

Soul Friending:  
Training Interspiritual Spiritual Directors

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## Introduction

This thesis is about the nature and development of what is known as interspiritual spiritual direction (hereafter known as interspiritual direction) and the delineation of one model of training interspiritual spiritual directors. Part I includes a recent history of how interspiritual direction evolved through the lens of Spiritual Directors International (SDI), the professional organization of spiritual directors. It shows the evolution from an almost single faith-tradition orientation to a multi-faith perspective that embraces both interfaith and interspiritual members. I believe this organizational trend may be indicative of where the profession of spiritual direction is headed.

Part II is a brief overview of interspirituality and its implications for interspiritual spiritual direction. I am known as an interspiritual director. A whole thesis could be written about interspirituality itself. That is not included in the scope of this thesis. This thesis is proposing that the defining characteristics of interspiritual direction are sufficient to justify a separate kind of training than what is offered in classical spiritual direction programs. This is not meant to diminish the efficacy of classical training programs, rather to point out that there are core competencies of interspiritual direction that are not adequately addressed in classical programs. Due to the limitations of single- faith training programs, it would appear important to

incorporate relevant elements from classical training into interspiritual education, rather than the other way around.

Part III defines the core competencies and curricular elements of the personal spiritual formation section of a classical spiritual training program. Part IV defines the core competencies and curricular elements of the professional spiritual director formation section of a classical spiritual training program.

Parts V and Part VI then explore the interspiritual direction training programs of the Lorian Center for Incarnational Spirituality. The “Deepening into Spirit” and the “Soul Friending” Programs look at the refinements and changes that need to be made to the classical training approach to accommodate interspiritual students. Part V and VI will address those refinements and modifications in the personal spiritual formation training section and in the professional direction formation training section of the program respectively.

Lastly, Part VII will conclude with some implications of interspiritual direction for spiritual direction training and for trends in the vocational field of spiritual direction in general.

A word about references: sources and persons mentioned in the text of this thesis that are not direct quoted can be found in the Works Cited. These sources include websites and printed materials.

## Part I

### The Advent of Interspiritual Direction

In the last ten years, the world of spiritual direction has blossomed and grown. Spiritual Directors International (SDI) was founded in 1990 and continues to hold a large community of spiritual directors as it grows to include a more diverse population (Ludwig 9). SDI's mission is as follows:

Spiritual Directors International is a global learning community of people from many faiths and many nations who share a common concern, passion, and commitment to the art and contemplative practice of spiritual direction. Through open and respectful exchange of perspectives, contemplative practices and patterns of expansive thinking, we seek to enhance competence and connections. The purpose of the learning community is to foster the transformation of individuals, organizations, and societies in light of the holy.

([www.sdiworld.org/index.pl/purpose\\_and\\_history.html](http://www.sdiworld.org/index.pl/purpose_and_history.html))

There are forty-five different spiritual affiliations, from Buddhist to Unity, listed in the membership and six continents represented in the SDI membership ([www.sdiworld.org/uploads/wj/ci/wjcigA\)\\_ysrEk47FCROtCA/demographics-2010.pdf](http://www.sdiworld.org/uploads/wj/ci/wjcigA)_ysrEk47FCROtCA/demographics-2010.pdf)). At its beginning, in the early 1990s, SDI was also an international community, with members coming "from seventeen

countries and five continents” (Ludwig 9). Most of those who made up the overseas membership were Christians working overseas for missions, training institutions, or religious communities. At that time, diversity was seen as follows:

Yet even in its earliest years, SDI involved a rich tapestry of directors representing diverse traditions and histories of spiritual direction. They ranged from the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises to ecumenical training models that included elements from Quaker, Presbyterian, and Asian religious traditions. They encompassed contemplative models as well as variations on the Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) model, including the use of ‘verbatim’ and the desire to insure that practitioners were qualified professionally. (13-14)

Attention was being paid to diversity within Christian and Western cultural contexts, prompted by Christians working overseas or those coming to United States training programs. This included discussions during the early trainer symposiums about the use of language to “bring culturally distinctive idiom and metaphor to describe what was most essential in the work of direction, and how they might best pass it on to a new generation of directors” (14). Still, spiritual direction was largely a Christian phenomenon, with Roman Catholics comprising the largest segment of the membership

(Ludwig 26).

As the membership developed and grew, new elements and questions were introduced into symposia and annual conference discussions. New elements included different arenas for conducting spiritual direction and new clientele. Added to individual one-to-one monthly sessions were settings with youth, the homeless, and persons with disabilities. This led to “an examination of social and economic structures that require transformation” (Ludwig 15).

Forays into offering spiritual direction in corporations and with office workers, and doing group discernment in parish, diocesan and religious communities were also explored (15). By 2001, SDI even began looking at spiritual direction from the “outside in.” Examining issues of social justice and spirituality in major businesses and organizations and their impact on economic, political, social and spiritual environment were topics. A related arena that became a focus was work and the workplace. The nature of contemplation and discernment look different in an organizational/corporate setting and in the individual work environment. The application of an individual direction focus doesn’t really help the directee address an organization or a person’s role in it:

The way of processing experience is different, too. Out in the woods with a sense of the sacred, there’s less interpersonal talk

with Jesus, and more inclination to let the person stay in the broad experience of a small creature in a huge ancient place relating to the Creator.... In an institutional setting, one asks questions like, 'Where is the organization going?' Rather than 'Where is God with me?' ... The experience is both/and, and it is very powerful. (16)

Around this same time, Steve Wirth, a spiritual director who ran a training program in Louisville, KY, was distinguishing different foci of attention and activity in spiritual direction:

There is the individual, inside your own skin. There is the Jungian personal reflection, body relationship versus the interpersonal arena focus. Then there is the structural/communal focus. And finally [there is] the environmental arena, the largest scale systems, the cosmos, nature, history and culture. (qtd. in Ludwig 15)

With this paradigm shift came a different nuancing of spiritual experience. Even the far reaches of the cosmos, New Science and quantum theory became contexts for understanding spiritual direction. The shift was in looking "at the hunger for God in all human beings" (15).

Alongside the expanding arenas and foci of spiritual direction in the 1990s came the debate on criteria for consistent components in a classical

spiritual director training program. As diversity increased, so did the need to answer the questions, “What is the classical spiritual direction paradigm?” and “What constitutes essential training components?” Some argued for a certification process, others did not want to be so uniformly prescribed (Ludwig 24). Speaking about the issue, Dorothy Whiston described the impasse as “a reflection that from the very beginning the network was inclusive of people who held very different views, training, and visions about the charism and work of a spiritual director” (qtd. in Ludwig 23). In 1999, after a long and careful process, the *SDI Guidelines for Ethical Conduct* was adopted as a solution to the debate. The task force that composed these guidelines

had developed a set of standards high enough and broad enough for a membership which now encompassed more than 3,700 people from thirty-four religious traditions and fifty-four nations around the world. (24)

Most training programs today use the Ethical Guidelines in some manner.

Another way the diversity of both the membership and the art of practicing spiritual direction began to be expressed is through the founding, in 1995, of Presence: The Journal of Spiritual Directors International (hereafter referred to as Presence). The journal had an essential purpose: to “reflect espoused values” in articles about different ways of practicing

spiritual direction, about various ways to train directors and about diverse contexts of practice (25). In 1997, a website was launched ([www.sdiworld.org](http://www.sdiworld.org)) and in 2009, links to other Internet social networking sites (Facebook™, MySpace™, Twitter™, YouTube™ and blogs) expanded diversity to reflect the newer generations of directors and their needs.

Starting in 2000, at the annual conference in Holyoke, Massachusetts, an interfaith dimension of SDI became overtly apparent. A Jewish rabbi and a Buddhist teacher offered a workshop on interfaith spiritual direction (26). Presence offered an article by Elizabeth Stout on the World Parliament of Religions in May of 2000 (Stout 17-23). Carol Ludwig, writing in 2002, commented that these two events “may be a portent of things to come as the interplay between the world’s religious traditions increases in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (Ludwig 26). She further comments that

relationships developed at the 1999 World Parliament of Religions in Cape Town and ... new members of SDI who come from diverse faith traditions could open doors to deeper interfaith exchanges and lead to a wider representation of non-Western spiritual paths in SDI. (27)

Ludwig’s portents have come true. There have been interfaith panels at the annual conferences. There have been conference chaplains from different faith traditions. The 2010 SDI conference had a chaplain from the

Tibetan Buddhist faith, Sally Taylor from Northern Ireland

(<http://www.sdiworld.org/uploads/Gj/Yh/GjYhcnSz2N5aHxlikV5rag/020510-Event-Brochure-2009b.pdf>). In 2008, the chaplain was a Jewish reconstructionist rabbi Jacob Staub ([http://www.sdiworld.org/uploads/6s/nM/6snMoyODk9fBnue1u\\_wR2w/Event-Brochure-Web.pdf](http://www.sdiworld.org/uploads/6s/nM/6snMoyODk9fBnue1u_wR2w/Event-Brochure-Web.pdf)).

Presence has included interfaith articles in recent years too. The two interfaith seminaries in New York City, One Spirit and The New Seminary, both have programs in interfaith spiritual counseling; so does The Chaplaincy Institute in Berkeley, CA. Amidst this trend of growing diversity, reflected both in new members of SDI and in articles and training programs, there is a relatively new player on the block. It is interspirituality.

## Part II

### What is Interspirituality?

Interspirituality has its roots historically in interreligious dialogue and interfaith encounters (Secret and Fageol 7). More recently, The World Parliament of Religions has brought attention to interfaith dialogue. Even the Roman Catholic Church has acknowledged “some truth” inherent in different faiths around the globe and a willingness to engage, as reflected in the 1965 Vatican II conciliar document “Nostra Aetate.” Today, “it is not uncommon to hear of Christians celebrating a Passover Seder with Jews or of a religiously diverse neighborhood celebrating the Hindu festival of Diwali” (7). Spiritual direction has adopted this interfaith orientation and adapted it for use in more personal spiritual growth. Engaging in interfaith dialogue has brought a new focus and added depth and nuance in thinking about one’s own traditions and religious practices.

Brother Wayne Teasdale, author of the book The Mystic Heart, coined the word interspiritual in 1999. It is about exploring the common roots of interior spiritual experience that are present in and nourish all faiths.

Teasdale expresses it as

the sharing of ultimate experiences across traditions....

Interspirituality is not about eliminating the world’s rich diversity of religious expression.... Rather, it is an attempt to make

available to everyone all the forms the spiritual journey assumes. (26)

There are those who have taken the interfaith stance a step further. Instead of exploring tenets and practices from other religious traditions as a way of enhancing their faith in their own root tradition, some seekers have adopted and adapted practices and wisdom from other traditions and put together a spirituality that speaks to the unitive mystery underlying all traditions and forged their own unique spiritual expression:

An example of this would be chanting a Buddhist mantra or doing a Sufi heart meditation when that is not one's customary practice and learning to feel at home in one's spiritual self in that other tradition. In such actions one is taking another tradition into the body of one's own spiritual experience. This is an interspiritual approach. (Secrest and Fageol 7)

Those who engage in spiritual companionship along this path are called to enter into a relationship that holds some different characteristics from classical faith-based direction. This is called interspiritual direction.

As stated above in the Introduction, the advent of the Internet, global networking, the media and travel have exposed many to the tenets, beliefs and rituals of faiths different than their own. Within the field of spiritual direction, Presence journal, the SDI website and conferences and training programs like the Shalem Institute and the Mercy Center have become

vehicles for introducing spiritual direction students to practices and scriptures of many religious and spiritual traditions. Inspired by their imagination and openness to their inner calling from the holy, many individuals have taken the initiative to build their own personal inner spirituality and development drawing freely from whichever traditions speak most to their hearts:

The path of interspirituality is also supplemented as it encompasses aspects of contemporary culture. This results in new expressions of spirituality such as that which is emerging out of our knowledge of quantum physics, the popularity of *A Course in Miracles* that comes out of a New Thought lineage, eclectic Gaian rituals around the solstices and equinoxes, and the spirituality of twelve-step programs. One person who was raised as an Episcopalian, and has subsequently chosen to delve into Celtic Christianity, Tibetan Buddhism and other streams of spirituality articulates a particular example of this. 'Somehow I must explore them all and know they are part of my consciousness and being. And all of them have taught me to celebrate my place in the larger ecology of sentient beings and to feel the Earth/Gaia as a living being and soul of which I am a part.' (8)

One of the main characteristics of someone who engages in interspirituality is eclecticism. By this is meant the selection of “what is best or preferred from a variety of sources or styles (< <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/eclectic>>). Coming out of a Western cultural predilection for individual expression, eclectic spirituality calls for a unique expression of a person’s spirituality:

This is a call to craft a personal relationship with the Sacred that is direct, authentic and often outside the boundaries of any particular religious tradition. This emphasis on individual meaning-making is energized and broadened by allowing direct experience to be the formative connection with the Sacred.

(Secrest and Fageol, 8)

Both mind and body participate in this kind of spiritual connection. Direct awareness is a felt sense in the body and, as such, the body is regarded as a vessel for encounters with the sacred. Often referred to as the wisdom of the heart, this form of knowing takes precedence in interspirituality over theology and dogma and is an important source of spiritual knowledge.

Connected to this marker of the body is the notion that the body is a nested hierarchy in the body of the planet and the universe. This wider perspective sees all life - the human, the natural, the seen and the unseen – as participating to form an interwoven whole. Theologian Thomas Berry

refers to himself as a "geologist" (< <http://ncronline.org/news/ecology/thomas-berry-environmentalist-priest-dies>>). Priest and social psychologist Diarmuid O'Murchu brings quantum physics and theology together. Mathematician and cosmologist Brian Swimme and quantum physicist and Taoist Fritjof Capra, among others, offer scientific models that reflect this new awareness of the living wholeness of the earth and the cosmos and the human place within it. (8) This coming together of science and spirituality offers a broad perspective for those who are looking for a nontheistic vantage point to express their spiritual experience. Even today's global spiritual leaders - Ammachi, the Dalai Lama and others - are joining elders from indigenous lineages in speaking out on behalf of kinship with all life and the value of new science in understanding spirituality.

A concomitant corollary to this notion of the web of life is the idea of panenthesism, the idea that "God is in everything and everything is in God" (Fox 90). Here the notions of "the world" and "the Sacred" expand to include unseen realms, be they faerie or devic kingdoms or allies from other realms of consciousness. The work of David Spangler and his metaphysics of Incarnational Spirituality© explores this view fully:

It is the path that some seekers follow wherein they walk in partnership with inner world alliances. These unseen sources are variously identified as guides, angels, archetypal energies, healing energies and qualities that help shape the individual's

system of spiritual guidance. Popular examples of this type of guidance include the use of shamanic journeying and oracular systems like the I Ching. This stream sees inner wisdom as primarily coming from within the individual. It also assumes that while these alliances are part of a sacred container, they do not replace the Sacred/God as the ground of being. (8)

Spangler's work will be looked at more fully at a later point in this thesis.

Another important tenet of interspirituality is the embrace of a global ethic. It engages and expresses social responsibility and caring among all members of the global family. The popularity of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 1999 book, Ethics for a New Millennium, on the bestsellers list for over a year, is one such expression of this. This isn't an either/or phenomenon. There is concern both for the individual's richness of experience and for the support and holding of "the other," be it individual or group. One pays attention to and cares for oneself; one is also part of a circle of support for the collective. Community becomes an important element of support for the individual and also a container for meaning-making and interpretation of experience. The difference is that the community is global and can be networked on the Internet. It is composed of folks of very different paths and ethnicity rather than a community of individuals who share a common faith tradition and are local:

What changes for interspiritual seekers is that the definition of what constitutes community is expanded with their global identification. They hold the paradox of engagement at a local level with a global spiritual awareness. One spiritual director, Christina Baldwin, calls this 'glocalizing.' (9)

It should be noted here that a different emphasis from that of eclecticism also exists within the arena of interspiritual. According to Teasdale, there is an attraction of the heart of the mystic to the Source of all Being itself. "Every person is a mystic. The call to the spiritual journey is always inviting us. We need only respond. In this summons, in the cave of the heart, we are all one" (Teasdale 243). Teasdale looks at how interspiritual seekers search the different world religious traditions to find a basic source that is expressible through spiritual experience within each tradition. Thomas Keating and Bede Griffiths, to name a few, speak of the "sharing of ultimate experiences across traditions" (Quinn, Dveirin and Borysenko 5). This is the perennial philosophy, written about by Leibniz and made popular through the work of Aldous Huxley in his book The Perennial Philosophy (vii). The sense that there is a "ground of being" underlying all human experience is the foundation of this perspective:

Philosophia perennis - the metaphysic that recognizes a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds; the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to, or

even identical with, divine Reality; the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being – the thing is immemorial and universal.

(vii)

According to Teasdale, the ontological roots that tie the various religious traditions together speak of the interdependence of all religions (27). In this view of interspiritual, one does not necessarily leave one's root tradition, but rather explores other traditions in order to glean wisdom and insight from them and assimilate them into one's own experiences and practices. These practices are introspective and contemplative by nature but lead to spiritual activism in the world. "Interspirituality is not a one-way street, but an intermystical *intersection* where insights cross back and forth, intermingle, and find new habitats" (27).

