

Spiritual Direction Reflection and Review

Invite your directee to reflect on the spiritual direction relationship using the following questions:

- What do I like about spiritual direction?
- What has it done for me so far?
- Is there anything I wish were different about spiritual direction?
Anything I wish were happening, but isn't?
- Is there anything that goes on in the sessions themselves that is particularly helpful?
- Anything that is "unhelpful"? e.g., something that is frustrating, counterproductive, etc.
- Do I have anything in particular to suggest that would improve the sessions?
- What was my intent in seeking spiritual direction? Is that being fulfilled?
- Is my experience of spiritual direction turning out as I had hoped?
- Specifically, how has spiritual direction helped my prayer life?
My relating with God?

Reviewing the Spiritual Direction Relationship

Periodic review is part of ongoing discernment about the rightness of continuing the spiritual direction relationship itself and any specific issues or concerns that either directee or director may have. As such, it is important that both parties have an opportunity for prayer and reflection ahead of time. Some areas for both director and directee to look at include:

- *Content.* Are the discussions really addressing prayer, sense of God, movements and invitations of the Spirit (as contrasted with problem-solving, psychological, religious or theological conversations)? How does direction support or perhaps substitute for counseling or other needed assistance? Is the focus of discussion sufficiently on the directee, or is it becoming more mutual, more like a friendship than a direction relationship?
- *Prayer.* What is the attitude of prayerfulness within the meetings, and what is prayer for each other like outside the meetings? How does the relationship really serve prayer and prayerfulness for both parties? What might be interfering (e.g. concern for each other being more important than concern for God, or the director being too directive about how the directee should pray)?
- *Freedom and Power.* Are both director and directee free enough to discuss whatever seems called for, or are significant areas being excluded, e.g. work, family, community, feelings about each other, health, money, church, social justice issues? Is the locus of discernment kept within the directee, or is the director subtly taking over in some way? Is the relationship supporting the self-worth and self-respect of both parties?

Note that the above questions apply to both director and directee. Not all these issues need to be talked about in each review, but it is helpful if the director can suggest such a range of topics for both to pray and think about ahead of time.

*Excerpted and adapted from **Suggestions for Evaluation of Direction Relationships** by Gerald May for the Shalem Spiritual Guidance Program*

Ignatian Spiritual Direction Reflection and Review

By Rev. Brian McDermott, SJ

Learning Various Forms of Praying in the Christian Tradition

- is the directee growing in the use of Lectio Divina and Ignatian imaginative prayer, if discursive prayer is what they are being called to?
- Is the directee growing in the prayerful "use" of Scriptural texts and prayerful "use" of their own life-experiences?

Growth in Interior Freedom

- Is the directee growing in interior freedom, rooted in the experience of God's unconditional love for them?
- is the directee growing in self-knowledge about their disordered attachments and growing in their desire to become more and more free from them?

Growing Heart Knowledge of Jesus Christ

- is the directee growing in interior knowledge of, and love for, Jesus Christ, in his authentic humanity and in his unique relationship with God, Source of All, whom he called Abba?
- is the directee growing in their ability to bring more and more of their life experience to Jesus Christ out of desire for deeper intimacy with him?

Discernment of Spirits and Discernment of God's Will

- is the directee receiving the assistance needed to discern the various spiritual movements in their interior life and to infer correctly from the directionality of the movements the nature of the spiritual origin of the movements?
- Is the directee receiving the help they need to make choices based on evidence of God's will that God is giving them?