

Care of the Soul

Spiritual Direction in the Jungian Tradition ~ Wake Up to Mystery & Discover Your Unique Path A Spiritual Direction Practice Located in North Texas

Questions About Spiritual Direction

[I'm new to Spiritual Direction. Help me to better understand what it is.](#)

Spiritual Direction is an ancient term used to describe what is, in reality, a relationship of Spiritual Companionship. It is an exploration of a deeper relationship with the spiritual aspect of being human. Simply put, I help people tell their sacred stories everyday. It is a practice grounded in contemplation and is a spiritual practice which helps another person or group awaken to the mystery called God in all of life. Spiritual direction helps us learn how to live in peace, with compassion, promoting justice, as humble servants of that which lies beyond all names.

[How long does a spiritual direction relationship last?](#)

It lasts as long as you want it to last. For some people, spiritual direction is for a season, during a time of discernment or transition such as a re-examination of one's vocation or a time of mourning following a death or other significant loss. I've found that for most of us, it is part of our on-going practice of self-care, and especially for those of us who follow a spiritual path. It offers support for own relationship with the Holy Mystery or God, whatever our experience is of the Mystery that is both beyond us and as close as the air we breathe. For some, it lasts a lifetime, though rarely with the same director. It is not a "quick fix" for the soul, but rather subtle and deep work in which transformation happens, gradually, over the long haul. What someone wants out of spiritual direction often determines how long the relationship lasts.

[What is the difference between spiritual direction and therapy?](#)

Spiritual direction is not therapy. Usually, therapy offers a clinical focus with a more intense schedule of meetings such as weekly or, for acute crises, several times each week. While some counseling needs might require years of therapy, others may last for several months or a few years. Spiritual direction, once begun, usually continues for many years, even for a lifetime. In most instances, therapy and spiritual direction are compatible, but to seek spiritual direction in place of therapy is not recommended. Most trained Spiritual Directors can help you discern whether therapy might be beneficial for you and can make referrals to the appropriate therapeutic professionals.

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Does a Spiritual Director have any special training?

More and more today, the answer is yes. When looking for a Spiritual Director, it is important to look for two things: does this person feel called to this ministry and what training have they had which further qualifies them? Spiritual Directors are both lay and clergy; however, not all clergy are called to the ministry of spiritual direction. Clergy who feel called and have been affirmed in this ministry usually focus her or his ministry exclusively in this area. Spiritual Direction is also a natural part of a Pastoral Care ministry.

What training do you have?

I have three years of post-graduate training in Pastoral Care & Counseling, and I have Spiritual Direction training through [The Haden Institute](#) in North Carolina. There are many Spiritual Direction training institutes in the United States, and each offer different emphases to their programs. The Haden Institute has two training institutes, one in Canada and one in the United States. I chose Haden because of its faculty and its dual emphasis on the Christian mystical tradition and Jungian depth psychology/dream work. Margaret Guenther, the author of *Holy Listening*, is on the faculty, and her book has had a remarkable influence on my life and ministry from when I first read it 25 years ago. Listening at the depths and understanding the complexities of the human condition and soul are important to me, and my training at The Haden Institute has complemented those desires well.

Where do you meet with clients?

I meet with people, person to person, in my Dallas area office and also hold appointments by phone or online. Periodically, I conduct Spiritual Direction in a group setting and also facilitate Dream Groups. Please check my website for information on groups that are forming.

What is your fee, and do you offer a sliding fee scale?

The fee is set during our initial consultation. I do offer a sliding scale fee and we can also discuss that during our initial consultation. Contact me for more information.

Do you offer retreats on the spiritual life?

Yes, I do. If you're interested in bringing a retreat, workshop or class on spiritual direction, the spiritual life or spiritual practices to your faith community or small group, please contact me. Also, check my website for information on retreats that are forming.

I understand you also conduct weddings, funerals and memorial services. Where might I find information on those services?

Simply contact me for more information on weddings, funerals and memorial services. I'll be happy to talk with you further.