The insights and wisdom of both expressions of interspirituality are in service to the individual's spiritual growth and to the construction of a global community of service and connection. One of Teasdale's visions coming out of his definition of interspirituality is the founding of a "civilization with heart." (5) Both eclecticism and perennial philosophy lead to an individual's choosing to live out their spirituality drawing from the wide wealth of wisdom and practice from various religious and spiritual traditions. The eclectics pick and choose what draws and resonates with them and construct their own spirituality gleaning from the multitude of choices. Sometimes this leads to

a shallow dabbling without substance. The access to depth lies in the discipline of practice to the wisdom or wisdoms chosen. The mystics of the heart often stay within a root tradition while annexing contemplative practices that enhance their engagement with their root tradition. The shadow side of this approach is to overlook the real differences and nuances that make each tradition unique. This is the point of view brought forward by Stephen Prothero in his book, God is Not One. The “Deepening into Spirit” and “Soul Friending” programs from The Lorian Center for Incarnational Spirituality represent the eclectic definition of interspirituality. The Claritas Interspiritual Mentoring program, another interspiritual training program, represents the perennial philosophy perspective.

For both types of interspirituality, community, global ethics and service are important elements. The primacy of individual spiritual experience, contemplative or otherwise, is a founding marker. Likewise, the notion of panentheism, present in the mystical writings of most religious traditions, is a common thread. Direct awareness of the divine guides both streams.

It is little wonder, then, that those who choose a path of interspirituality would seek the guidance of a spiritual director and benefit from having a companion to share what emerges for such directees in their direct experiences on their journey with the Sacred. To have a companion who understands a directee, who either does not espouse a particular root tradition or who wishes to explore outside one’s own tradition, is invaluable.

Such a directee is in a vulnerable position. In the midst of diversity, focus is necessary to attain depth of experience. A director can help with that. Further, there is integration needed. Either there are various practices and wisdoms that can be at variance with one another, or there are experiences that require seating alongside one's root tradition. Interspiritual direction offers support for gaining coherency in one's faith journey. "It serves as a container for witnessing, celebrating and holding one's spiritual experiences" (Secrest and Fageol, 10).

The role of the witness is particularly of value in interspiritual direction for two reasons. First, one is without a faith tradition, or is on the edges of it, in experimenting with incorporating practices from other traditions. Second, there is an absence of a faith community to hold the person. It is true that interspiritual directees tend to find various groups that, in part, support their predilection. Groups like the Dances of Universal Peace, community ritual gatherings that celebrate feast days from many traditions, and chanting circles fulfill some of this need, but do not specifically fit the constructed spirituality of the directee.

It is also of utmost importance that in interspiritual direction, the directee meets a person who is without judgment about the spirituality that has been constructed by the directee. Such a director

is committed to strengthening his or her own moral capacity  
beginning with a willingness to meet God, him/herself and others

with honesty, humility, and maturity. It is from this stance that s/he values the specific and irreplaceable expression of sacredness and the sovereignty of each individual. (10)

Further characteristics of directors/companions of interspiritual direction include a belief that no one religion or spirituality holds all wisdom:

They make use of spiritual tools, scriptures and ceremonies that come from the different world religions, indigenous paths, science and contemporary expressions of spirituality. They, too, have a desire to be an agent of the sacred in service to the earth and to the cosmos. They recognize and work with the sacred in ordinary life, including looking for the wisdom of the body. They seek all expressions of the Sacred, those from within, as well as those found in the transcendent. (10)

As with all spiritual direction, the aim of interspiritual direction is to bring one into closer and deeper connection with the holy. This leads to great flow in one's life and, ideally, to engaging in some form of sacred activism or service in the world. Through this relationship, one hopes to integrate the sense of the sacred into daily life and infuse all one's work and relationships with holiness and wholeness. What might seem different about interspiritual direction is the "potential for co-creative alignment with the generative mystery underlying the universe." One might also notice the finding of one's authentic voice as one sees one's self as divine. Standing

more fully in oneself leads to standing more fully in partnership with the Sacred (11). This more immanent view of the sacred leads to discernment of one's place in the interconnected web of all life, a move away from anthropomorphism:

As we learn to sit in silence and just *be* with the Divine or Greater Consciousness, we move into the timelessness of the Ultimate – the heart of unitive experience. This leads to fulfillment as we reflect upon the journey. We look back at the moments of grace that have led us to the present and look forward to the horizons of Mystery that beckon. (12)

Interspiritual pilgrims value their independence. It is important for them to be free to explore and integrate in their own way. Yet such a path needs the assistance of a deep container, accountability and companionship of a witness who can truly be present. "This relationship is the primary one in which the Sacred can be named, mirrored, shared and held. The benefits bless both the individual and his/her wider community" (12).

In this context of interspirituality, how do we train companions who can walk with others on this interspiritual path? What is needed that is essential to the spiritual direction experience itself? What is needed that is essential for the interspiritual direction experience? What is important to include that prepares student directors to take their place as competent

spiritual directors? What is needed to prepare student directors to be interspiritual directors?

The next two parts of this thesis will address what are generally held to be core competencies and essential curricular elements of classical spiritual direction. Interspiritual direction includes and builds on these competencies and elements, as they are essential to the profession of spiritual direction itself. I will first look at core competencies and curricular elements in the first part of a training program; namely, the personal spiritual formation of the director. I will then look at core competencies and curricular elements of the second part of a classical training; namely, professional formation. This overview is a composite of common elements from many of the more widely known and established spiritual direction training programs in the USA. They include Shalem, Mercy Center, Creighton University, The Institute for Spiritual Leadership and several Ignatian training centers.

Part III  
Personal Spiritual Formation in Classical  
Spiritual Direction Training Programs

Suzanne Buckley, in her introduction to Sacred is the Call: Formation and Transformation in Spiritual Direction Programs, speaks about training programs as journeys of faith (13). In this book of essays by trainers from various training schools, religious orders and universities, there is a wealth of knowledge to be found about the nature and methods of training spiritual directors. The book also contains a generally acknowledged set of foundational principles that characterize the basic core of essentials needed to train spiritual directors.

Most programs take a holistic approach in their teaching, employing didactic presentations, assigned readings, individual written reflections, small and large group inquiry, creative arts projects and some simple ritual experiences. "These holistic modes of learning are intended to cultivate an awareness of the presence and transformative power of god in various types of experience" (Neafsey 25). Programs generally meet face-to-face at some regularly scheduled times (once a month, one day a week, every three months, depending on the availability of students) with homework assignments and papers in between to be completed before the next module

begins. This pattern gives time for individual reflection, contemplation and fuller comprehension.

Overall programs vary in length, but unless certain elements are present, there is a less than adequate preparation for this unique vocation. The first part of any training program looks to deepen and broaden a student's experience of and relationship with God. This part of the curriculum is called personal spiritual formation. The second part is concerned with learning the professional skills and special knowledge base necessary to do good direction work. These programs layer their skill and experience building to move from the particularity of building personal spiritual capacities into the ability to help another do so. One learns the skills for oneself first and in so doing one learns how to be present in the same way for another. In addition to engaging in the work of the training program, it is also expected that each student will also be engaged in an ongoing relationship with a spiritual director who is independent from the program.

The first part of any training program, the personal spiritual formation aspect, can last anywhere from one to two years. Some programs join the formation and professional parts and run them concomitantly, though this leaves little time for personal reflection before engaging in vocational practice. The focus of formation is to foster and deepen five capacities: the awareness of presence, the ability to ground abstract spiritual concepts in

everyday life, the skill of listening contemplatively, the deepening of the role and discipline of prayer in one's life, and the art of discernment (13-14).

James Neafsey calls the awareness of God "the human experience of God." He uses several questions to help students work with this capacity: "Where do we find God?" "What is our primary life/spiritual task?" "What does spiritual direction have to do with our experience of God?" (Neafsey 19). These three questions alone become the basis of all learning in the spiritual formation phase of the training. One of the assumptions that Neafsey outlines in addressing these is that "the Mystery of God is fully present and active in all human experience" whether we are "explicitly aware of it or not" (19). This is where we seek to find God. The next assumption is that our human calling is to "wake up to the mystery of God's presence and action in all human experience" (19). One could name this a call to greater consciousness of God. Lastly, Neafsey states that "the purpose of spiritual direction is to help people become aware of the mystery of God's presence and action in human experience and to assist them in making a fuller and freer response to it" (19). In Ignatian spirituality the Awareness and felt-sense of this mystery is referred to as the Principle and Foundation (Ignatius 22-23).

The task of the formation aspect of training is to take these questions and assumptions and move them from abstract principles to lived experience in the lives of the students. There are many training tools employed

through-out this time to aid students in this task. Often some form of spiritual autobiography is employed to help students review their lives by looking at formative people, places and events that have helped shape their relationships with God. Variouslly called the circle of life, time-line, or lifeline, it provides a template for students to divide their life spans into deciles and review in great detail their lives. The point of this exercise, which is revisited time and again to glean more information and insight, is to become

... more aware of and open to the Mystery, rooted in contemplative awareness, free to let other people and things be who and what they are in their uniqueness and otherness. We are here for God rather than for the preservation and enhancement of our own ego. We have the capacity to discern spiritual meanings and values and have an intuitive awareness of the presence of God dwelling and acting at the depths of human experience. (22)

Rose Mary Dougherty adds here that the work of formation should be fostered in an atmosphere of prayer, so that everything that is done, is done prayerfully. She refers to those as times when

... we consciously choose to put ourselves in the way of grace, or enter the sacred space of our true self, or open ourselves to the Indwelling Mystery of our souls ... a time of intentional availability to God. (28)

She says it is about creating “an atmosphere of detached listening and fresh seeing” (28). “When students are able to learn this, they are helped to see blind spots and areas where they are not free and to celebrate moments of grace-filled awareness” (29).

Students can only do this as they learn to cultivate the capacity for witnessing themselves. This is learned, in part, through the art of contemplative listening. This is listening with the whole of the person, through the ears, mind, heart and the senses (33). Marie Tattu Bowen defines contemplation as the consideration of something or someone so fully and so deeply that “we perceive a whiff of the sacred emanating from them.” “How appropriate then that the word “contemplate” has at its root the word ‘temple,’ that place where we meet the sacred” (34). Bowen takes her definition of listening from the International Listening Association. “Listening is the process of receiving, constructing meaning from and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages” (qtd. in Bowen 34).

Listening to self and to God in one’s own personal life experiences are the goals for the formation phase of training. Bowen lists three benchmarks for evaluation in learning contemplative listening. The first is to grow in self-awareness and in the many ways students can recognize God in human experience. The second is to foster deeper, more detailed perception through the use of specific tools and exercises for use in group exercises and in personal spiritual practice. The third is to help students, through these

exercises and through reflection, “grow in the consciousness of hearing and responding to themselves, others and God” (34-35).

The exercises and reflections used are varied but usually include some didactic instruction around the importance of listening as written by spiritual authors and saints, prayer practices that help focus the mind and the heart like *lectio divina*, the use of Ignatius’s examen of consciousness, (49-55) times of listening to others in small groups using a process to foster focus on affect and emotion, and writing assignments to enhance and ground experiences even more deeply. The following example gives a good feel for what capacities trainers want to instill in students.

... we ask students to recall a time when they felt loved and then to write about it, fleshing out until they remember the thoughts they were having at the time, the sensations they felt in their bodies, and the feelings kindled by the experience. Once they have finished writing we ask students to record the sensations, thoughts and feelings that arise for them now, in the present moment, as they remember their past experience. (35)

The point of this exercise, and others like it, is to help students think about the process and to witness what was happening for them. This witnessing can be further uncovered by coming together in groups to share. Here the focus is on listening to the other while at the same time noticing

what is happening interiorly to oneself in this process. One outcome is the ability to see ordinary human experience as an experience of God.

Out of such awareness, reflection and perception comes an ability to make new meaning and to name that meaning as a meeting place with God. Once the student is able to practice and hold an awareness of God, listen more deeply and perceive his or her relationship with God in more sustainable terms, the groundwork has been laid for the next step – the ability to maintain a regular prayer practice. Joseph Driskill says that “faithfulness in prayer is faithfulness to the relationship with the Holy...it is a genuine expression of the relationship between a person and God” (43).

It should be noted that many students already have a long-standing prayer life. What is being asked for now is to add the witness aspect and the deep listening aspect even more assiduously, to deepen faithfulness to a spiritual practice, and to allow for even greater sensitivity within one’s relationship with the Holy. The more one is able to use prayer in these ways, the easier it will be to enhance appreciation for the authentic experiences of others and to see the diversity of prayerful expression and the many ways “relationships with the Holy are supported and sustained” (43). Paying focused attention to the nuances of one’s prayer life and writing about them also offers students a chance to place experiences in the context of their own lives (referring back to their spiritual autobiographies) and to notice longer-range patterns of relationship both to themselves and to God.

There is another reason faithfulness and discipline in prayer are emphasized in formation. Praying with regularity also holds us in accountability – to oneself and God (44). Ironically, the more one sinks into prayer, the more one encounters rough places as well as good ones. When one meets one's own shadow and examines times and actions that take one away from God, resistance is often felt. Throughout the ages, wisdom keepers have stressed that these are the times when one must remain faithful in prayer. To have a supportive community of fellow students and training faculty to hold one lovingly in these places and times teaches students to persevere and to discover the rewards of so doing. It also allows students to experience firsthand states of resistance that they will inevitably encounter in their directees.

It is important to teach students that many different forms of prayer and meditation exist. What works for one might not work for someone else. In understanding that diverse paths can still lead to depth of prayer, students come to see that others do not have to pray in a particular way to achieve greater sensitivity in their relationship with the Holy. Similarly, understanding that each person's path to prayer is different fosters tolerance and joy in celebrating different paths. For some, the path of devotion is appropriate, for others, it is the path of contemplation. Still others come to God primarily through their intellect. A fourth way is the path

of service in the world. Each path influences how someone will approach prayer (Adiswarananda vii-viii). To respect each path is to promote non-judgment and the possibility of trying something new for oneself as well.

Deepening into one's prayer life, contemplative listening and the practice of presence before God are all prerequisites for the next basic foundational capacity in formation; namely, discernment. Mary Ann Scofield calls this "waiting on God, or staying with movements of God" (52).

Discernment is about making choices in one's life, be they quotidian or life-stage decisions. In any such process, the object is to stay with the question until the decision reflects one made in union with God. Scofield says that one will "recognize them by noticing what evokes an unmistakable resonance in our own hearts, by what is immediately and deeply attractive to us" (53).

Discernment is a process that is composed of many elements. First there is the art of asking the correct questions, ones that access the interior reaches of the soul. Such concepts as consolation and desolation, introduced by Ignatius of Loyola, speak to the movements of the heart (Ignatius 202-219). Knowing what attracts or repels our search can be measured according to consolation or desolation. The realm of desire is another focus for consideration. Whose desire is it anyway, the person's or God's? Is there a place where they can meet? Discernment is about balancing affectivity and reason. It is also about prioritizing values and learning which ones are truly important enough to steer one in the direction of the holy.

There is a further place to search when making heart-felt choices. It is the territory of obstacles to decision making. This is the territory of resistance and the shadow of the personality. This is the place to examine emotional and psychological factors, attachments and addictions, images of self, lack of imagination and faulty reasoning. This is rich territory. As Mary Ann Scofield reminds us, "places of resistance signal where God is active" (62). This may not be apparent or attractive to students initially, nevertheless it is territory that must be covered in discernment particularly and in formation generally. Resistance can appear as evasion of God through inconsistent prayer practice or a lack of affect in speaking about spiritual life with a director, to name a few. Just learning about the different ways resistance can occur is usually a whole module in the formation curriculum.

By the time the formation part of the spiritual direction training program is complete, most participants will report a deepening of their prayer life, more comfort in dealing with resistance, a greater familiarity with their interior patterns of relating to God and some confidence that, with the help of their spiritual director and the skills and tools they have acquired, they can make a discernment that reflects their highest spiritual values and that brings them closer to God. Now it is time to turn attention to learning the art of doing spiritual direction.

Part IV  
Professional Spiritual Formation in Classical  
Spiritual Direction Training Programs

At this time in their studies, students will have been in their own spiritual direction for at least a year. In addition, they have probably been engaged in some sort of ongoing small-group reflection process with their peers in the program. This could be called group spiritual direction. A popular layout is one designed by Maureen Conroy and adapted by the Shalem Institute (Dougherty 10-16). It is a formatted structure that helps student to learn contemplative listening and awareness of presence with others. This becomes a precursor for beginning to practice being a spiritual companion for someone else.

It is usually in the second part of the training that students take on clients who volunteer to be directees. The student then engages with peers in a format of "group supervision" (Appendix I). The format is similar to the group spiritual direction sessions formatted for students in year one, only this time students are reflecting on their affect and issues with directing another person instead of exclusively focusing on their own interior life. Of course, the two cannot be so easily separated; it is more a matter of emphasis. These practice formats become an important touchstone for students in learning how to sit with others in direction.

This is the point in the program where all the capacities previously mentioned as relevant for formation are now directed toward doing spiritual direction with another. What has been enriched and deepened in the interior life of the student must now be practiced and applied when working with another. Foundationally, this means new directors learning to lead directees to their sense of resting in the Sacred, the felt-sense of the mystery of God, the Ignatian Principle and Foundation. Additionally, there are a body of knowledge and a set of skills that are useful and professionally ethical for students to learn in order to be responsible directors.

These are often challenging elements. Monitoring one's own internal state of being, listening for the presence of the holy and witnessing the process of the directee takes practice. Many years of engaging in spiritual direction are needed by most directors to become proficient at this art of witnessing self, others and the Sacred all at the same time. Supervision is an important aid in this process.

While it is true that the maxim "just be present and God will do the rest" helps new directors to stay out of the way and allow spirit to act in the relationship, too much laissez-faire can leave a directee feeling unattended to. Knowledge from the various disciplines such as theology and psychology that are related to spiritual direction helps new (and experienced) directors to find their footing and start to feel confident about their ability to sit with another. Some degree of monitoring spiritual, psychological, moral, and

interpersonal boundary factors enhances the director's ability to foster the growth and freedom of the directee.

