

The Art of Spiritual Accompaniment

An experiential course in discerning listening

Overview of the Course

The day typically begins with a **prayer exercise**. This helps us to focus on God and to be aware of ourselves. It may also lead into the accompanying in the triads.

The **triads** are the places where we practice accompanying. Each member of the triad takes it in turn to speak, to listen and to observe. The triads are at the core of our learning. They will start with basic listening and move on to include different aspects of responding. Membership of the triads will change with each session.

Each session has a **main theme**, which will be the subject of a presentation and other exercises or group work.

Sessions 1 and 2 set the scene:

1. Introducing the course and process of accompanying
2. Approaches to spiritual accompaniment

Sessions 3 and 4 consider aspects of how we accompany

3. How we listen
4. How we discern

Sessions 5 to 8 explore some of the processes that may be happening as we accompany

5. Spiritual movements
6. Psychodynamics
7. Stages of faith
8. Resistance

In the light of all this, sessions 9 and 10 pick out two specific aspects

9. Remote accompaniment (online etc)
10. Some touchstone issues for accompaniers

We conclude over two sessions, 11 and 12

11. What next? – discerning readiness to accompany
12. Endings and next steps.

Each session we will also reflect on aspects of our underlying theology and on the heritage of spiritual traditions on which we can draw.

The final component of each day is the **Reflection Group**. This has two main purposes:

- To reflect with others on what you are experiencing in the triads and the course more generally
- To present something of your accompanying of your 'course pilgrim' – an introduction to supervision of accompaniment.

You will be in the same Reflection Group for the duration of the course.

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Recommended Reading

ASA 2021

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| Barry, W & Connolly, W. | The Practice of Spiritual Direction 2 nd Edition
HarperOne |
| Guenther, Margaret | Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction
Darton, Longman and Todd |
| Pickering, Sue | Spiritual Direction: A Practical Introduction
Canterbury Press |
| Woodwell, Anita | On Holy Ground Guided Prayer: A Handbook & Practical
Companion
Canterbury Press |