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CATEGORY ARCHIVES: SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Stand Up and Show Your Soul

Posted on [January 15, 2014](#) by [charlisehillarson](#)



January 14, 2014. Today a 12 year old little boy opened fire on his classmates in Roswell, New Mexico – a little boy – just 12 years old. Tonight, untold numbers of children are hungry in our country. Perhaps their parents are out of work and benefits have run out; perhaps they're being neglected. Tonight, here in the United States, someone is sexually assaulted every two minutes. It's exhausting, really. It's exhausting to open our minds and souls to the reality of so much suffering. Yet, somehow, we find the hope, strength and compassion to continue to care for those in our midst. As Dr. Estes reminds us, we were made for these times. Don't lose heart. Don't lose your compassion. Continue to work for a just society; share your love, your compassion, your hope, and your strength. In every thought, in every word and every action, let your soul shine bright.

Let Your Soul Light Shine Bright

By Clarissa Pinkola Estes

My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times. I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in our world now. Ours is a time of almost daily astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradations of what matters most to civilized **Follow**

visionary people.

You are right in your assessments. The lustre and hubris some have aspired to while endorsing acts so heinous against children, elders, everyday people, the poor, the unguarded, the helpless, is breathtaking. Yet, I urge you, ask you, gentle you, to please not spend your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Especially do not lose hope. Most particularly because, the fact is that we were made for these times. Yes. For years, we have been learning, practicing, been in training for and just waiting to meet on this exact plain of engagement.



I grew up on the Great Lakes and recognize a seaworthy vessel when I see one. Regarding awakened souls, there have never been more able vessels in the waters than there are right now across the world. And they are fully provisioned and able to signal one another as never before in the history of humankind. Look out over the prow; there are millions of boats of righteous souls on the waters with you. Even though your veneers may shiver from every wave in this stormy roil, I assure you that the long timbers composing your prow and rudder come from a greater forest. That long-grained lumber is known to withstand storms, to hold together, to hold its own, and to advance, regardless.

In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or unmended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency, too, to fall into being weakened by dwelling on what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there. That is spending the wind without raising the sails. We are needed, that is all we can know. And though we meet resistance, we more so will meet great souls who will hail us, love us and guide us, and we will know them when they appear. Didn't you say you were a believer? Didn't you say you pledged to listen to a voice greater? Didn't you ask for grace? Don't you remember that to be in grace means to submit to the voice greater?



Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of it. Follow

poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good. What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these—to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity. Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do.



There will always be times when you feel discouraged. I too have felt despair many times in my life, but I do not keep a chair for it. I will not entertain it. It is not allowed to eat from my plate. The reason is this: In my uttermost bones I know something, as do you. It is that there can be no despair when you remember why you came to Earth, who you serve, and who sent you here. The good words we say and the good deeds we do are not ours. They are the words and deeds of the One who brought us here. In that spirit, I hope you will write this on your wall: When a great ship is in harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But that is not what great ships are built for.

Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Ph.D

Author of the best seller [Women Who Run with the Wolves](#)



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Spiritual direction

Spiritual direction is the practice of being with people as they attempt to deepen their relationship with the divine, or to learn and grow in their own personal spirituality. The person seeking direction shares stories of his or her encounters of the divine, or how he or she is experiencing spiritual issues. The director listens and asks questions to assist the directee in his or her process of reflection and spiritual growth. Spiritual direction develops a deeper relationship with the spiritual aspect of being human. It is not psychotherapy, counseling, or financial planning.

Forms

While there is some degree of variability, there are primarily two forms of spiritual direction: regular direction and retreat direction. They differ largely in the frequency of meeting and in the intensity of reflection.

Regular direction can involve a one to two hour meeting every four to eight weeks, and thus is slightly less intense than retreat direction, although spiritual exercises and disciplines are often given for the directee to attempt between meetings.

If the directee is on a retreat (lasting a weekend, a week or even 40 days), he or she will generally meet with their director on a daily basis for one hour. During these daily meetings, exercises or spiritual disciplines such as *lectio divina* are given to the directee as fodder to continue his or her spiritual growth. Alternatively, retreat centres often offer direction or companionship to persons visiting the centre alone.^[1]

The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola are a popular example of guidelines used for spiritual direction.

