

Spiritual Growth and Transformation Course Overview

(This outlines the topic and likely content of each session, and items are not necessarily in the order in which they will come on the day)

- Session 1 Welcome and introductions. Creation of safe and sacred space.
Exploration of understanding of prayer.
Orientation of the Course and explanation of Listening Threes.
Short prayer exercise “What has brought me here?”
What does “spiritual growth and transformation” mean to you?
A ritual – often planting of bulbs – to symbolise growth from darkness.
- Session 2 Listening and Discernment
Normal pattern of a day from this point
Prayer exercise – “Time Line”
Review of prayer followed by listening threes.
Invitation to consider their own experiences of being listened to – examples, reflection and sharing.
Sharing groups (4 people with a facilitator reflecting on the day)
- Session 3 Who Am I?
Prayer exercise – “My Name” based on Isaiah 43:1 and Isaiah 49:16.
Ways of knowing myself – a brief overview of Myers Briggs Type Indicator and discussion of other possible tools available.
We usually offer some ideas for reading, and suggestions for looking at other Christian traditions or a mystic etc at this point for those who would like to do more around the course. This is not obligatory.
- Session 4 Who Am I? continued.
Prayer Exercise – The Banquet of our Whole Selves
Introduction of the idea of True and False Self with examples from people such as Thomas Merton and Richard Rohr.
Visual aid of a picture of a man embracing his shadow.
- Session 5 Who is God?
Prayer Exercise – Lectio Divina.
Material from the original course on images of God.
Reflection and sharing of how image of God has changed over the years.
Presentation of the Dynamic Cycle.

- Session 6 Jesus
 Prayer exercise – imaginative prayer using a gospel story about Jesus
 Input and discussion on Jesus/the Christ intended to provoke thought and discussion on people’s ideas about Jesus.
 We have recently had someone come to talk about Icons which has been very well received.
- Session 7 Moving on – vocation?
 Prayer exercise – various, recently we have used an exercise from Francis Dewar’s book “Called or collared”
 Input on Stages of Faith with an overview of Fowler.
- Session 8 Grown up Spirituality – taking responsibility for my own journey
 Prayer Exercise – Children’s books.
 A variety of input from the original course and from Parker J Palmer “Let your life speak” and “An Altar on the World” Barbara Brown Taylor.
 Use of metaphors like “dream”, “word” “song” “dance”
 An introduction to the Ignatian decision making grid as a helpful tool.
- Session 9 What part of the Body am I?
 Prayer exercise - clay
 Input on Ignatian ideas of spiritual freedom
 We have hugely benefited on this day from input from an artist (Ric Stott)
- Session 10 Conclusion
 Prayer exercise – reflection on the journey of the course.
 Hopefully return of now grown and flowering bulbs.
 Information about the next part of the course, and information about available resources for continuing the journey.
 Celebration Eucharist.

The weekend silent retreat usually comes any time after day 3 and hopefully before or at the halfway point depending on availability.

Each session will have a variety of resources – poems, pieces of writing etc which will vary from one year to the next. Prayer exercises may change. The above is the pattern and basic content of the course.