Ethics, as we saw earlier, gives the training program a way to evaluate competency. Using the SDI Guidelines for Ethical Conduct ([http://www.sdiworld.org/ethical\\_guidelines2.html](http://www.sdiworld.org/ethical_guidelines2.html)) as a teaching tool allows faculty and students to cover important aspects of the interpersonal field that is created between the two human elements in a direction session. In addition, addressing the interface between psychology and spirituality and learning the human dynamics common to therapy and spiritual direction offer invaluable help to directors. These dynamics include topics such as boundary issues, dual relationships, transference and countertransference, and when to refer for mental health issues. Moral responsibility, including mandatory reporting of abuse and delineating the issues around confidentiality, round out this arena.

Spiritual topics that need to be included in the curriculum are: stages of prayer, issues of justice and working with different denominational and faith traditions. Since the publication of James Fowler's book, Stages of Faith, in 1981, stages of adult faith development are part of most programs.

Lastly, programs cover topics of special interest. Depending on the nature, scope and length of the program, group spiritual direction, sexuality, gender issues, working with the poor and marginalized, and young people are often included. While not exactly a special interest topic, the business

aspect of being a spiritual director and marketing tools might also be covered, though usually cursorily.

Of these topics, the development of and transitions in prayer is one that deserves a closer look, not only for the director, but also for those served. It is very important to understand that as a person deepens into the spiritual journey they go through periods of transition in prayer life. This helps to appreciate the directee's journey and to better discern the movements of the Sacred in the directee's experiences. As one deepens into prayer, a theme or image of the journey might emerge. The director can foster that deepening, in part by noticing the overarching theme that is presenting itself. Neafsey gives an exercise he uses to illustrate this concept.:

Participants can be invited to listen contemplatively for a "master metaphor" that captures the quality of their journey in prayer as a whole. Examples include ... ascent of a mountain, an inner journey to the center of a temple, a love affair between the soul and God... and liberation from captivity. (72)

Other states encountered in spiritual transitions are signaled by dry periods of prayer, a restlessness or sense of boredom. It is important for the director to understand these states and work with them accordingly. Many programs work with Theresa of Avila's classic book, The Interior Castle, to illustrate the soul's journey in prayer and all of the highways and byways it

encounters. Others use John of the Cross's, Dark Night of the Soul, an account of working toward union with God. Themes here include the Night of the Senses, Dark Night of the Soul and the radical surrender to the Mystery that brings both ennui and ecstasy as well as long periods of silence, experiences that are hard to bind or explain with words. To sit in the silence with a directee who is experiencing these states requires full presence, patience and knowledge of what is happening to help hold and witness holiness manifesting in this way. The restlessness during these times can look superficial to the untrained eye. The suffering can seem overwhelming to the one who is inept in holding space. The study of prayer states and transitions helps the director to look at unexamined assumptions about prayer and can expand a director's vision of the myriad possibilities of experience that are possible in prayer (Neafsey 77).

Similarly, some learning and reflecting on the relationship between spirituality and psychology and the places where they intersect help the directors to monitor their own unconscious material and to help their directees work through painful places of psychological growth or work with spiritual issues in the midst of mental illness. When spirituality and psychology are seen as a continuum, as Patricia Coughlin suggests, there is the possibility of working with psychological issues from a spiritual perspective. "Shame, guilt, anxiety, depression, loneliness and destructive ways of organizing and interpreting the meaning of feelings and events"

(80), while seemingly the domain of psychology, certainly show up in direction sessions in the psyches of directees - and directors too. It is the material of life and, as such, these events, sorrows, joys, crises, feelings and relationships with the self and with others affect the quality and substance of the direction session. While the emphasis may remain on how this material affects one's relationship with the Holy, it does not imply that there may not be therapeutic benefit from examining it. Nor does it mean that this material should be left outside the session, for to do so would imply that God is outside the realm of our everyday lives and feelings:

Someone who cannot feel loved by God as she struggles with the Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius might come to sense that after receiving empathic mirroring in therapy (80)

Similarly, a directee might experience this sense of feeling loved by God after receiving empathic mirroring in spiritual direction.

Training programs tend to introduce psychological models that are spiritual in nature. Jungian depth psychology, transpersonal psychology, and the integral model of Ken Wilbur are three that are common. Jung brings notions of reconnecting with split-off parts of the self and of archetypes, long the content of scriptural stories. Coughlin points out that Wilbur's work is the basis for Thomas Keating's psychology of Centering Prayer, a very popular

method of prayer for many Christians (82). Whatever framework is used, it is useful to address some psychological topics in spiritual direction.

Personality theory as expressed in the Enneagram and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (83) are often looked at, not as a way of pinning down a person to a typology, but to assist the director in working with ways of speaking about God and helpful types of prayer that suit the person's way of being in the world. Both these models now have a plethora of literature to support their use in prayer, spirituality and spiritual growth. Often it is recommended that students explore these models in greater depth outside their regular training program. Both models deserve more than a cursory understanding if they are to be used responsibly.

Developmental models, like those of Erik Erikson and Robert Kegan (83) fulfill similar functions when taught in training programs. They sharpen the sense of what images of God are likely to resonate and what kinds of prayer are preferable. Developmental models also serve to help the director understand how developed a directee's moral sense is and how he or she might process feelings, images and realizations. These models become aids in seeing and assisting the movements of the soul that lead to greater openness, to the call of the holy in prayer and everyday life circumstances. (Liebert 74) What this teaches the director is how to be more empathetic, less frustrated with "uncooperative" directees, less blaming of self or others

when the session takes an unexpected turn and less demanding of what is not possible (84).

Janet Ruffing, in her book Spiritual Direction: Beyond the Beginnings, has been the teacher/trainer of spiritual directors who has brought the psychological notions of transference and countertransference into the realm of spiritual direction. Focusing on transference/countertransference is not an intention of spiritual direction work, as it is in many psychotherapeutic encounters. However, when one is in such an intimate relationship of deep sharing of inner life over a period of time, the psychic material of the directee is likely to be projected onto the relationship with the director at some time. Likewise, directors are not immune from projecting unprocessed material in their psyches onto the directee. The point here is not to get into a therapeutic dynamic with the material, but for the director to acknowledge it appropriately either by referring the directee to a therapist to work on the issue and/or by taking the issue themselves into supervision. William Barry and William Connolly, in their book The Practice of Spiritual Direction, state that "growth as a spiritual director cannot be superficial, it must take root in the core of the person, in the heart, in that center where directors meet God and other people most intimately" (179). Hence, the supervision must focus on the countertransference of the director and not the dynamics of the directee (186).

One area of interface between spirituality and psychology that should never be overlooked is diagnostic considerations. Gerald May, in his book Care of Mind/Care of Spirit, speaks to psychiatric concerns. At the very least, there should be a module that looks at symptoms of depression, suicide, PTSD, psychosis, bipolar and other mental disorders. When someone is at risk to themselves or others, the spiritual director must know what to do and how to refer when they understand that they are outside their scope of practice.

The last considerations with regard to the interface between spirituality and psychology in a training program may come in the form of special interest topics. Perhaps the director is called to work with a special subset of directees. Such issues as working with the mentally ill, victims of sexual and ritual abuse, trauma, substance abuse and recovery, gender and sexual issues, the sick and the dying all should include some reading and mentoring around the attendant psychological components.

Part of the work of the spiritual director is the holding of the person as he or she matures in his or her faith. This brings us to the study of the stages in adult spirituality. James Bowler outlines four general phases of maturation in faith. The first is the stage of ultimate reality and meaning that the exterior world and culture of the directee defines. The second is a world of ultimate reality and meaning that is defined by the self. The third is characterized by denied or repressed experience coming to consciousness,

and the fourth stage is defined by the realization of God's one sustaining act of creation is mystical in nature (94-97).

This is one among many possible ways of describing the stages. What is important here is that Bowler has outlined in broad strokes the major transitions in the spiritual journey and these are important markers to note. It is the transitions between them where a directee is likely to feel stuck or dry. Together with the stages of prayer, they signal the director that special care and handling are required during these times. Empathy, and not impatience; spaciousness, and not focus; and assurance, not annoyance are called for. Learning about these stages and transitions can help the director orient better to the turmoil and ambivalence that the directee may feel and feel for some considerable time.

One thing all humans share in common is being incarnate in a body. It is the vehicle through which we feel, think, emote and sense the world around us. As such, it can be a source of wisdom for us and for our spiritual lives. As Lucy Abbot Tucker says, "it is a treasure chest of information" (102). She speaks about how a tool we talked about earlier in personality development, the Enneagram, characterizes people, in part, according to what aspect of their body they primarily derive wisdom from. According to Enneagram theory, there are three centers in the body – head, heart and gut. "Those who lead from the head approach life first from their thinking function. Those who lead from the heart look first to relationships,

and those who lead from the gut approach life from their feeling function” (103). As we mature spiritually, we may still lead with our primary function, but we will tend to integrate all functions. We learn to “feel our feelings, reverence them and allow them to be our teachers and guides” (102).

When we learn to integrate all the parts of our body and let them speak to one another, we can enjoy the fullness of what our body wisdom has to offer. The body can also help us to access what is in shadow and is unfree. Through the work of Eugene Genlin’s method of “focusing,” which he has written about in a book by the same name (Focusing, 1981), it was discovered that people when they take the time to feel feelings, to name them and dialogue with them, can help themselves undo places in themselves where they feel emotionally stuck. Similarly, in spiritual direction, places where the directee does not feel free can be uncovered and resolved with this same method of focusing. Training programs are now incorporating these and other methods in the creative arts, such as the use of poetry and collage, to access body wisdom in the service of deepening an individual’s spirituality.

## Part V

### Training Interspiritual Directors

#### “Deepening into Spirit:” Personal Spiritual Formation

Now that we have described the major components of a classical spiritual direction training program, let us turn our attention to the similarities and differences found in training interspiritual directors. From 2003 to 2010, I had the privilege of designing and implementing an interspiritual direction training program for the Lorian Association’s Center for Incarnational Spirituality. Along with me, faculty members Jeremy Berg MCS, Ruth Chaffee PhD, Elizabeth Fowler MD, Terri O’Fallon PhD, Freya Secrest MSD, David Spangler MCS and Julia Spangler, all trained spiritual directors themselves, designed a curriculum that incorporated all of the elements described in Parts III and IV of this thesis. “Deepening into Spirit” was the name of the personal formation program and “Soul Friending” was the name of the professional training master's degree program. Together they composed Lorian’s interspiritual direction training program (Appendix III). The emphasis and focus on some elements of the classical curriculum were changed and new components were added that reflected the needs of students particular to working interspiritually with directees.

It should be noted here that Incarnational Spirituality, conceived of and written about by David Spangler, is the underlying metaphysical system

of Lorian education. Learning the components of that metaphysic was required of all students entering the “Deepening into Spirit” and “Soul Friending” programs. As a hermeneutical structure, Incarnational Spirituality frames interspirituality in a way that allows students to fill in the particular content of their own experiences, beliefs and practices. At the same time, it remains a template for understanding and navigating the field of interspirituality. Describing the basic tenets of Incarnational Spirituality will assist the reader in understanding both the details of the curriculum that reflect both classical and interspiritual stances and the field of interspirituality as a whole.

In his book, Introduction to Incarnational Spirituality, David Spangler describes Incarnational Spirituality as

the art and practice of evoking and using inner resources of energy arising from the act of incarnation itself in order to shape one’s life, bless one’s world and become a partner with the creative forces of spirit. (1)

It is both a practice and an experience of the Sacred. As Secret and Fageol have noted,

the core of eclectic spirituality is the call to individual exploration. This is a call to craft a personal relationship with the Sacred that is direct, authentic, and often outside the boundaries of any particular religious tradition. (8)

The emphasis of eclectic spirituality is on individual meaning-making and is energized and broadened by allowing direct experience to be the formative connection with the Sacred (8). Spangler's metaphysic of Incarnational Spirituality allows just such a spiritual approach. Direct reflection on the experience of life is what human beings derive from the consciousness inherent in human incarnation. Incarnation itself *is* that direct experience of connection with the Sacred. This reflective ability is the signature of our uniqueness as incarnate beings. When that focus is turned toward that which we deem to be Sacred, it becomes a form of interspirituality.

In order to appreciate Incarnational Spirituality's contribution to the understanding of interspirituality, a closer look at some of its main themes is helpful. It espouses three levels of spiritual involvement. The first level has to do with personal spiritual practice for the purpose of inner change and development. Through this practice, one's well-being is enhanced. This includes changes in attitude toward the self, others, one's worldview, one's being in the world, and one's relationship with the Sacred (2). The aim is to create an opening within the self that, in turn, opens one to the "generative power and energy of one's own incarnational spirit" (2).

This perspective implies, at this level, a sense of the Sacred that is immanent. Here the traditional "kingdom of God" idea expands to not only being within you, but also is you. This brings us back to perennial

philosophy's view of panentheism – God is there in all things. Nomenclature is important here, as many who hold this interspiritual notion that the Holy is a divine spark that is *them* would not choose the word "God," but rather the "Holy," the "Sacred," the "Divine" or "Mystery," which I will use interchangeable throughout the rest of this thesis.

The second level of involvement that occurs in Incarnational Spirituality relates to a change of action or behavior as a result of new insights or inner shifts. Reshaping one's life, one's relationships and even the environment is the next layer of work in both Incarnational Spirituality and interspirituality. By developing our incarnational energy, we have the power to change the way we manifest how and who we are in our world (2). A critical corollary to this step is the concept of co-creation. It is the combined energy impulse of the seeker in cooperation with the Sacred that allows for the manifestation. This is not a magical concept, but rather a sense of deep attunement and listening for the deepest discernable answer that combines the best of oneself and the Sacred. The outcome is potentiated; the resultant manifestation is realized in a totally new creative appearance not previously visualized.

Spangler uses the concept of blessing (Blessing) as an example of this principle. One may hold another in meditation or prayer, not asking for anything but simply holding the person with no qualifiers. The idea is to hold a presence so that the other can do what needs to be done (Introduction

59). By combining a holding of the other without agenda and meeting the Sacred in that presence, a blessing occurs. There is no outcome intended, just the creation of sacred space to allow the unfoldment of the blessing. This principle is operative at the heart of both classical and interspiritual direction.

The third level of involvement is the use of one's incarnational energy in service to the inner and outer forces of change in the world. In Incarnational Spirituality parlance, this is called "world work" (2). This view of spiritual service in the world places an emphasis on working in partnership with inner alliances from the nonphysical realms. Interspirituality is open to these kinds of partnerships and often emphasizes them. As an example, the use of oracular practices (like the I Ching, Tarot, Runes) to receive knowledge for discernment is a common practice.

Spangler postulates that practices and exercises used at all three levels enhance our spiritual capacities and enable growth and maturity. As in all spirituality, the discipline of regular practice leads to the ripening of one's spiritual Self. While Spangler has specific exercises designed to accomplish this goal of ripening one's spiritual Self, it should be noted that these exercises are only some of the many options used in the Lorian program to allow the deepening of the same formation capacities which were referred to earlier in the classical formation programs.

Spangler names seven premises on which all his Incarnational Spirituality rests. They are examples of basic interspiritual principles. The first premise is that "the act of incarnation is the primal act from creation that emerges from the Generative Mystery of the Sacred. The cosmos is the incarnation of the Sacred" (4). This statement is an interspiritual way of stating panentheism (without the God word!).

The second premise is that "our individual acts of incarnation are a fractal or resonant expression of this primal act, a means by which we participate in and manifest sacredness ourselves" (4). Individual selves are important. Each person uniquely expresses a demonstrable proof of the sacredness of reality by simply being incarnate.

The third premise is that "incarnation is a process that is ongoing" (4). We are continuously coming into fuller expression of the embodiment of the Sacred. We are also continuously becoming more conscious of our responsibility and relatedness to the Sacred.

The fourth premise is that "the art of incarnation generates creative energy" (5). In interspiritual terms, we are ourselves an act of prayer. Out of us the Sacred moves and is moved. "It is also an inner resource on which we can draw" (5). A Christian scriptural equivalent of this might be the Gospel of John's opening: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Interspirituality would see this as

the author's way of saying that the Word, Jesus, is a fractal of creation that also generates creative energy.

The fifth premise is that "at the heart of the incarnational process is the generative source that is the essence of Self, our sacred individuality" (5). Here again we see that often understood interspiritual principle that our Self is both a source and a means of the Sacred. (For this thesis, Self implies the true Self that is both source and means of the Sacred). Concomitant with this premise is the notion of sovereignty. Sovereignty is a core energy that can be found at the mystery and depths of the Soul and at the personality level (5). Interspirituality invites a person to stand in the Self that is the source of the Sacred, includes the Sacred, interacts with the Sacred and emanates from the Sacred. This interpretation of the function of the Self stands over and against more traditional religious hierarchical notions of a God that is "above" all creation, including humans. In Incarnational Spirituality, and in other manifestations of interspirituality, there is the quantum idea of a nested hierarchy where the paradox of source and product of the Sacred are one and the same. This is similar to the mystical understanding of unitive experiences where distinctions between God and Self drop away. Teasdale speaks of this as the mystery that underlies all traditions and the mystery that draws the individual interspiritual seeker.

The sixth premise of Incarnational Spirituality is the objective of the seeker to “understand and inhabit all levels of the Self with love and honor as a means of unfolding the coherency and power of our unique spiritual presence as a blessing in the world” (5). This is also what Matthew Fox writes about in his book, Original Blessing. Creation Spirituality, Fox’s version of interspirituality, seeks to draw out this very principle.

Finally, it is in the seventh premise of Incarnational Spirituality that there is

an act of resonance between the individual and the universal.