Historical Traditions

Western Christianity

Within Christianity, spiritual direction has its roots in the Early Christianity. The gospels describe Jesus serving as a mentor to his disciples. Additionally, Acts of the Apostles Chapter 9 describes Ananias helping Paul of Tarsus to grow in his newfound experience of Christianity. Likewise, several of the Pauline epistles describe Paul mentoring both Timothy and Titus among others. Tradition tells that John the Evangelist tutored Polycarp, the 2nd-century bishop of Smyrna.

John Cassian who lived in the 4th century provided some of the earliest recorded guidelines on the Christian practice of spiritual direction. He introduced mentoring in the monasteries. Each novice was put under the care of an older monk. Benedict of Nursia integrated Cassian's guidelines into what is now known as the Rule of Saint Benedict.

Eastern Orthodoxy

Eastern Orthodoxy comes from the same pre-schism traditions, but the role of a "spiritual director" or "elder" in Orthodoxy has maintained its important role. The original Greek term *geron* (meaning "elder", as in gerontology) was rendered by the Russian word *starets*, from Old Church Slavonic *starŭtsĭ*, "elder", derived from *starŭ*, "old". The Greek tradition has a long unbroken history of elders and disciples, such as Sophronius and John Moschos in the seventh century, Symeon the Elder and Symeon the New Theologian in the eleventh century, and contemporary charismatic gerontes such as Porphyrios and Paisios. Sergius of Radonezh and Nil Sorsky were two most venerated *startsy* of Old Muscovy. The revival of elders in the Slavic world is associated with the name of Paisius Velichkovsky (1722–94), who produced the Russian translation of the *Philokalia*. The most famous Russian *starets* of the early 19th century was Seraphim of Sarov (1759-1833), who went on to become one of the most revered Orthodox saints. The Optina Pustyn near Kozelsk used to be celebrated for its *startsy* (Schema-Archimandrite Moses, Schema-Hegumen Anthony, Hieroschemamonk Leonid, Hieroschemamonk Macarius, Hieroschemamonk Hilarion, Hieroschemamonk Ambrose, Hieroschemamonk Anatole (Zertsalov)).^[1] Such writers as Nikolay Gogol,

Aleksey Khomyakov, Leo Tolstoy and Konstantin Leontyev sought advice from the elders of this monastery. They also inspired the figure of Zosima in Dostoyevsky's novel *The Brothers Karamazov*. A more modern example of a starets is Archimandrite John Krestiankin (1910-2006) of the Pskov Monastery of the Caves who was popularly recognized as such by many Orthodox living in Russia.

Judaism

In Judaism, the Hebrew term for spiritual director differs among traditional communities. The verb *Hashpa'ah* is common in some communities though not all; the spiritual director called a *mashpi'a* occurs in the Habad-Lubavitch community and also in the Jewish Renewal community. A *mashgiakh ruchani* is the equivalent role among mitnagedim (adherents of the *mussar* tradition). The purpose of hashpa'ah is to support the directee in her or his personal relationship with God, and to deepen that person's ability to find God's presence in ordinary life. Amongst Lubavitchers this draws on the literature and praxis of Hasidism as it is practiced according to Habad standards, and to Jewish mystical tradition generally. Spiritual mentorship is customary in the Hasidic world, but not necessarily in the same way.

Notes

[1] <http://www.rivendellretreat.org/personal.html>

References

- Catholic Encyclopedia on Spiritual Direction (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05024a.htm>)
- Ho'oponopono

External links

- Spiritual Directors International (<http://www.sdiworld.org/>)
- Spiritual Direction in Alberta (<http://www.frombeginningtoend.org/>)
- Spiritual Direction in Calgary (<http://anamcharacentre.ca/>)
- Spiritual Direction in Manitoba (<http://www.spiritualdirection.ca/>)
- Spiritual Directors in British Columbia (<http://soulstream.org/>)
- Tyndale Association of Spiritual Directors (<http://www.tyndale.ca/seminary/tasd>), Toronto, Ontario
- Evangelical Spiritual Directors Association (<http://www.ecswisdom.org/index.php/esda>)
- The Retreat Association (<http://www.retreats.org.uk/spiritualdirection.html>), an organisation facilitating Christian spiritual directors in the United Kingdom

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