ordinary life.
- Wilkie Au and Noreen Cannon Au

About Joel

Joel Blunk has practiced spiritual direction for over 20 years. Trained by Oasis Ministries for Spiritual Development, he served as faculty on the RUAH School for Spiritual Guidance at Richmond Hill. An ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA), he was associate pastor of the State College Presbyterian Church (1994-2016), co-pastoral director of Richmond Hill (2017-2021), and is currently a wisdom elder emeritus and weaver with Illuman, an international organization connected with Fr. Richard Rohr, dedicated to offering rites of passage and nurturing healthy masculinity. Joel lives in community at the Rolling Ridge Study Retreat near Harpers Ferry, WV.

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Sessions available in person, virtually (Zoom, FaceTime), and by phone.

Fees based on sliding scale and discussed prior to scheduling.