To partner with, participate in, and enhance the universal and sacred spirit of incarnation itself is to honor, bless and empower all other acts of incarnation that make up our world. (5)

This is the interspiritual principle of interdependence, of “mutual co-arising” to quote Buddhist scholar and deep ecologist Joanna Macy (World as Lover, World as Self 95-96).

Out of these three levels and seven premises of Incarnational Spirituality come the capacities that allow us to inhabit and enhance ourselves. In our incarnational formation, we also prepare ourselves to engage more deeply, and in a more compassionate way, with others. Hence the Lorian experience of spiritual formation also includes the development of certain capacities that deepen students’ sense of Self and the desire and ability to be of service to others.

Now comes a demonstration of ways in which Lorian's "Deepening into Spirit" program combines classical with interspiritual elements of personal spiritual transformation. First, a brief description of the overall structure of the program will be given (Appendix II 1-2). The Lorian Center for Incarnational Spirituality offered a two-year personal spiritual formation program called "Deepening into Spirit." It was also the required foundational program for another tract leading to a master's degree in Contemporary Spirituality. The third year, Lorian's "Soul Friending" program offered a professional certificate in spiritual direction. Upon completion of this third year, students had the option of writing a thesis for a master's degree in spiritual direction, with an emphasis on some form of interspirituality.

Those students taking the "Deepening into Spirit" program who desired the certificate and/or master's degree in spiritual direction were required to be in individual spiritual direction with a classically trained director who was a graduate of a recognized training program. Since interspiritual training was new, there was no option to work with an interspiritually trained director. Students had to find directors who were sympathetic to the interspiritual field. The ethics of SDI and Lorian precluded the Lorian faculty from working as directors with students, as this would have constituted a "dual relationship" which falls outside the boundaries of these guidelines.

The format for instruction during each of the two years of the “Deepening into Spirit” program included three five-day face-to-face intensives and three online twelve-week quarters during which students took two classes per quarter (1-2). Each quarter began with a five-day face-to-face intensive that introduced the theme for the quarter and gave the student the opportunity to interact with others in personal exploration, using exercises that did not fit the online formatting. One of the two concurrent classes was on a particular aspect of Incarnational Spirituality. The other class focused on specific formation capacities that built the student’s spiritual self. The online portion of the course was interactive in nature, employing online software that allowed for both real-time and asynchronous interaction. Discussions, journal and classroom entries could be viewed by all. The faculty response time during online activity was never more than twenty-four hours.

Additionally, there was an online “Integrative Spiritual Practice” track that ran alongside the online courses for the whole of the two years (Appendix III 13-14). It had several purposes. The first one was to help students deepen into their own personal spiritual practice. The second purpose was to “provide an ongoing forum for the integration and application of the material presented in the curriculum” (13).

The first year of formation focused on the development and nurturing of the self in the context of the Sacred and was called “Deepening into Self.”

The second year focused on the self in relationship to others and the world and was called "Deepening into Relationship." All classes were holistic in design, highlighting short lectures, some reading and discussion and lots of interactive and experiential exercises followed by reflections upon them (1, 6-9, 9-14).

The Fall Quarter of the first year was entitled the "Nature of the Sovereign Self" (7). The intensive schedule included practices of being "present" to the Self, receiving a felt-sense of the sacredness of the Self and initiating some psychological understanding of the Self, Internal Family Systems™ (IFS), the work of Richard Schwartz from The Center for Self Leadership. Spiritual autobiography, body-sense, art, and music were also employed in teaching.

The first online class, the Incarnational Spirituality class, "Sacredness: The Foundations of Self," (7) worked on understanding sacred individuality and the Self as the source of the Sacred and on the nature of "sacredness." It examined how one imagines the Sacred, both as itself and in relationship to the Self. The interspiritual slant included how new paradigms from science affect spirituality. It explored the "meaning of Self as a fractal of divinity expressing sovereignty, generativity and responsibility within the world" (7). The second online class, "Befriending the Personality," (7) afforded more chances to work with the principles of IFS. Emphasis was on appreciating

individual uniqueness and looking at aspects and patterns of the personality that no longer served.

This first quarter also worked with the "human experience of God" in classical direction terms. The interspiritual differentiation is the notion that we are the Sacred and so the Self is an aspect of the overall field of the Sacred. It is person centered rather than God centered. As such, humans are agents of incarnation, blessing and transformation, not something outside of or apart from the Sacred. This does not imply that there is no transcendent aspect to the Sacred. Aspects of the Sacred do exist outside our consciousness with which we interact as well. This is again the paradox of interspirituality with which the seeker lives. In classical spirituality, what is looked for is a sense of the smallness and humbleness of the human against the all powerful, awesome Godhead. In Incarnational Spirituality, the incarnate being carries and directs that Sacred potential as well as interacting with it.

The winter quarter of the first year was called "The Shadow and the Sacred" (7). The intensive centered on the sacred nature of the shadow, a Jungian psychological concept referring to the hidden parts of our personality that can be either positive or negative. Shadow was explored through a time of silent retreat where a creative arts process called Touch Drawing™ was used. "Participants recognize[d], witness[ed] and integrate[d] shadow material" (7). Reflective writing, ritual and

improvisational theater exercises were also employed. The online classes for the second quarter were "Standing in Self: Incarnation and Sovereignty" (8) and "Body Work" (8). The Incarnational Spirituality class, "Standing in Self" explored the nature of incarnation as a sacred act and personal sovereignty as a spiritual expression ... sovereignty is considered a core value embodying freedom, integrity, uniqueness and innate creative power. Through it, we can experience the nature of Sacredness. It is akin to the notion of the eclectic spirituality slogan of 'standing in your true Self.' (8)

Again, this spirituality is person centered, but far from egotistical, it is a deeply mystical stance. It is here that the possibility of sensing oneself as part of the vastness of the Sacred and the particularity of knowing it in one's incarnate being are both possible.

The second class, "Body Work," highlighted another concept central to interspirituality - embodiment. Incarnation takes place in the body, so does "being" Sacred. To that end, this class helped the student to experience even more deeply the felt sense of the Sacred in the body. Through learning about systems of energy distribution, the physics of energy movement and healing touch modalities, students learned strategies and integration for energy management and ways of learning discernment criteria through the body's wisdom. One requirement of this class was to receive three private bodywork sessions. As part of learning discernment, each student was asked

to sit with a question during their sessions. The purpose was to give students a felt-sense way of knowing the inherent wisdom coming from their own bodies (8). Here we began the work of discernment but through forms of “body” prayer (yoga, tai chi, chi gong, deep breathing, chanting, dance) and meditation on the felt senses in the body.

Spring quarter of the first year was given over to the important idea of “Imagining the World: Differences and Boundaries” (8). With this intensive the curriculum began to hint at turning from the interior Self to begin to face outward to the world. The students began to look at how they structured and viewed the world: how they meet the world and perceives it influence, their perspectives of the world, the cosmos and nature, their notions of the Holy, and their interactions with the Holy as encountered in daily life. An ancillary concept to world-view is that of boundary. Boundaries have three functions: to protect, to take one to the edge of one’s comfort, safety and familiarity and to help one become aware of crossing over new thresholds. Considerable time was spent exploring differences and boundaries both in the intensive and in the online classes during the quarter. Knowing about boundaries helps to define and redefine oneself, helps one to know where safety and discomfort/resistance lie and helps one to understand the ramifications of the spiritual call that requires passing through thresholds.

The online Incarnational Spirituality class in the spring was entitled “The Generative Self: Imagination, Presence and Co-Creativity” (9). It

focused on the use of the imagination and perception in the construction of world-views. It also looked at how a broadening of imagination can lead to more co-creativity in the spiritual realms and in sacred partnerships in the world. The intersection of boundary and imagination was also explored.

The second class, "Ethics and Boundaries," (8) looked at personal values, situational ethics, boundaries and how they influence each other. Here attention was paid to the felt-sense and bodily experiences of boundary as definition of the Self, as edge and as threshold. Defining the Self in these ways helped to develop the capacity for presence and compassion.

The whole of the first year's curriculum, as visible in the catalogue (Appendix III 7-9), does not show the syllabi from the individual courses. It is in this syllabi layer that careful thought was given as to how to include the skill development of core capacities for self-deepening and for preparing to do spiritual direction with others. All of the exercises designed in the assignments for these first-year classes gave opportunities for the students to practice deep listening, presence, contemplative awareness, curiosity, silence, and a tolerance of ambiguity and the unknown. Incarnational Spirituality gives language to these capacities as standing, holding, and blessing. The underpinnings of discernment were also present in exercises about boundaries and in students' work with their spiritual autobiographies. Additionally, the online "Integrative Spiritual Practice" track, mentioned above, where students were asked to record felt interior movements and

responses to the exercises from course work and to their stated daily spiritual practice was aimed at developing these core capacities (13-14). Each quarter held a different focus. In the fall quarter of the first year, students learned to navigate the online site and began by recording thoughts and feelings they had about the courses in which they were engaged. In the winter quarter of the first year, the faculty posted inquiries designed to “develop tools of connection and inner attunement ... employ[ing] spiritual autobiography, focusing, felt sense and kinesiology techniques, inner and outer listening skills, and discerning authentic voice” (13). The winter quarter’s inquiries concentrated on tools for discernment and on “investigating different modes of entry into the sacred” (14). Winter quarter focused on recognizing and resolving resistance. Spring quarter concentrated on valuing the intrinsic worth of each person, differing worldviews and deepening inner life calling/vocation (14). This provided the students and faculty with a long-range perspective on students’ spiritual growth and issues.

The second year of the “Deepening into Spirit” program, “ Deepening into Relationship,” (9) continued the journey of personal formation with an emphasis on how a person is in relationship with others. Both the interspiritual and Lorian reframe on this set of skill-building courses and exercises had to with the question, “With whom am I in relationship?”

Interspirituality and Incarnational Spirituality would answer that question more broadly than a classical formation program would. For the interspiritual seeker, relationships can include the rest of the sentient world and those beings who inhabit unseen realms. It is not uncommon to establish relationships with the animal and plant kingdoms, or with angelic or inter-dimensional energies and beings. This is taken as a given and was integrated into the curricular material of this second year.

Building on the strength of deepening and broadening the sense of Self as Sacred and as agent of the Sacred, the second year focused on the spirituality of co-creation with others, seen and unseen, and in the context of service to the world (9). The Incarnational Spirituality track of classes gathered in understandings of the nature of the non-physical realms and partnership with spiritual allies. The second track of assembled online classes centered on the nature of call/vocation, cooperation, the energetics of creating a field for interaction, energy hygiene and practicums of inquiry about being in relationship.

Participants ... experience more deeply the power of imagination, the multidimensional nature of their own selves, the integrative capacity of the self and the embodiment of sacredness. This opens new possibilities of relationship in both physical and nonphysical worlds. Within the inner realms, this takes the form of contact and collaborative alliances with spiritual beings. In the

outer world, these possibilities manifest as partnering in service with one another and to the earth. Through the practice of co-creative presence we gain the power to shape our personal and collective ecologies. (9)

The fall quarter of year two was "Being in Relationship" (10). The intensive concentrated on the question, "What is the nature of relationship?" The nature of conflict and communication was explored using the work of Marshall Rosenberg and his work in non-violent communication, Personology™, a system of personality typology based on physiological characteristics, and IFS. Students also worked with how to meet the "other" in the radiance of the Sacred by knowing the felt sense of radiance in the Self and how it was carried into relationships (10). The fall quarter intensive worked with the formation skills of boundaries, presence and communication, both verbal and nonverbal. The emphasis was on how the Self forms itself in relationship to others. Previously, these skills were explored with the Self in relation to the self, in a more interior way. The inter-relational aspect that was added was that these skills were applied not just to human relationships, but also to relationships with non-physical and non-human beings, all part of the sacred whole from the perspective of both interspirituality and Incarnational Spirituality.

The online courses for the fall quarter of the second year were "The Call of the World" and "Alliances: Partnerships in Caring and Spaciousness"

(11). In the "Call" class students discovered how their incarnational selves were "loving responses to the world in which they participate, engage, nurture and serve." It taught students to look beyond a specific call or vocation to service through presence to the world at large. The nature and dynamics of this "world work" was examined. Its relevance for spiritual direction lies in deepening the responsibility of each of us, as beings who view the world as imbued with spiritual presence, to strive to live from that position at all times and to encourage others to find that capacity in themselves. (11)

The "Alliances" class examined, in a much-needed way, the very idea of inner realm alliances and co-creative partnership with non-physical allies and forces. Much hoopla is made of this type of partnership and it is rarely addressed in classical training programs. Lorian dealt with this aspect of spirituality in a reasonable, responsible and honoring way. All too often there is a glibness and englamorment about working with non-physical forces. Incarnational Spirituality treats this subject carefully and fully, allowing the full scope of these realms to be addressed and held as "real." The idea, though, is not new to classical religious traditions, and is given little credence in most spiritual direction circles. Examining attitudes and the scope of possible alliances with angels, devas, archetypes or other forms of inner guidance allowed students to become comfortable with their own, as well as others', touchstones in this arena. Emphasis was placed on

maintaining personal sovereignty, boundaries and ethics skills necessary for doing responsible and effective world work in such alliances. The homework for this class was to engage in two relationships, one human and one non-human, for the whole twelve weeks of the class. With the permission of the other, the student was to engage in full presence, deep listening and felt sense to “be there” for the other and to observe what happened to the relationship over the course of three months. Reflective questions were posed online to help direct awareness to ever more subtle forms of interaction.

Winter quarter of year two had as its theme “Walking in the World” (11). The intensive was spent mapping world ecologies. Each student worked with art materials that were left out over the entire intensive. Time was given each day for reflection and creating a visual representation of the student’s own ecology. The studio was open all day and night and the last day was given over to brief presentations by each student artist. Questions that fed the process were given for contemplation. One example was “What are the flora and fauna of your inner and outer selves and how do they enhance or obstruct the flow of spirit through the landscape?” Didactically, the adjunct teaching was on the elements of shadow and resistance in relationship. Also deepened were the understandings of field theory and principles of partnership and co-creativity. From a spiritual formation perspective, this whole intensive was a discernment process.

Because interspirituality describes spirituality in terms of energy and flow, a whole class was offered in the winter quarter on the application of field theory. Eclectic seekers are often heard to speak about “stuck energy,” “being in the flow,” “sucking energy” and similar phrases. Interspirituality uses a language that reflects quantum consciousness. This class addressed this new scientific understanding of consciousness. We also looked at systems theory, deep ecology and concepts of flow and coherence. “We access fields as palpable experiences of synchronicity, intuition and interconnectedness. Through developing the capacities of attention and awareness we distinguish between fields and energy” (11).

The second class of the winter quarter was “Building Alliances” (12). Working on the premise that alliances constitute generativity and co-creative partnership, this class sought to draw out the students’ own creative power and accountability in relationship with non-physical beings and with the world around them. Exploring the skills and capacities for forming such alliances based on foundations previously exercised, students deepened their abilities to form such relationships (12). Part of this work was the beginning of a group discernment and project. The students had to conceive of a project of “world work” that used all that they had learned in the last two years. They had to cooperate with each other and with inner alliances. They spent their time this quarter finding and defining the project. Students had

to work contemplatively within themselves, resonate in presence with their fellow students and inner allies and discern the group field and project.

The last quarter of the program continued the theme of "Being in Alliance" (12). Larger ecologies were the focus of continued study of the nature of inner alliances and co-creative partnerships. The principles of sovereignty, interdependence, openness, accountability and mutual blessing were developed and applied to partnerships students built in their lives (12). In the intensive, methods such as role-play and small-group problem solving were used to gain practical experience in building alliance capacities. Part of this intensive also gave the students face-to-face time to work on their group alliance project.

The classes for the spring quarter of year two were combined to form a practicum for the group alliance project. Some online time was spent looking at economic, healing, parenting and stewardship of the earth co-creative projects already existing in the world. This gave the students examples of different working models from which to draw resources and to reflect on as they began to manifest their own alliance project.

It is worth mentioning that the project one group chose was partnering with inner world alliances to help heal the field of Hiroshima and the nuclear holocaust that occurred there. Part of the project was the making of a thousand origami paper cranes as a manifestation of the love and healing energy field. They worked with the overlighting deva of cranes, the angel of

the city of Hiroshima, the field of the dead from that event and more. At the final intensive, before graduation, they created a ritual to commemorate their alliance. Part of the ritual was to burn all the cranes. At the end, one yellow crane was found in the burn pile wholly intact. That paper crane was later taken to Hiroshima to be placed at the memorial there. It was a potent learning experience for all.

The final exercises before graduation were individual presentations by the students of how they saw their true Selves. Each had total creative license in how they presented themselves as incarnate spiritual beings. These presentations were to demonstrate what they had learned about themselves and that they understood and could use the spiritual capacities taught in the program. These presentations were adaptations stemming from a culminating paper about their growth in the program.

The “Integrative Spiritual Practice” track, which also ran through the whole of the second year online experience, put together a practicum integrating the students’ spiritual practices into the arena of their chosen practice relationships (14). By applying “the techniques of centering, sovereignty, witnessing, holding, participating and appreciating diversity to daily life relationships,” (14) it allowed students to continue to apply these skills and capacities in working with others. Winter quarter focused on recognizing and resolving resistance. Spring quarter highlighted co-creativity with alliances of all kinds (14). This second year application of the

“Integrative Spiritual Practice” track focused on inquiries designed to help students look at witnessing themselves and their own processes while witnessing and interacting with others. Additionally, it provided a long-term view each of student’s spiritual journey during the second year. The faculty intention for the “Integrative Spiritual Practice” track during the second year was the idea that having students pay attention to their relationships in these ways would prove useful in helping them view patterns of interaction with directees during the third year.

