



THE COMMUNITY OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS CODE of PRACTICE

LCSD offers resources and support for those interested in Christian Spiritual Direction. As part of that, we uphold a *Code of Practice* and invite those who accept that Code to join the Centre's Community of Spiritual Directors *and adhere* to these guidelines.

The ministry of spiritual direction is a privilege. It seeks to enable an engaged and dynamic interaction between life, spirituality, and theology in the context of the directee's life lived in relationship to God, creation, the world, the local community and the community of faith.

The director has significant potential power and responsibility that should be exercised with care to ensure the intention of the relationship is not undermined. Such care needs to be practiced in the use of language, in the expression of moral judgements and in the handling of decision-making so that the autonomy of the directee is not undermined. To this end:

A member of the *Community of Spiritual Directors* is required to

- Have an ongoing relationship with God and a commitment to deepening that relationship by maintaining an appropriate spiritual life, *e.g. Personal prayer, worship, retreats etc.*;
- Have an understanding of and be in sympathy with our Christian tradition;
- Be rooted in a widely-trusted faith tradition and transparent about religious influences in the spiritual direction relationship ;
- Receive regular spiritual direction *e.g. every 6 - 8 weeks*;
- Receive regular supervision (sufficient for their own practice and workload) to reflect on and develop their practice and to be accountable;

- Engage in ongoing training and development, *e.g. by attending courses or day events, reading appropriate books, etc.*;
- Explain and agree the role of spiritual direction with enquirers;
- Contract the terms of confidentiality and maintain clear professional boundaries, *e.g. will not (ordinarily) relate to the directee in a separate context (for example as a friend, colleague or supervisor)*;
- Act in a way that respects the integrity (including sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, disability, or gender) and wellbeing of the directee;
- In matters relating to the wellbeing of a directee, act solely in the interests of the directee;
- Encourage directees to seek further support where necessary, *e.g. counselling, medical attention, etc.*;
- Have knowledge of, and abide by, legal and ethical guidelines, including in relation to safeguarding (see the safeguarding policy attached); receive safeguarding training every three years;
- Comply, where appropriate, with GDPR, *e.g. any personal data held about the directee will be kept in a safe and secure place, available for inspection and destroyed at the end of the relationship.*

All members of the Community of Spiritual Directors will be expected to show evidence of attending a Safeguarding Training Day and to refresh that training within a three-year period.

Whilst we can't insist you have a DBS; it can be requested by directees or organisations. We recommend that if it is possible, you obtain one and may like to mention that in your Directory entry.



THE COMMUNITY of SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES for SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

These guidelines have been produced by the Centre for Spiritual Direction, in consultation with **thirtyone:eight**. Its purpose is to give those in this ministry assistance in relation to safeguarding issues for children and adults so that they are aware of the responsibilities of pastoral care in situations where concerns are raised.

Whilst recognising that directors will be meeting with people in a variety of locations, these procedures fall under the *Safeguarding Policy of the Diocese of London* (see <http://www.london.anglican.org/kb/safeguarding-in-the-diocese-of-london-policy-document>) This will be similar to those of other dioceses. If issues concerning Safeguarding arise within a context of spiritual direction these should be discussed with the appropriate Diocesan (or other church's) Safeguarding Advisor or **thirtyone:eight**.

While spiritual direction conversations would normally be held in confidence, where a disclosure is made that could cause a child or adult to be at risk of significant harm, then it is necessary to seek advice and guidance from the appropriate person and to keep a written record of any action taken.

Such situations include:

- Past abuse as a child where the perpetrator still has contact with children or adults at risk of harm.
- A person who may have committed abuse or is fearful that they have the propensity to harm.
- A person currently experiencing abuse, witnessing it, or indirectly involved.
- A person who may view or download indecent images of children or extreme abuse.

It is **not** the role of the spiritual directors to ‘investigate’ the matter; instead, it is always important to seek advice. In the event of a safeguarding matter arising, the director should keep a written record of the action taken.

As a protection for directors, LCSD recommends that at the start of all spiritual direction relationships **either**:

1. A written agreement is signed stating that while meetings are confidential, any matters relating to the protection of children or adults will be referred to the appropriate diocesan representative or statutory agencies i.e. police or social care;

or:

2. A signed record is kept which states that these matters have been explained and discussed with the directee.

Your first point of contact when a safeguarding concern arises would be your supervisor, who would then be required to inform the Safeguarding Lead, who is the Centre Director. You can also contact **thirtyone:eight** 24 hour helpline on **0303 003 111** for advice. ***In an emergency contact children’s or adults’ social services and/or the police.***

Further information, including details of safeguarding training,
can be found on:

<https://www.lcsd.org.uk/resources/safeguarding/>
<https://thirtyoneeight.org>