## Part VI

### Training Interspiritual Directors

#### “Soul Friending”:

#### Professional Spiritual Direction Formation

By this point in their educational journey, students entering the “Soul Friending” program had had two years of personal formation work, at least one year of personal experiences in spiritual direction and a skill set that laid a foundation for competency in accompanying another on a spiritual journey. The Lorian “Deepening into Spirit” education also provided these students with much of what would be useful in dealing with the needs of seekers from an interspiritual perspective. In addition to the Lorian “Deepening into Spirit” program-graduates, we also included transfer students whom we felt had the above skill sets. These students were graduates of the Claritas Institute for Interspiritual Mentoring in which I participated as an adjunct faculty member, giving me detailed knowledge of that program. These students had already had some experience directing folks and some elementary instruction in the art of interspiritual direction. The Claritas program, which ran for a year and a half, combined both formation and direction instruction, with an emphasis on formation. The Claritas students had chosen to join us because they wanted a master’s degree in interspiritual direction and so were prepared to deepen into material that

was, in part, familiar to them and in part, not. The Lorian faculty and Claritas transfer students mutually agreed that reviewing some of the Incarnational Spirituality material from the "Deepening into Spirit" program would prove beneficial. To this end, it was agreed that the Claritas transfer students would take an online class with David Spangler before the start of the "Soul Friending" academic year to learn the rudiments of Incarnational Spirituality before starting the program.

The educational pattern for the Soul Friending year consisted of six three-day face-to-face intensives, an ongoing online class, continuing personal monthly spiritual direction sessions, continuing individual integrative spiritual practice and monthly teleconference calls in small groups for peer supervision (Appendix II 2). The intensives introduced concepts and themes that would be continued online for the following two months. The intensives also allowed plenty of face-to-face time for experiential engagement, including opportunities to practice spiritual direction sessions that focused on current topics with fellow students. Again, as in the "Deepening into Spirit" program, we took advantage of face-to-face time to work with aspects of spiritual direction training that were hard to do online. Additionally, each student was engaged in directing at least two volunteers in their home communities with whom they had made arrangements for monthly direction sessions (Appendix III 14-15,16).

The first intensive, "Creating the Field for Soul Friending," (16-17) in June, consisted initially of a two-day class in "Contemporary Spirituality." This class was a prerequisite for both the master's degree in Contemporary Spirituality and in "Soul Friending" and thus included students from both tracks (3,5). This class covered the history and components of esoteric and earth-based spiritualities and the history of mystical spirituality from all traditions. Students were also asked to read about the main beliefs of the world religions during the summer before the start of the third year. Texts included Huston Smith's The World's Religions and Wayne Teasdale's The Mystic Heart.

Immediately following the face-to-face contemporary spirituality course was a two-day face-to-face class for "Soul Friending" students only. It included didactic and discussion sessions on the history and definition of spiritual direction, client relations and elements for a fruitful first session (16-17).

The client relations' section worked with choosing and being chosen by a client. Here the word client is used interchangeably with directee. Using a less "hierarchical" term than directee is part of the difference in language found in interspirituality. In addition, the Lorian faculty chose the name "Soul Friending" for the process and relationship of spiritual direction, in part, because it sounded less religious. Client relations also included learning to assess client/director compatibility and refer clients to another spiritual

director due to incompatibility, establishing a relationship with a client, and learning to recognize the need to refer a potential client for psychotherapy.

The section on elements for a successful first session began the first foray into naming what one does in spiritual direction in interspiritual language, specifically that of Incarnational Spirituality.

Hence the discussion was around questions like “How do you set up a field in which spiritual direction can take place?”, “What co-creative forms of partnership come into play?”, and “How does this relationship constitute a blessing?”. More classical spiritual direction inquiries, which were also integrated into the “Soul Friending” program, included looking at how one can use different forms of spiritual autobiography and how to help clients set up and/or maintain a spiritual practice.

This latter topic is an especially important aspect of interspiritual direction. When a director has a client who picks and chooses from various sources to assemble a practice, it is important to make sure that there is not so much breadth to the practice that it precludes depth of practice. It is also important that the client stay with a particular exploration of one practice before moving on to another. Some directees have a sense of this depth if they grew up in a specific religious tradition, but for those who did not, the establishment of a spiritual practice without the benefit of tradition is a new and often foreign concept. Particular care is needed here on the part of the interspiritual director.

The second intensive, in September, focused on the theme of “Responding to a Client’s Spiritual Call” and was extended from three to five days to include a two-day silent retreat (17). The first section of the intensive covered the theme of defining the territory of the calling. This included looking at the nature of the Self, the Soul, the Sacred and the World. These concepts from Incarnational Spirituality became the cosmological backdrop and vocabulary for discussing the different ways call can appear, the ways to listen to who is being called, as well as a discussion of various modalities of call. The questions “Where are you called to serve?”, “What is the nature of the work?”, and “With whom are you called to serve (physical and/or non-physical alliances)?” formed part of the constellation of aspects of calling that were addressed in order to see the whole picture and perspective of calling.

The second aspect of this call theme stemmed from ascertaining and strengthening the client’s sense of spiritual rootedness, home and connections to the Sacred. Classically, this is often taught through looking at Ignatius of Loyola’s concept of the Principle and Foundation as found in his Spiritual Exercises (22-23). This brings into inquiry how the director helps to find and foster the affective sense of this grounding of the Sacred in the directee. For the interspiritual director, it also leads to an inquiry about how to translate this concept out of its sixteenth century Spanish Catholic context and into the myriad ways it can be experienced by the eclectic seeker.

This brings to the fore the broader questions that were addressed continually throughout the year: “How do both the director and the client remove a theological or metaphysical concept from a particular tradition and at the same time translate its essential meaning in a way that is helpful to the director, or client, who may have lifted it from its ‘natural’ context?” and “Which concepts are truly universal and can be adapted to a different spiritual ecology?”. Students worked with these questions in the particularity of discovering and employing the underlying concept of rootedness in the Sacred, based on the Principle and Foundation. For example, students were asked how they might deal with ideas of sin, surrender and humility as these concepts emerged in their interspiritual directees who tended not to value these terms or concepts yet struggled with “being out of right relationship” with the Sacred or others. Likewise, students were exposed to questions of how might they adapt to the paradox of holding Ignatius’s world-view of the sovereignty of God with concepts from Incarnational Spirituality like self-sovereignty? How might they hold themselves and their directees in the groundedness of their souls when they are the Sacred incarnate? Or, to look at Matthew Fox’s concept of original blessing, how is it possible to hold the paradox of original sin and original blessing at the same time (316-319)? These issues are important to the interspiritual seeker who has left a religious tradition and is struggling to find new meaning in old concepts or to understand why they no longer serve. For

those people who have never been part of a faith tradition and who encounter theological or metaphysical concepts in the spiritual exploration, helping them understand their meaning and whether or not these concepts fit their spirituality is an equally critical task for interspiritual directors.

The third intensive, "Discernment," in November, focused on the many components of discernment and how to work with directees who wish to make a discernment, either formally or informally (17). Much of this unit reviewed and enlarged on the wonderful body of knowledge that already exists from classical spiritual direction. Topics covered were: components of discernment, methods of discernment, extreme states, the ecology of inner worlds, and working with allies in discernment. Interspiritual influences around discernment were seen in an emphasis on body knowledge and alliances with inner allies in the discernment process.

Drawing on earlier personal formation skills, we encouraged students to work with affect and felt sense through helping the client tune into bodily sensations and following them through to a resolved state. The latest research in neuroscience and brain development was taught to help students deepen directees' experiences of consolation, inner knowing and their creative imagination processes. We also called upon this method to work with and dissolve resistance as appropriate.

With regard to working with inner allies, we spent time teaching directors to work with directees around divination and oracles as a way of

knowing. Many interspiritual seekers use these aids to assist them in coming to decisions that they deem to be spiritually based. The possibilities come from many cultures and spiritual systems. Assisting the directee to stay in sovereignty while entering into partnership with these forms of alliance requires balance.

The importance of understanding how to work with inner alliances is three-fold. First, interspiritual directors may have their own co-creative partnerships that inform them in a direction session. Ethical issues arise around whether or not to reveal their inner alliance knowledge to a directee. Questions arise: "Is the director's inner guidance accurate?", "Is it appropriate for the director to share this information with the client?", and "Is the timing right for the revelation?".

The second important aspect of working with inner alliances has to do with the affect and felt-sense the client is experiencing. The director's alliances may or may not be accurate. For example if the alliances' messages are predictive, they may cause the client to step back from her or his own sovereignty and make a decision that is falsely based. It can be especially tricky if the director's allies and the directee's allies are giving opposite messages. The director needs to know ways to discern and handle the situation and make sure that the voice of the Holy is what is truly being heard.

The third important aspect of working with inner alliances is how the use of imagination touches on discernment. Many religious traditions discourage the use of imagination as leading the seeker away from God. Interspirituality, and certainly Incarnational Spirituality, encourages the use of imagination as a path of knowledge. Imagination is, for instance, an integral part of the shamanic path. Many earth-based pagan traditions employ imagination as a tool. So, too, do new age systems. Clients often come with ambivalent feelings: "Is this my imagination, or is this really God/Spirit speaking to me?" Fortunately we have a long tradition of the use of imagination in many spiritual traditions around the world that shows its assisting value in spiritual practice and discernment. One needs to look no farther than Rumi, Theresa of Avila, or Tibetan thonka meditation to see the value of imagination. Learning to help the client discern the voice of the true Self is crucial to authentic spiritual direction. It also impacts knowing when someone is in an extreme state of ecstasy, overwhelm, dark night of the soul, or englamorment. The question that needs to be asked is, "Is this a spiritual state or an internal state of the imaginal misfiring of neural networks?" For all these reasons, and especially when one is in foreign interior territory without benefit of creed or tradition to steer one on a healthy path, it is important for interspiritual directors to have experience with and a firm grasp on this material and these concepts.

There is much material to ponder around the topic of discernment. Having the extra time online to work with the many nuances of this topic was important. By this time in the program, students had seen their volunteer directees several times. Often these clients were working with discernment issues. This provided student-directors with the perfect opportunity for researching and modifying their approaches with clients.

The fourth intensive, in January, took us into the heart of "Professional Praxis" (18). This intensive dealt with the interface of spiritual direction with psychology, with boundaries and ethics, with communication, with working with diversity as well as with additional work on alliances. On the practical side, we also spent time looking at spiritual direction practice management.

Psychological issues that were explored were transference and countertransference, the concept of shadow, recognizing the signs of mental disorders and learning when referral was appropriate. Communication skill-enhancement revisited non-violent communication and body wisdom, this time with the accent on the client and encouraging better and richer expression of language of his or her spiritual experiences.

Discussion and sharing of resources dealing with the business side of a director's practice is a topic often omitted from curriculae. Taking the time to compose a statement about oneself as a director and what folks can expect when they come for spiritual direction builds confidence and helps to sharpen one's professional beliefs and how one uniquely practices spiritual

direction. The statement becomes a further refinement of expressing vocation. With interspiritual directors who are meeting people of all spiritualities and practices, how one gives words to one's work will call some forward and others to seek elsewhere for a closer alignment of beliefs. Similarly, whether to charge and how much are valuable questions that students were asked to discern. Financial arrangements and possible fees for missed sessions are also questions for the professional to ponder and set clear boundaries around. Most directors working interspiritually are self-employed and are obviously not members of a religious organization or order. They may therefore need to charge appropriately as directing is their livelihood. Estimating the fee involves factors like demographics, availability of other directors and the director's own financial needs.

The largest portion of this fourth intensive was given over to issues of diversity. Since diversity is almost synonymous with interspirituality, there were a number of aspects to explore. First, there are the different portals or pathways to the Sacred. The Hindus speak about this notion as the four ragas or predilections toward the Holy: the intellectual, the devotional, the contemplative and the actional. Others have noticed different paths. (See Joan Borysenko's book, 7 Paths to God: The Ways of the Mystic). Next, there are hundreds of alternative/contemporary spiritualities. Then there are metaphysical and theological themes. Personality typologies also play into this topic and are of importance to many interspiritual seekers. Astrology,

numerology, Enneagram, and Myers-Briggs are but a few. Once again, the importance of the director's guidance to help the directee find the value in seeing parts of themselves in the models, while at the same time seeing themselves as more than the models, helps the directees to stay rooted in themselves and in the Sacred – and not in some external definition of who they are. In the same way, models of faith development were explored with the same end goal.

The last professional praxis topic we covered was closure of the "Soul Friending" relationship. How one says good-bye to a client is important. Whether it is because one, or both parties, decides the relationship is not working for whatever reason, or because both parties decide the relationship is complete, closure brings up strong feelings and affect. These feelings should be addressed and worked through as part of the direction relationship. To celebrate each other, give thanks for insights received, address possible impasses and speak whatever words help with completion is as much a gift of the relationship as the totality of the direction time.

Intensive five, "Sub-Specialties of the Spiritual Director," (18-19) gave the faculty a chance to evaluate student depth of understanding of the year's material to that point. The students "taught" much of the intensive by researching and then presenting sub-specialties of spiritual direction. (30) The following is a list of topics covered: spirituality in the workplace, death and dying, healing, karma and re-incarnation, ritual, dream work,

mysticism, science and spirituality, deep ecology, interfaith, body work, working with groups, gender issues, sexuality and cultural/ ethnic diversity. As one can see from the list, some topics are covered in classical training programs while others reflect the interspiritual approach. The chance to speak in more depth about all of these topics helped students to see how many factors affect the practice of spiritual direction.

The faculty input for this intensive centered on the preparation and choice of thesis topics. Outlining guidelines and the practical issues around writing a thesis and the final public presentation helped students see the creative possibilities that were available to them. The thesis formats provided two options: a research option and a demonstration project option (9).

The final intensive of the year, "Integration and Supervision," (19) in June, was given over to integration, to final self-evaluation presentations and to the topic of supervision (19). During this intensive, we tied up loose ends of topics that we had never quite finished, answered any lingering praxis questions still wanting to be answered and allowed the students time to finish planning the student portion of the graduation ritual. One hour was theirs to plan; the faculty planned the second hour.

Time was spent on the importance of ongoing supervision. The students had been in peer supervision all year. The question was discussed as to how they would continue to participate in ongoing supervision as

directors. The SDI guidelines recommend ongoing supervision as part of responsible professional ethics. Would they to continue to take part in their training peer supervision group, or would they rather seek a new group that might be open to having an interspiritual director in their midst? Since they had been doing supervision on the phone all year, might they like to try a face-to-face group? These were some of the points for discussion.

Finally, a large portion of time was allotted for the final student presentations of themselves as spiritual directors. Students had to complete a final paper evaluating their strengths and challenges as new directors prior to the intensive. These papers were read both by faculty and other students. Their final presentation was the students' chance of creatively presenting their spiritual director selves. They each had twenty minutes to represent themselves as interspiritual directors using any and all art and music forms they wished. Their presentations were a true representation of the diversity and eclecticism indicative of interspirituality.

The program had come to an end. At graduation, they each received certificates of completion. But the writing of the theses was still ahead. The topics chosen were as diverse as the student population and reflect, in a way nothing else can, the interspiritual nature of the "Soul Friendling" program. The topics were: compassion in spiritual direction, pagan spiritual direction, peace circles as a form of group spiritual direction, Principle and Foundation in interspiritual direction, the gifts of spiritual direction at the threshold of

death, an empirical theory using developmental levels to aid applied discernment in spiritual direction and setting the sacred container in spiritual direction. All theses are now complete and are available for reading on the Lorian website. Some are also available on the SDI website.

## Part VII

### Outcomes and Conclusion

As our world grows more complex, so do our approaches to life and to spirituality. There is a plethora of choice. Clearly this is visible in the realm of materialism. But it is also visible in the realm of spirituality. With so many ways of connecting to other cultures and people, we have been exposed to and interact with many faith traditions, spiritual literatures and rituals in ways that are unprecedented in history. No longer bound by culture to a particular religious community, many people are choosing to blend a spirituality that suits their particular needs, drawing from the wisdom of a variety of spiritual sources.

Additionally, we are a product of our times psychologically. For better or worse, we are at the peak of individualism as a cultural meme in the West. This position has a shadow as well as a purposeful use. From the shadow standpoint, it has led to a selfishness that begets a materialism that is leading the planet toward the collapse of sustainable life. On the positive side, many thinkers who pay attention to global trends in consciousness would argue that this individualism is a step in evolving consciousness and that it is this evolution of consciousness that is our only hope for saving ourselves as a species, and perhaps even the planet.

One such pundit, Jeremy Rifkin, argues that this individualistic phase in the evolution of human consciousness leads us toward an empathic

civilization. It is this evolving empathy that will bring humanity to an ever-increasing awareness of our interdependence and need to be of service to one another, regardless of ethnicity, nationality or religious perspective. He writes:

Empathy is the psychological means by which we become part of other people's lives and share meaningful experiences. The very notion of transcendence means to reach beyond oneself, to participate with and belong to larger communities, to be embedded in more complex webs of meaning. (The Empathic Civilization 20)

It is in the milieu of this exciting, though challenging, time in history that the work of interspiritual direction is conducted. As in other centuries, spiritual direction today is reflective of and embedded in the paradigm of the particularity of history. Even the material reflective of, and embedded in, the paradigm of the psyche and the soul are paradoxically expressed both in timeless and in consciousness-bound metaphors. And so, today, we have spiritual expression of the intimate journey between humans and the Holy made available as the choice between many options. It is the path of the eclectic. As human experience goes global, so does spiritual experience. At the same time, our interconnectedness and growing sense of empathy bring us together. Inner stirrings and knowledge lead us to a felt-sense of the one

stream of the Sacred underlying and connecting us all. This is the path Teasdale spent his life defining and refining.

Interspiritual direction must increasingly take into account the shifting theological ground, which increasingly locates the Sacred within the incarnate Self. It is not that there is no Sacred transcendent outside the Self, but that the Self is seen as an equally valid generative source of the Sacred and not just a conduit for the Sacred to flow through.

We do not normally think of ourselves as sources of energy but as recipients. We expect, for instance, to receive blessings from God or spiritual beings, but we may not see ourselves as a source of blessings as well. We expect subtle energies to come from 'on high' or from special 'spiritual' people so we may not see ourselves as generative sources of such energies, which can be used to support and nourish the energies of others.

(Spangler, Facing the Future 102)

The role of the Self as a fractal and agent of the Sacred seems a natural evolutionary step in this time. Not a new concept for mystics of all ages and persuasions, the serious contemplation that we in our incarnate Selves are Sacred, Blessed, Holy and able to conduct our lives as Sacred beings and blessings for the betterment of the planet, is a foundational concept in interspiritual thinking.

In order to be of service to the world, one must first focus on the formation of one's Self. One must know, value and love oneself. It is the first task of the human: to find one's worth as reflected in the other and to gradually absorb the value, worth and love into one's own sense of sovereignty, wealth, and resource as a human being. This development of Self is the first step to empathy. One cannot value another without first valuing the Self.

In The Empathic Civilization, Rifkin states that the original German word, einfühlung, was translated into English in 1909, by E.B. Titchener, as a new word, "empathy" (12). Empathy was defined in the context of introspection as

... the process by which a person examines his or her own feelings and drives, emotions and thoughts to gain a sense of personal understanding about the formation of his or her identity or selfhood. The "pathy" in empathy suggests that we enter into the emotional state of another's suffering and feel his or her pain as if it were our own. (12)

Empathy is not just about pain: one can also empathize with positive emotions. As Rifkin notes, this empathizing of joy, for instance, can come from a deep personal knowledge of the person's past struggles, making their joy all the more valued and vicariously

felt. Another person's empathic embrace can even transform one's own suffering to joy. (13-14)

When someone has been deeply felt or heard, they feel connected and understood: "Someone knows what its like to be me" (14).

Hence, an important task of interspiritual director personal formation and professional training involves a great deal of time looking at the evolving Self in its personality aspect and in its connection to the Sacred. Empathy, necessary in all spiritual direction relationships, is an especially potent component of sitting with interspiritual clients. There is no community of faith to support the development of the Self and so the director takes on more responsibility for the witnessing and fostering of Sacred Selfhood, sovereignty, and service to others. Equally, the client looks to the director more as a source of generative empathy to be able to see one's true Self. Once seen, the self ignites and in turn becomes a generative and Sacred source for others.

Once the directee feels him or herself to be a generative source of the Sacred, an exploration of how he or she is living into that source of goodness can begin. In interspiritual direction, this phase of direction, involving call and discernment, often involves the companionship of allies. These alliances may take many forms: energies associated with oracles, archetypes in dreams, or beings in the angelic, devic, or unseen realms. To interspiritual clients, these alliances are real, available and important

companions on the spiritual journey and in their striving to be agents of sacredness in the world. These alliances need to be worked with and engaged with in a consistent manner, just like any relationship.

There often needs to be attention given to the possibilities and opportunities for such connections and an intention to make them happen, especially with complex systems like ourselves with strong boundaries and many differences between us.

(Facing the Future 75)

What emerges from these alliances is a spiritual quality referred to in interspiritual circles as wholeness. It is not a mystical process, though the end result can produce a unitive experience. It is the ability of the elements of a system or ecology to “connect, engage and work together in coherent and integrated ways ... [to] emerge as [the] mind, body, emotions and spirit are able to connect and enhance each other” (75). From this interior platform, one can then connect in relationship with another, seen or unseen – with the Sacred in its many faceted aspects. Spangler calls this wholeness holopoiesis (74). It is a hallmark of the evolution of human consciousness we are experiencing in our times and it is the preferred hermeneutic of interspiritual directors and clients alike.

These then are the capacities and felt-senses are the purview of interspiritual spiritual direction: choices that are culled from the best spiritual practices of all traditions, empathy, the Self as Sacred, alliances

from all realms of being. All of these are wrapped in a nested holism and in mutual co-arising. As has been shown, it takes a program of considerable depth and perspective to train interspiritual soul friends who can first form a depth to themselves and second be trained to hold others in this same process.

Without sacrificing the core, the ultimate connection between the human and the Sacred, interspiritual directors are being asked to broaden and deepen the ancient and already wise container of spiritual companionship to encompass the vastness of this new world where the universe itself is a close companion, not a distant heaven. What the Lorian "Soul Friending" program accomplished, and what other interspiritual programs like Claritas are accomplishing, brings hope to the field of spiritual direction training. The question now is, "Can the field of spiritual direction grow and expand in offering more elements of interspiritual education to enfold a new kind of interspiritual directee/client who may very well form the majority of people seeking companionship on their spiritual journeys in times to come?".

## Appendix I

### Guidelines: Peer Supervision Sessions

#### General Guidelines

**Purpose of Supervision:** "Supervision is the processing of the inner experiences of spiritual directors that are evoked during direction sessions in order to help them grow in awareness of their reactions and responses, to allow them to respond in a Spirit-centered and interiorly free manner, and to maintain a contemplative focus. Other tasks and benefits may occur through supervision, such as guiding, consulting, teaching and personal healing; however they are secondary tasks and occur only after the primary purpose is served." (Conroy, p14).

**Context:** The group provides a container, a sacred space within which the spiritual director has the opportunity to listen to her or himself out loud. It is spiritual direction for the director, and so takes place in a contemplative, prayerful, and reverent environment. The interactions should emphasize attentive listening to one another and an active watching for the presence of the Sacred. Each person should be willing to sit back a bit and try to sense and respond to the movement of the Sacred, allowing responses to surface rather than trying to come up with responses.

#### Timeframe and Process

**1. Creating the sacred space** – The facilitator leads the group into silence, inviting a contemplative attitude and an intention for the highest good of the presenter. Prayer, chant, scripture or any other means of inviting such a stance may be used by the facilitator.

**(5 Mins)**

**2. Presentation** by spiritual director - the presenter distributes copies of the narrative to the circle, and then reads the narrative to the group. The group remains in silence and in a contemplative, listening mode. **(up to 10 Mins)**

**3. Silence** - The group takes several moments of silence to allow their minds, hearts and spirits to absorb the presenter's experience and to gain a sense of Spirit's guidance. They may circle "feeling" words or phrases in the narrative or others that appear to need focus.

**(3 Mins)**

**4. Clarification/Exploration Questions** – Questions arising from the silence that either may allow the listener to better receive and hear the presenter, or that help the spiritual director to “unpack” deeper feelings and explore the experiential reasons for his or her reactions during the spiritual direction session being offered. In other word, the questions should help the supervisor better hear the presenter, and/or the presenter to better hear him or herself. **See examples following this section. (up to 15mins)**

**5. Silent prayer and reflection** – asking Spirit for a discerning vision of heart to notice and identify a significant insight that can be shared with the presenting director; giving the presenting director time to review his or her inner experience, paying particular attention to any difference or shifts within oneself; praying for the director in a particular way in relation to what was shared. **(3 mins)**

**6. Sharing of Reflections** – One person is designated as **scribe** and captures the comments for the presenter. Each person (if/as they feel called) shares one observation, insight, image, feeling, suggestion or question that can assist the presenting director’s ongoing growth. It can be an insight or feeling that became clear during group exploration or something from their own experience of directing. It can be an image that surfaced during the supervision session or during quiet prayer. **The presenter listens in silence. (up to 15 mins)**

**7. Period of silence** – an opportunity for the presenter to absorb the group’s reflections. **(3 mins)**

**8. Comments from presenter** - the presenter shares any insights or shifts/movement that has occurred for him or her during the experience. **(5 mins)**

**9. Consultation, if requested** – this is the time to discuss and advise the presenter regarding specific problems/issues with their directing. **(Up to 10 mins)**

**10. Clarification of confidentiality** – the presenter chooses whether and/or how she/he wishes supervision members to bring up session material . Options are:

- 1) presenter is open to talking about material once the session is over.
- 2) presenter wants some time (presenter to specify length of time) for integration and reflection before having the session material brought back to them.

3) presenter does not want any further discussion outside the supervision session unless initiated by him/her. **(2 mins)**

### **11. Reflecting on the process -**

Where was the focus in the session? How was the presenter assisted in better hearing his/her inner attitudes and feelings? Discuss times where we might have been off track focusing on the directee, or problem solving, engaging in intellectual discussion and analysis. How were we attentive to Spirit during the session? **(5 mins)**

### **Clarification/Exploration Questions**

The following are examples of categories and questions that might be useful as a means for the supervisor to better hear and receive the presenter and/or for the presenter to better hear him or her self. The list is not meant to be exhaustive, and the guiding principle is a contemplative openness to the questions Spirit raises within us.

#### **Exploring Inner Freedom in the Relationship**

- What kind of agreement exists in this relationship and is the nature of the agreement clear to both parties?
- How does the presenter see the Sacred active in the life of the directee and in the direction relationship? Are there any signs of Grace? Ways in which each is gift for the other? Is mutual periodic evaluation built into the relationship?
- How does the presenter feel before and after meeting with the directee?
- Are there issues of dependency, attachment, sexuality, anger, power or manipulation that need to be addressed? Is there any challenge to the presenter's values, beliefs? Are these seen as invitations to growth?

#### **Exploring Inner Freedom of the Presenter**

- What attitude does the presenter bring to direction? How does he/she prepare? What is the quality of his/her attention to the Sacred during sessions?
- Can presenter confront issues and say "hard things"? What of the ethics and integrity of the presenter in this situation?
- Does presenter give sufficient attention to the life context of the directee? Can presenter understand and speak the "language" of the directee?

- Is the presenter trapped by self-consciousness or absorbed with “trying to get it right”?

### **Exploring Attentiveness to the Sacred**

- How does the presenter see discernment happening in this relationship? Is presenter enabling discernment in directee?
- How does presenter deal with consolation and desolation in the directee? How is he/she affected by his/her own experience of consolation? Desolation?
- What is the degree of trust in the Sacred as opposed to reliance solely on personal competence? How is this presenter co-creating with the Sacred?
- How does the presenter’s theological, scriptural, and psychological knowledge serve the relationship? Does the presenter rely too much on knowledge at the expense of openness to the Sacred?

### **Exploring Contemplative Awareness**

- How does the director pray for and about the directee? What are the presenter’s experiences of prayer? Assumptions about prayer? I.e. what it is, how it happens, power of prayer, etc.?
- What does the peer group know about presenter’s personal prayer? How might presenter’s style or experience of prayer affect the relationship with the directee?
- How does prayer enter into the sessions? Do director and directee pray together? Silently? Aloud?
- What does the presenter actually know about directee’s personal experiences in prayer?

This handout adapted, with gratitude, from *Looking into the Well: Supervision of Spiritual Directors*, by Maureen Conroy, and from handouts developed by Vie Thorgren, PhD, in the *Formation Program for Spiritual Directors* offered by the Center for Spirituality at Work, Denver.  
< [www.cfsaw.org/](http://www.cfsaw.org/) >.

## APPENDIX II

### Overview of Deepening into Spirit Curriculum

| Fall Quarter<br>First Year<br>September/November                                  | Winter Quarter First<br>Year<br>January/March   | Spring Quarter First Year<br>April/June   |
|---|---|---|
| 5 Day Intensive<br><b>The Nature of the<br/>Sovereign Self</b><br>September       | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>The Shadow and the<br/>Sacred</b><br>January                              | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Imagining the World: Differences<br/>and Boundaries</b><br>April                  |
| <b>Befriending the<br/>Personality</b><br>First six week online<br>class          | <b>Body Work</b><br>First six week online<br>class  | <b>Ethics &amp; Boundaries</b><br>First six week online class   |
| <b>Sacredness: The<br/>Foundations of Self</b><br>Second six week<br>online class | <b>Standing in Self:<br/>Incarnation and<br/>Sovereignty</b><br>Second six week<br>online class | <b>The Generative Self: Imagination,<br/>Presence and Co-Creativity</b><br>Second six week online class |
| <b>Learning Community</b>   | <b>Learning<br/>Community</b>   | <b>Learning Community</b>   |
| <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   |

| Fall Quarter<br>Second Year<br>September/November  | Winter Quarter<br>Second Year<br>January/March                           | Spring Quarter Second<br>Year<br>April/June                            |
|--|--|--|
| 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Being in Relationship</b><br>September                                     | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Walking in the<br/>World</b><br>January            | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Being in Alliance</b> April                      |
| <b>The Call of the World</b><br>First six week online class                                      | <b>Application of Field<br/>Theory</b><br>First six week online<br>class | <b>Partnership with the<br/>World</b><br>First six week online class   |
| <b>Alliances: Partnerships in<br/>caring and spaciousness</b><br>Second six week online<br>class | <b>Building Alliances</b><br>Second six week<br>online class             | <b>Alliances and World<br/>Work</b><br>Second six week online<br>class |
| <b>Learning Community</b>  | <b>Learning<br/>Community</b>  | <b>Learning Community</b>  |
| <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>  | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>                                | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>                              |

## Overview of Soul Friending Curriculum

| Summer & Fall<br>Quarter<br>Third Year   | Winter Quarter<br>Third Year  | Spring Quarter<br>Third Year   |
|--|---|--|
| 2 Day Class &<br>2 Day Intensive<br>June<br><i>Creating the Field for<br/>Soul Friending</i> | 3 Day Intensive<br>November<br><i>Components &amp;<br/>Methods of<br/>Discernment</i> | 3 Day Intensive<br>March<br><i>Sub-Specialties of the<br/>Spiritual Director</i> |
| 2 Day Silent Retreat<br>& 3 Day Intensive<br>September<br><i>Responding to a Call</i>        | 3 Day Intensive<br>January<br><i>Professional Praxis</i>                              | 3 Day Intensive<br>May<br><i>Integration and<br/>Supervision</i>                 |
| <b>Being in Spiritual<br/>Direction</b>  | <b>Being in Spiritual<br/>Direction</b>   | <b>Being in Spiritual<br/>Direction</b>  |
| <b>Practicing Soul<br/>Friending</b>   | <b>Practicing Soul<br/>Friending</b>  | <b>Practicing Soul<br/>Friending</b>   |
| <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>  | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>  |

(Lorian Association Center for Incarnational Spirituality Catalog 2006 – 2008).

### APPENDIX III

## Lorian Center for Incarnational Spirituality Catalog 2006 - 2008

### Deepening into Spirit

*Deepening into Spirit* is a two-year program of individual development facilitating a transformational experience that integrates spiritual life, personal creativity, service, and practical living.

These times call for a contemporary spirituality that honors the sacredness of incarnation. This sacredness manifests in the unique life of each individual, in the co-creative life of a group, and in the sanctity of the earth itself. Incarnational Spirituality expresses the integrative synthesis of the transpersonal and the personal, the universal and the local, the individual and the group, and the sacred and the ordinary.

*Deepening into Spirit* is an opportunity to respond to this call and learn with others how to:

- ~Discover the sacredness within your life
- ~Stand as an agent of blessing and transformation in your world
- ~Practice the art of co-creativity
- ~Offer your individual gifts into spiritual service, enhancing self, others and the world
- ~Pioneer an emergent, loving, holistic spirituality

*Deepening into Spirit* stands alone as a complete program and need not be engaged as a Masters degree program.

*We feel a need as individuals to experience the spirit of our own sacredness, power and grace. We see a need in the world for the blessing and service that this spirit can generate. We would welcome you to join us in deepening into this spirit.*

### Deepening into Spirit - Premises

- ~Each person is a specific and irreplaceable expression of sacredness.
- ~The sacred is an integral part of the ordinary, not just the extraordinary.
- ~The personal side of our lives is as holy and spiritual as the transpersonal.

~Each person as an embodiment of sacredness is a unique source of generative, co-creative and life-fostering energy and unobstructed love.

~Incarnation is a sacred act in which we participate throughout our lives.

~The sovereignty of each individual is a fundamental spiritual value.

~Each person is a whole for whom even hidden and conflictual parts are avenues into the sacred.

~Individual life and group life even when in conflict can be mutually enhancing through new practices of community.

~The earth is a living being with its own sovereignty and sacredness, calling for our co-creative partnership.

~Each person participates in a vast ecology that includes both physical and non-physical realities, beings and forces.

~The spiritual journey is one of paradox, participation, emergence, and life-long learning.

~Education is fostered and improved through the creation of a learning community in which the distinction of teacher and student is transformed into the co-creative empowerment of being mutual learners within a supportive group field.

For over twenty-five years, the Lorian Association's faculty has been providing programs grounded in experience and study integrating spiritual life principles with everyday life practices. Their educational mission is "to foster the understanding and practical experience of an evolving relationship between the individual and the sacred so that a culture based in a co-creative and generative spirituality may flourish".

## **Masters of Contemporary Spirituality (MCS) & Masters of Spiritual Direction (MSD)**

These degrees are offered with the intent of assisting those individuals who may be aided in their spiritual work by having a formal degree. The primary elements of the Masters of Contemporary Spirituality degree are contained within the *Deepening into Spirit* two-year program. The Masters of Spiritual Direction degree also requires completion of Lorian's *Deepening into Spirit* program (or an equivalent program - see page 9) and completion of the third year professional Spiritual Direction training as described within this catalog.

The three objectives of this program are for participants to:

1. Acquire new understandings about the spiritual nature of everyday life.
2. Embody the innate spirituality of the individual, and the relationship between the self and the sacred.
3. Expand their individual spirituality into co-creative relationships with others in a context of service to the world.

The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board has determined that Lorian Center of Incarnational Spirituality qualifies for religious exempt status from the Degree Authorization Act for the following programs: Master of Contemporary Spirituality and Master of Spiritual Direction. Any person desiring information about the requirements of the act or the applicability of those requirements to the institution may contact the board at P.O. Box 43430, Olympia, WA 98504-3430.

## **Requirements for Obtaining the MCS Degree\***

1. Participation in and successful completion of all course work of the Deepening into Spirit program described within the catalog. Each class requires completion of the reading assignments, writing responses, writing reflective papers, and posting reports on the practical exercises. Assessments are based on these criteria.
2. Attendance at and participation in all of the Deepening into Spirit intensives.
3. Demonstration of comprehension of the recommended books from the reading list of the various online classes.
4. A final self-evaluation paper reflecting on and demonstrating the following capacities:
  - A. Knowledge and understanding of Incarnational Spirituality principles expressed as the integration of body, personality, and spirit.
  - B. The ability to stand in sovereignty and presence, to hold oneself in love and appreciation
  - C. The expression of holding, active blessing and fostering of others.
  - D. The expression of generativity, love, support of the will-to-be, creation of god-space, and being an agent of incarnation.
  - E. World work
  - F. Energy hygiene
  - G. Partnering and alliance work
  - H. Co-creative improvisation and support for emergence nurturing the ongoing development of oneself and others.
5. Completion of a summer course situating Incarnational Spirituality within a context of contemporary spirituality.
6. Completion of a Thesis. Candidates for this degree will be required to complete a Thesis to demonstrate a thorough working knowledge of the Deepening into Spirit program material. This will be in the form of a written paper of at least 35 pages and not more than 100 pages in one of two categories:
  - ~Original research into an area of Incarnational Spirituality employing a methodology that is both systematic and transparent.
  - ~An original demonstration project on Incarnational Spirituality about which a paper describing the project can be composed.

A candidate for the MCS degree must submit a thesis proposal to be approved by a faculty thesis committee prior to the start of the thesis. The ongoing thesis work will be supervised by a personal committee chair and be finally approved by the entire faculty thesis committee. The participant will have one year to complete their Thesis. If not completed within one year an extension of an additional six months may be applied for.

\* Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP): Code: 39.9999

## **Drug Policy**

The work of Incarnational Spirituality is based on discovering and applying the innate spiritual capacities that are part of the natural state of our bodies and minds. In particular, the physical body is used as a means for the grounding, discernment, discrimination, and generation of subtle forces. Anything that alters, interferes with, or diminishes the body's own natural capacities in this area can affect the work done in classes based on Incarnational Spirituality. For this reason, we ask that no drugs be used while participating in this program, other than those prescribed by a physician.

## **Requirements for Obtaining the MSD Degree “Soul Friending”**

1. Participation in and successful completion of all course work of the Deepening into Spirit program *or an equivalent program*\*\* and the third year professional training described within this catalog. Each class requires completion of the reading assignments, writing responses, writing reflective papers, and posting reports on the practical exercises. Assessments are based on these criteria.
2. Attendance at and participation in all of the face-to-face gatherings (intensives) of the three years.
3. Demonstration of comprehension of the recommended books from the reading list of the various online classes.
4. A final self-evaluation paper reflecting on and demonstrating the following capacities:
  - A. Knowledge and understanding of Incarnational Spirituality principles expressed as the integration of body, personality, and spirit.
  - B. The ability to stand in sovereignty and presence, to hold oneself in love and appreciation
  - C. The expression of holding, active blessing and fostering of others.
  - D. The expression of generativity, love, support of the will-to-be, creation of god-space, and being an agent of incarnation.
  - E. World work
  - F. Energy hygiene
  - G. Partnering and alliance work
  - H. Co-creative improvisation and support for emergence nurturing the ongoing development of oneself and others.
5. Completion of a summer course situating Incarnational Spirituality within a context of contemporary spirituality.

6. Two years of being a directee for at least one hour per month with a qualified Spiritual Director.
7. Successful completion of an internship requirement acting as an apprentice Spiritual Director.
8. Completion of a Thesis. Candidates for this degree will be required to complete a Thesis to demonstrate a thorough working knowledge of the content of the three-year Spiritual Direction program. This will be in the form of a written paper of at least 35 pages and not more than 100 pages in one of two categories:
  - A. Original research into an area of Spiritual Direction, which incorporates Incarnational Spirituality and employs a methodology that is both systematic and transparent.
  - B. An original demonstration project on Spiritual Direction which incorporates Incarnational Spirituality and about which a paper describing the project can be composed.

A candidate for the MSD degree must submit a thesis proposal to be approved by a faculty thesis committee prior to the start of the thesis. The ongoing thesis work will be supervised by a personal committee chair and be finally approved by the entire faculty thesis committee. The participant will have one year to complete their Thesis. If not completed within one year an extension of an additional six months may be applied for.

\* Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP): Code: 39.9999

**\*\*Note:** transfer students, having completed an equivalent training to Lorian's Deepening into Spirit program, must also complete Lorian's Online class *Inner Lens I*, read *Introduction to Incarnational Spirituality*, *The Call*, and *Blessing: The Art and Practice* by David Spangler, and keep a Journal documenting the practice of exercises within the class and books. These requirements must be completed prior to beginning the "Soul Friending" year.

## **Deepening into Self: The Spirituality of Embodied Living**

The goal of the first year curriculum is to acquire new understandings about the spiritual nature of everyday life, the innate spirituality of the individual and the relationship between the self and the sacred. Participants engage with the sacredness of their work life, personal relationships and daily activities. Those exploring *Deepening into Self* experience shifts on physical, psychological and spiritual levels leading to an expansion of their capacity to express the power of their uniqueness.

This program is an experiential exploration of the wholeness of mind, body and spirit. Participants learn to access the embodied spirit arising from the act of incarnation itself. They discover themselves to be generative, sovereign, co-creative, and radiant persons.

*Deepening into Self* is composed of 6 six-week online classes and 3 five-day face-to-face cohort intensives as shown in the table following and detailed in the class descriptions.

In addition two other year long forums are integral to our curriculum. We call these “Learning Community” and “Integrative Spiritual Practice” as described on pages 22 and 23.

## **Deepening into Self: First Year Curriculum**

| <b>Fall Quarter<br/>First Year<br/>September/November</b>                         | <b>Winter Quarter First<br/>Year<br/>January/March</b>  | <b>Spring Quarter First Year<br/>April/June</b>   |
|---|---|---|
| 5 Day Intensive<br><b>The Nature of the<br/>Sovereign Self</b><br>September       | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>The Shadow and the<br/>Sacred</b><br>January                              | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Imagining the World: Differences and<br/>Boundaries</b><br>April                  |
| <b>Befriending the<br/>Personality</b><br>First six week online<br>class          | <b>Body Work</b><br>First six week online<br>class  | <b>Ethics &amp; Boundaries</b><br>First six week online class   |
| <b>Sacredness: The<br/>Foundations of Self</b><br>Second six week<br>online class | <b>Standing in Self:<br/>Incarnation and<br/>Sovereignty</b><br>Second six week<br>online class | <b>The Generative Self: Imagination,<br/>Presence and Co-Creativity</b><br>Second six week online class |
| <b>Learning Community</b>   | <b>Learning<br/>Community</b>   | <b>Learning Community</b>   |
| <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   |

### **Fall Intensive - First Year**

#### **The Nature of the Sovereign Self - September**

This intensive explores the nature and sacredness of the sovereign self, introducing the idea of sovereignty as a spiritual quality. Participants engage in self-discovery using perspectives from Internal Family Systems™, spiritual autobiography, body sense, art and music. The process of Learning Community begins.

### **Fall Online Six-Week Classes**

#### **Befriending the Personality - First six-week online class**

This class introduces Internal Family Systems™, (IFS), a form of psychotherapy developed by Richard Schwartz, Ph.D. As a tool for understanding the personality, participants will learn to use IFS for self-discovery and for identifying responses to stress and barriers to well being. The focus of the class will be appreciating our

uniqueness, while at the same time giving voice and time to those aspects of our personality that hold patterns that no longer serve us. This class introduces us to the yearlong journey of exploring our sacredness in new ways integral to the embodiment of spirit.

**Sacredness: The Foundations of Self** - Second six-week online class

The idea of sacredness is essential to Incarnational Spirituality and the process of deepening into spirit. This class examines how we image the Sacred, both as itself and in relationship to ourselves. We study how new paradigms from science affect a theology of Incarnational Spirituality and explore the meaning of self as a fractal of divinity expressing sovereignty, generativity, and responsibility within the world.

## Winter Intensive - First Year

**The Shadow and the Sacred** - January

This intensive focuses on the sacred nature of shadow, the hidden part of our self and how it is linked to the enhancement or obstruction of personhood. Drawing on psychological and spiritual perspectives, participants recognize, witness and integrate shadow material. This is done through personal exploration, reflection, touch drawing, creative writing and improvisation.

## Winter Online Six-Week Classes

**Body Work** - First six-week online class

This class continues the exploration of the idea that the body is source of wisdom, holding and healing. We will learn about the physics of energy bodywork, systems of energy distribution in the body, the subtle bodies and the healing touch therapies of Reiki and Craniosacral. Participants are asked to experience three sessions of professional subtle bodywork as a way of learning discernment through their own bodies. We will also learn bodywork session strategies and integration.

**Standing in Self: Incarnation and Sovereignty** - Second six-week online class

This class explores the nature of incarnation as a sacred act and personal sovereignty as a spiritual expression. Incarnational Spirituality is person-centered. We consider the sovereignty of the person as a core value embodying freedom, integrity, uniqueness, and innate creative power. It is a foundation that allows the individual to understand and experience the nature of sacredness as embodied in an incarnate, personal life.

## **Spring Intensive - First Year**

### **Imagining the World: Differences and Boundaries - April**

This intensive focuses on how we imagine the world and the structure of our worldviews. As citizens of nature, the planet, and the cosmos, our human affiliations and concerns are better served when we broaden to include the perspectives of these larger dimensions. We present the understanding of boundaries as the creative edge between self and other where difference becomes the seed for emergence.

## **Spring Online Six-Week Classes**

### **Ethics & Boundaries - First six-week online class**

This class emphasizes the importance of ethics and boundaries in everyday living. We learn to recognize personal, energetic and psychic boundaries. We develop sensitivity to, and respect for, what arises at the boundaries of relationship. Looking at the idea of boundary as sacred space for creativity and imagination, we investigate core values, recognize the nature of ethical challenges and learn to respond to tough choices, especially right vs. right dilemmas.

### **The Generative Self: Imagination, Presence and Co-Creativity** Second six-week online class

This class explores the spiritual, magical and creative resources of the personal self. We examine the value and use of imagination, the nature of will, and the integrative nature of spirit. We also study how these three come together in the manifestation of presence as an expression of the innate power of the individual to shape and co-create his or her world. This power is an essential aspect of our incarnation and our spirituality, a key element in our identity as co-creative participants in an emerging universe.

## **Deepening into Relationship: The Spirituality of Co-creation**

The goal of the second year is to expand our own individual spirituality into co-creative relationships with others in a context of service to the world. Through an understanding of the nature of non-physical spiritual realms, this expansion includes partnerships with spiritual allies.

Participants in this training experience more deeply the power of imagination, the multidimensional nature of their own selves, the integrative capacity of self, and the embodiment of sacredness. This opens new possibilities of relationship in both the physical and non-physical worlds. Within the inner realms, this relationship takes the form of contact and collaborative alliances with spiritual beings. In the outer world, these possibilities manifest as partnering in service to one another and to the earth. Through the practice of co-creative presence we gain the power to shape our personal and collective ecologies.

The second year is composed of 6 six-week online classes and 3 five-day face-to-face cohort intensives as shown in the table following and detailed in the class descriptions. The two forums, “Learning Community” and “Integrative Spiritual Practice,” as described on pages 22 and 23, continue. The program ends with a final integrative and celebratory day.

## **Deepening into Relationship: Second Year Curriculum**

| <b>Fall Quarter<br/>Second Year<br/>September/November</b>   | <b>Winter Quarter<br/>Second Year<br/>January/March</b>                  | <b>Spring Quarter<br/>Second Year<br/>April/June</b>                    |
|--|--|---|
| 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Being in<br/>Relationship</b><br>September                                     | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Walking in the<br/>World</b><br>January            | 5 Day Intensive<br><b>Being in Alliance</b><br>April                    |
| <b>The Call of the World</b><br>First six week online<br>class                                       | <b>Application of Field<br/>Theory</b><br>First six week online<br>class | <b>Partnership with the<br/>World</b><br>First six week online<br>class |
| <b>Alliances:<br/>Partnerships in caring<br/>and spaciousness</b><br>Second six week<br>online class | <b>Building Alliances</b><br>Second six week<br>online class             | <b>Alliances and World<br/>Work</b><br>Second six week<br>online class  |
| <b>Learning Community</b>  | <b>Learning<br/>Community</b>  | <b>Learning<br/>Community</b>   |
| <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>  | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>                                | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>                               |

## Fall Intensive - Second Year

### Being in Relationship - September

This intensive focuses on the question, “What is the nature of relationship?” We explore the paradox of conflict and how to meet “the other” in the radiance of the Sacred. Through the use of non-violent communication, Personology™, and Internal Family Systems™ we learn how we communicate within relationships. We introduce the idea of the radiance of the Self and how we carry this into these relationships. We will also spend time reconnecting with our learning community after a time apart.

## Fall Online Six-Week Classes

### The Call of the World - First six-week online class

At the heart of each incarnation is a loving response to our world with which we seek to participate, engage, nurture and serve. This class explores ways in which the world calls to us. It views our spiritual purpose as being more than simply being part of the earth just for education or a specific mission; in addition the earth calls us towards becoming a spiritual presence, capable of “world work.” In this class, we will examine the nature and dynamics of service, of being called, and of being a call as part of our relationship to the world and to others.

### Alliances: Partnerships in Caring and Spaciousness - Second six-week online class

This class examines the idea of alliances, the co-creative partnership with non-physical allies and forces. It sets forth a model of levels of inner allies based on areas of responsibility and caring, and explores the purpose of such alliances in a context of world work and the spacious life. We also look at issues of working with new energies, maintaining sovereignty and balance and integrating information. An alliance should enhance our lives and deepen our relationship with the world, not bring imbalance or disconnection into our affairs. This class explores the ethics and skills of being in alliance.

## Winter Intensive - Second Year

### Walking in the World - January

This intensive takes us into mapping our own world ecology and what it means to be in a living system. We look at the flora and fauna of our inner and outer selves and how they enhance or obstruct the flow of our spirit through the landscape. We explore the elements of shadow and resistance in relationship. We also extend our understanding

of field theory, principles of partnership and co-creativity.

## **Winter Online Six-Week Classes**

### **Application of Field Theory** - First six-week online class

This class inquires into theories of individual and collective fields and their application in our daily lives. We draw on the “new sciences,” systems theory, deep ecology, and concepts of flow and coherence. We access fields as palpable experiences of synchronicity, intuition and interconnectedness. Through developing the capacities of attention and awareness we distinguish between fields and energy.

### **Building Alliances** - Second six-week online class

This class offers a specific way of contacting and working with spiritual beings and forces to form a special relationship called an alliance. Having allies—and being an ally—constitutes a generative, incarnational, and co-creative partnership. Alliances draw out our own creative power and accountability in relationship with non-physical beings and with the world around us. In this class we explore skills and capacities for forming such alliances based on the foundations provided by earlier classes in this year.

## **Spring Intensive - Second Year**

### **Being in Alliance** - April

This intensive looks at our relationship with larger ecologies. We explore the nature of inner allies and co-creative partnerships. The principles of sovereignty, interdependence, openness, accountability and mutual blessing are developed in application to partnerships we build in our lives. Role-playing and small group problem-solving exercises offer practical experience to build alliance capacities. Guidelines for each participant’s practicum of integration are introduced.

## **Spring Online Six-Week Classes**

### **Partnership with the World** - First six-week online class

This class is a practicum to explore the various ways that we partner with the sacred in our daily lives. Students design and carry out a service-oriented research project using the principles of co-creative partnership. Models of co-creativity in economics, healing, stewardship of the earth and parenting are demonstrated. Students report back and share with others in the class insights from their research.

**Alliances and World Work** - Second six-week online class

This class explores how we integrate alliances with spiritual forces and beings into our everyday lives in ways that can enhance others and the world at large. Partnering with spiritual allies to bring help into the world is what we call World Work. We will study the idea of world work in general and in particular techniques we can use that translate the presence of an alliance into service in the world.

## **Celebration and Completion**

**Life after DIS** - June

One day of presenting individual practicum projects and a celebration of our two years of learning together.

## **Deepening into Spirit: On-Going Forums**

Deepening into Self has two on-going forums that run concurrently with the classes for the duration of the two years.

### **Learning Community**

“Learning Community” is an ongoing forum. It continuously seeks to build an individual’s ability to stand in their own sovereignty while simultaneously being a fully functioning member of the group. We explore different ways to speak together, to listen deeply and to have generative conversations. Individual and group mindfulness are cultivated particularly in meeting the paradoxes of group life. Exploring and deepening the phenomenon of an “integral field” is a focus.

### **Integrative Spiritual Practice**

This track is intended to help participants develop a powerful and unique spiritual practice. It provides the space at the heart of the program to explore inner exercises, radiance in the world, personal energy hygiene and expand the spiritual domains in which to operate. It also provides an ongoing forum for the integration and application of the material presented in the curriculum.

**First Year:**

This ongoing practice forum introduces multi-faith, person-centered methods for

anchoring ourselves in spirit. Our work is based on the perspective that each individual has immediate access to the sacred. Each person will set up and maintain a regular spiritual practice.

To develop tools of connection and inner attunement in the fall quarter we employ spiritual autobiography, focusing, felt sense and kinesiology techniques, inner and outer listening skills, and discerning authentic voice.

In the winter quarter we develop methods of discernment to set life priorities, get clearer guidance, learn to hold paradox and make choices from our integrated self, silent retreat, prayer, meditation and ritual. In addition, in order to craft our personal gateways into the sacred, we investigate different modes of entry into the sacred from the devotional to the mystical, Eastern and western faith traditions and modern systems of spirituality.

The central thesis of the spring is the inherent value of each person. We explore the nature of personal uniqueness as it manifests through our personalities and structures, and is further shaped through life experience. We distinguish among different worldviews, their assumptions and guiding beliefs and apply this knowledge to understand how behavior is affected. We present exercises of self worth, loving oneself and attunement to our uniqueness, leading to a deeper attunement to our inner life calling.

### **Second Year:**

The practice track in the fall of the second year is designed as a practicum integrating our spiritual practice into the arena of our relationships. We will apply the techniques of centering, sovereignty, witnessing, holding, participating and appreciating diversity to our daily life relationships. By using these steps we explore the elements that give richness to forming co-creative and sacred relationships.

In the winter quarter we look at the nature of, the recognition of, and the unlocking of resistance. We explore techniques and theories from social systems psychology, spiritual direction and new science to understand the dynamic of resistance. We reveal the paradox of resistance that affects a greater flow and coherency in our lives.

Finally in the Spring Quarter, we explore the principles of co-creativity as we apply them in our many partnerships, from the most intimate to our broader connections in the world. This work identifies and enhances common interest, respect, diversity, competing commitments, and paradox. Participants practice these principles in one of their current partnerships.

## **Soul Friending: A Year of Professional Training in Spiritual Direction**

This program trains people for the profession of accompanying others on their spiritual journeys. “Spiritual companioning” has grown historically out of Christianity though more recently there has been a body of practitioners arising from other faiths. As spirituality becomes more eclectic and unrelated to any one particular spiritual or religious tradition, the need has arisen to train practitioners who can work with clients exploring post-traditional spirituality.

Lorian offers training in the art of Spiritual Direction that transcends any particular religious tradition. Our program teaches the best of traditional Spiritual Direction practices. At the same time it offers new perspectives that speak to the emerging contemporary spirituality of human consciousness that goes beyond any one religious faith or spiritual practice.

Our values in Spiritual Direction grow out of a stance of co-creativity with the Sacred in ourselves and others and a premise that the spiritual world is multivalent. The curriculum prepares practitioners to work with the whole spiritual ecology: body, mind, heart, inner world beings, and supersensible perception all of which impacts contemporary spiritual relationships. The program prepares directors to help clients grow more fully into their incarnate selves and realize their potential to co-create with the Sacred in their work and daily lives.

We offer a one-year program, June through May, which includes five face-to-face three-day intensives, a silent retreat, monthly small group interactions, inter-session online class work, and supervised internship. Participants are required to be in Spiritual Direction during the course of this and the prior year.

## Soul Friending: Third Year Curriculum

| Summer & Fall Quarter<br>Third Year  | Winter Quarter<br>Third Year  | Spring Quarter<br>Third Year   |
|--|---|--|
| 2 Day Class &<br>2 Day Intensive<br>June<br><i>Creating the Field for<br/>Soul Friending</i> | 3 Day Intensive<br>November<br><i>Components &amp;<br/>Methods of<br/>Discernment</i> | 3 Day Intensive<br>March<br><i>Sub-Specialties of the<br/>Spiritual Director</i> |
| 2 Day Silent Retreat<br>& 3 Day Intensive<br>September<br><i>Responding to a Call</i>        | 3 Day Intensive<br>January<br><i>Professional Praxis</i>                              | 3 Day Intensive<br>May<br><i>Integration and<br/>Supervision</i>                 |
| <b>Being in Spiritual<br/>Direction</b>  | <b>Being in Spiritual<br/>Direction</b>   | <b>Being in Spiritual<br/>Direction</b>  |
| <b>Practicing Soul<br/>Friending</b>   | <b>Practicing Soul<br/>Friending</b>  | <b>Practicing Soul<br/>Friending</b>   |
| <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>  | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>   | <b>Integrative Spiritual<br/>Practice</b>  |

### **Third Year Continuous Classes**

#### **Being in Spiritual Direction**

Participants are required to engage in a monthly session with a spiritual director of their choice other than Lorian faculty. This track constitutes the online learning component of these individual spiritual directions sessions and runs for the entire year. It is designed as a journal site for recording insights gained during individual spiritual directions sessions. It is also the place of on-going dialogue among all the students and the faculty about the experience of being in a spiritual direction relationship as a directee.

#### **Practicing Soul Friending**

During the Intensives, participants will have opportunities to practice being a spiritual director with each other in dyads/triads and through the use of role-plays. In addition, each participant is required to find two directees with whom they will act as spiritual directors under supervision. This track constitutes the online learning component of practicing Soul Friending. It is designed as a practicum to further dialogue and answer questions about the art and skills of being a spiritual director. Participants will also learn how to write verbatims, construct role-plays and other processes helpful to them when they are being supervised.

#### **Integrative Spiritual Practice**

One of the elements of being a spiritual director is having a regular spiritual prayer/meditation practice for oneself. Learning through one's own practice benefits working with one's directees. This track runs the entire year and is designed as a reflection journal where one can record such learning. This is also the track where shared learning through written exchanges can enhance all participants' skills and art in doing spiritual direction as all members of the group will have access to all journal entries.

## **June Intensive & Online Class - Third Year Creating the Field for Soul Friending**

1. Two day face-to-face and online course situating Incarnational Spirituality within a context of contemporary spirituality.
2. History and definition of Spiritual Direction
3. Client Relations
  - Choosing and being chosen by a client

Assessment and referral for Spiritual Direction  
 Establishing a relationship with a client  
 Recognizing and referring for psychotherapy

**4. Elements for successful first sessions**

Grail Space and Blessing  
 Fields and Holding  
 Spiritual Autobiography  
 Working with Spiritual Practice

## **September Intensive & Online Class - Third Year Responding to a Client's Spiritual Call**

**1. Defining the Territory of Calling**

The Nature of Self, Soul Sacred and the World

**2. Co-creative partnership, and Mutuality**

World work, service and blessing

**3. Foundation and Principle**

Sovereignty  
 Love and Sin, Self-image and Self-worth

This intensive will include two days of silent retreat with personal spiritual direction for each student.

## **November Intensive & Online Class - Third Year Discernment**

**1. Components of Discernment**

Consolation and Desolation  
 Ways of Knowing  
 Felt Sense/Affect  
 Resistance

**2. Methods of Discernment**

Contemplation  
 Divination and Oracles  
 Prayer  
 Sacred Texts  
 Imagination

**3. Extreme States**

Ecstasy  
 Overwhelm  
 Evil  
 Englamorment

Dark Night of the Soul

**4. Ecology of Inner Worlds**  
Working with Allies

## **January Intensive & Online Class - Third Year Professional Praxis**

**1. Boundaries and Ethics**

Transference  
Detachment  
Values  
Energy Hygiene

**2. Communication**

Communication Skills  
Non-violent Communication  
Body Wisdom

**3. Working with Shadow**

Exercises for directees  
Practice Management  
Supervision

**4. Working with Allies**

Working with Alliances as a Spiritual Director  
Working with Clients who work with alliances in their spiritual practice

**5. Understanding Diversity**

Different portals to the Sacred  
Alternative spirituality  
Criteria of evaluation of spiritual experience  
Metaphysical and theological themes  
Diversity  
Personality typologies  
Faith Development

**6. Closure**

Individual Sessions  
Overall Soul Friend Partnerships

## **March Intensive & Online Class - Third Year Sub-Specialties of the Spiritual Director**

**1. Spirituality in the Workplace**

2. Death and Dying
3. Healing
4. Karma and Re-incarnation
5. Ritual
6. Dream Work
7. Mysticism
8. Science and Spirituality
9. Deep Ecology
10. Working Inter-faith
11. Body work
12. Working with Groups
13. Others

## **May Intensive & Online Class - Third Year Integration and Supervision**

This intensive will focus on supervision and role-plays that allow the students to draw together all the elements of their practice as Spiritual Directors.

### **Lorian Faculty**

**Ruth Chaffee, PhD** is a psychologist in clinical practice who has been a student and seeker in the field of Incarnational Spirituality since 1986. She also is a practitioner of healing touch and Reiki. Her vision is to empower persons in the understanding of their mind-body intelligence, so that their everyday lives are expressed with contentment and courage by the emergence of their true selves.

**Suzanne Fageol, MDiv** brings over 30 years teaching experience in the fields of spirituality, history of religions and alternative healing modalities. She is a spiritual director, life coach, craniosacral therapist and Episcopal priest who has lived and taught

in the Caribbean, Africa, and Europe.

**Dorothy Maclean** is one of the three founders of the Findhorn Community in Scotland. She travels worldwide as a lecturer teaching on themes of cooperation with nature, the angelic realms, and attuning to the God within. Her books include: *To Hear the Angels Sing*, *Choices of Love*, *The Soul of Canada*, *To Honor the Earth*, and *Seeds of Inspiration*.

**Terri O'Fallon, PhD** Terri's PhD is from CIIS in Integral Studies. Her specialty is transformational learning in human systems. Terri is Lorian's Chief Academic Officer and has over 30 years of teaching, ranging from preschool through PhD. She has initiated companies serving adult developmentally disabled people and generating transformation in human systems. Her Call has been to engage with the Sacred in every day life.

**Freya Secrest**, one of the founding members of the Lorian Association, has worked as an adult educator in the field of spiritual education for over 30 years. She is an experienced administrator with a background in Waldorf education and community development. As a consultant, she integrates diverse perspectives so that joyful and collaborative environments can emerge.

**David Spangler** is a mystic, writer and educator in the integration of spiritual values, energy and presence into everyday life. He is Executive Director of Lorian. His books include: *The Call*, *A Pilgrim in Aquarius*, *Parent as Mystic - Mystic as Parent*, *Blessing*, *The Story Tree*, *Manifestation: Creating the life you love* and others. He has taught extensively for over 40 years.

**Julie Spangler** is a human relations counselor and Personology practitioner. She is a mother of four and a parent education instructor. She began her spiritual work at the Findhorn Community in Scotland as one of the singers in "The New Troubadours". She is also one of the founders of the Lorian Association.

**Elizabeth Fowler, MD** is a Life Coach, primary care internist and has experience facilitating and teaching growth at many levels from personal and team development to meditation. She is an ardent explorer of the transformational process and of the integration of mind, body, and spirit in health and illness.

**Jeremy Berg** is Lorian's Operation Manager and administrator. He is a workshop presenter and architectural designer. He has taught at both the secondary and post secondary level and been a college dean and vice president. Spirituality, especially an applied incarnational approach, has been a passion for many years.

## Tuition and Scholarships

### Annual Tuition and Fees

**Tuition** - \$1500 per quarter for three quarters (or \$4,350 if paid annually before the September classes begin)

**Assigned Body Work** - 3 sessions = Cost varies depending on practitioner (Non-Lorian Staff)

**Text Books** - Approximately \$200. Most classes do not require textbooks, as material is posted online. However, there are a few classes, which have assigned outside reading.

**Spiritual Direction (MSD)** - Monthly spiritual direction costs are the responsibility of the student.

**Travel, Meals and Accommodations** for Intensives are the responsibility of the student. Cost varies depending on location. All face-to-face activities are held in the Seattle, WA area.

Additional costs for the **Master's Degree** beyond the Deepening Into spirit two-year program or the Spiritual Direction three-year program option are \$250 per quarter for the thesis committee oversight work until thesis is completed and \$250 for the summer course.

Secure credit card payments are accepted online at [www.Paypal.com](http://www.Paypal.com) payable to [lorianeducation@msn.com](mailto:lorianeducation@msn.com). Check or money order payments can be sent by regular mail the above address.

**Registration:** Applications may be emailed or mailed to:

The Lorian Association

PO Box 1368

Issaquah, WA 98027

Contact us by email at [info@lorian.org](mailto:info@lorian.org) or call (425) 427-9071.

### Scholarships

Lorian is dedicated to making our classes and programs financially available to a broad range of applicants without bias. We offer scholarships for those who are not able to cover the full costs of our programs and yet have a sincere interest in them.

Scholarship will be awarded on a sliding scale commensurate with the need and in no cases will be more than 50% of the tuition cost. Intensive fees, books, and bodywork fees are not included.

1. Requests for funds must accompany an application.
2. Include an essay detailing your financial circumstances. Please describe with enough specificity to allow us to make a reasonable evaluation of your need. This should

include your income, expenses, savings and other equity, net worth and other relevant data. Please let us know of any unusual conditions or extenuating circumstances. These letters are confidential and will be kept on file in our office.

3. We ask that those who receive scholarships agree to participate in an expanded form of reciprocal gifting, i.e., that you find a specific act of gifting that you can do in your immediate community, family or work situation. There is no need to measure the value of such gifts to Lorian directly, however, we do ask for a written report on your activity and your experience of this act of gifting.

### Scholarship Fund

The scholarship fund is built up by participants with the ability to contribute more than the requested fee, or others who, recognizing the value of these programs, might wish to make a donation in support of others. We trust that someone who has received a scholarship and finds his or her circumstances changed may contribute at a later time. We invite you to consider participating in this gifting circle.

Donations to our scholarship fund or our overall work offer a significant support, both financially and energetically and we are appreciative. The Lorian Association is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization. Your tax-deductible contributions are gratefully received and faithfully put to work.

## Application

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_ Last  
 First Middle Preferred

Mailing address:

\_\_\_\_\_ Street City State Zip

Telephone numbers:

\_\_\_\_\_ Home Work E-mail

Soc. Sec. # \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Emergency contact

\_\_\_\_\_ Name Relationship Telephone

### Application Procedure

1. Complete the application materials and send to:

The Lorian Association  
PO Box 1368  
Issaquah WA 98027

or email: [info@Lorian.org](mailto:info@Lorian.org)

Please include a check for \$100.00 with your application materials. If accepted this amount will be applied towards your first year's tuition. If you are not accepted for any reason \$75.00 will be returned to you with an explanation.

2. Your application will be reviewed by Lorian faculty and administration

3. A telephone or face-to-face interview will be scheduled between you and a Lorian faculty member or administrator.

4. A decision will be made regarding acceptance and you will be notified.

5. If requesting a scholarship please attach the material to this application.

### **Academic Background**

Please indicate the number years of education you have completed and list any degrees or certificates that you have been awarded.

### **Application Questions**

On separate sheets please complete the following:

1. Please write a spiritual autobiography. While doing so, describe any critical incidents that informed your beliefs and practices. Describe your present spiritual practice.

2. Describe any educational programs that have contributed to your spiritual path or that are relevant to this program.

3. Please describe your aspirations for taking this program. What do you want to get out of it? What outcomes or intentions do you hold for yourself?

4. Describe your current life situation.

a) What kind of support system or personal context will support you through the course of this program? Please describe it.

b) Can you devote approximately 15 hours a week to spend on this work? How would that impact your current lifestyle?

c) Do you have any chronic health, psychological, or addiction issues that might impact this work?

d) Are you currently under the care of a physician, counselor or psychotherapist?

Please describe.

e) Describe any situational or relational challenges that might impact your participation in this program.

5. We will be working in learning communities. Please describe any experience you have with learning communities, learning systems or groups.

6. We will be meeting for five-day intensives three times a year. In-between that time, participants and faculty will be connected through an online classroom. Do you have access to a computer and the capacity to interact online?

7. How did you learn about the Lorian Association?

Thank you for your application for the first year of our program. All materials you submit will be kept confidential within the Lorian faculty and administration. If you have any questions please call us at 425-427-9071. We look forward to receiving your information.

By signing below, I affirm that the information I have provided on this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

---

Signature

Date

## **Incarnational Spirituality**

Incarnational Spirituality is the foundation for all of Lorian's work. It is an affirmation of the spirit innate within our world, our humanity, our physicality, and our personal lives. It sees each person as a source of spiritual power and radiance.

**Incarnational Spirituality brings a holistic perspective to spirituality.** The spiritual life is often seen as focusing upon the transpersonal and the transcendent, directing our attention beyond the world and beyond the self. Incarnational Spirituality seeks to balance this by restoring an awareness of the spiritual nature of our physical, everyday selves and the sacredness of the world around us.

**Incarnational Spirituality is grounded in our sovereignty as individuals.** Each of us is a unique incarnation of sacredness able to make contributions that no one else can make to the wellbeing of our world and the positive unfoldment of our future.

**Incarnational Spirituality is a calling to discover the nobility and spiritual presence in our everyday selves.** It is a calling to unfold capacities of blessing, manifesting, creating, and healing within us.

**Incarnational Spirituality is a calling of responsibility to each other and to our world. It is a calling to act and not just reflect, to engage and not just contemplate.**

How a person answers that calling is up to him or her. We each serve in unique ways. Incarnational Spirituality can offer tools that assist us in doing so, demonstrating the unity of inner alignment with outer activity. Join us in discovering and unfolding the radiance of your own incarnation as a spiritual presence and force for good in the world.

## **Contact Information**

PO. Box 1368, Issaquah, WA 98027

(425) 427 9071

[www.lorian.org](http://www.lorian.org)

Email [info@lorian.org](mailto:info@lorian.org)

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