



Spiritual Direction Certification Program

– Final Project Descriptions –
Graduation

20-February-2021

<http://metageminstitute.org>



Kendra Allen (Nashville, TN)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- ◆ Title: “Spiritual Renewal Day for Psychotherapists and Mental Health Practitioners”
- ◆ This project consisted of a one-day retreat of spiritual renewal designed for mental health providers. This retreat was held during the pandemic when many psychotherapists were experiencing “Zoom fatigue” after having shifted to telehealth. There was a felt need to offer a time for respite and reflection in an outdoor physically-distanced setting. The aim of the day was to introduce the participants to spiritual direction and other spiritual practices by giving them the opportunity to nurture their inner, spiritual life — believing the importance of personal renewal as essential to the work they do in the world. The one-day retreat ended with a group spiritual direction session that included an opportunity for each participant to share their encounters with God from the day.



Beth Chamberlain (Sewanee, TN)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Research and Reflection Paper
- ◆ Title: “Setting the Intention: How Spiritual Directors Prepare Themselves for the Practice of Presence”
- ◆ This research and reflection paper explores ways spiritual directors ready themselves for spiritual direction sessions, including setting intentions. It also examines the ways that these intentions might change over time, and how certain spiritual practices or a rule of life influence intentions. Primary research was conducted through interviews with and written statements by 11 active spiritual directors whose experience in the field ranges from 3 to over 35 years. The research conclusion invites spiritual directors to consider their own intention, rule of life, and spiritual practices in a deeper way, giving insights into the practical as well as the more artistic and mystical side of spiritual direction.



Detta Goodman (Jacksonville, AL)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Research and Reflection Paper
- ◆ Title: “Spiritual Direction with Young Adults”
- ◆ This research and reflection paper explores the practice of spiritual direction with young adults, especially with those who feel abandoned and/or confused by the church. The research included conversations with such young adults who indicated that spiritual direction provides a safe atmosphere where they can be themselves—with no fear of reprisal for current beliefs or questions—and offers an opportunity for them to reconnect with God as a loving faithful presence in their lives and indeed within themselves.



Linda Kennedy (Birmingham, AL)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- ◆ Title: “Sawyerterville Prayer Partners as a Group Spiritual Direction Exercise”
- ◆ This project integrated several spiritual practices: Ignatian Examen and Praying in Color with intercessory prayer and service to others. The project resulted in a unique and creative method for Sawyerterville prayer partner participants to express their thoughts, reach for God in a time of need, and connect with others in the Sawyerterville community during a pandemic when they could not be physically present. This creative approach enabled the Sawyerterville prayer partner arrangement to be more like a group spiritual direction exercise.



Brenda Mayhall (Albertville, AL)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- ◆ Title: “Spiritual Direction Through Grief Using Symbols of Special Times”
- ◆ This creative approach to spiritual direction involves working with those walking through a journey of grief. This journey is difficult, painful, and one that has no timetable and no final destination. The griever often questions their relationship with God and where God is in their loss.

Typically, symbolic items are retained that remind them of special times with their deceased loved one. This creative approach to spiritual direction invites the directee to share such items in sessions to further explore the directee’s relationship with God along the spiritual journey and incorporates the grief journey in the process.



Leslie Nolan (Shreveport, LA)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- ◆ Title: “Group Spiritual Direction as an Anti-Racism Practice”
- ◆ The events of the summer of 2020 led many people to learn more about racism. Jesus’ example and the Holy Spirit’s guidance are needed to help Christians become anti-racist. Therefore, the practice of anti-racism is a spiritual discipline.

This creative approach to spiritual direction involves facilitating a church study group to address racism. The process incorporates Ignatian Examen and other spiritual practices, which help the small group be open to new thoughts and ways of seeing.

When spiritual directors are working with directees who cannot see their ingrained biases and prejudices, and especially when these are harmful and/or hindering their relationship with God or neighbor, using the Ignatian Examen and other targeted spiritual practices may be useful to draw awareness and attention to the issue.



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Ben Padgett (Hoover, AL)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Spiritual Direction Offering within a Community
- ◆ Communities:
Highlands United Methodist Church Birmingham and clergy colleagues.
- ◆ All too often the church provides very little understanding of what the word *spiritual* means, even though the word is popular. This project used three videos focusing on spiritual formation and one video focusing on spiritual direction, using the Johari Window, to initiate those interested in enhancing their relationship with God, creation, neighbor, and self.

At present, there are five directees active in spiritual direction as a result of this project: four females and one male. Two are colleagues and one lives on the West Coast. All use social media: two on Zoom; two on FaceTime; and one on Google Duo. Each of the directees report they are experiencing God's presence in their life to a greater degree than before joining the spiritual direction process.



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Theron Swader (Leeds, AL)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Research and Reflection Paper
- ◆ Title: "The Enneagram and Spiritual Direction"
- ◆ This research and reflection paper introduces certain underpinning Enneagram concepts and themes that can provide spiritual directors a tool with which to first compassionately inquire into their own spiritual lives and, second, help point to the divine mystery in the lives of their directees. A spiritual director's ability to see and point towards glimpses of divinity in the lives of their directees requires a contemplative attitude and is limited by the degree to which they have willingly looked within to examine their own ego, personality, and shadow. This paper concludes that the Enneagram is a useful tool for such exploration.



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Kate Tremblay (Homewood, AL)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- ◆ Title: “Focusing Processing in Spiritual Direction”
- ◆ This creative approach to spiritual direction uses a process called Focusing to get in touch with unconscious knowing accessed through the body. Focusing invites us to notice and welcome important feelings in the body that we might otherwise ignore, and gently coax forward and nurture the wisdom beneath those feelings. Through Focusing, a body-based and heart-centered intuitive knowing can be integrated with our more familiar mind-based intellectual knowing. This integration is especially beneficial in spiritual direction.



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Patti Whitaker (Athens, AL)

- ◆ Final Project Type: Creative Approach to Spiritual Direction
- ◆ Title: “Mindfulness Practices with Those in Recovery”
- ◆ This project incorporates mindfulness practices into spiritual direction with those in addiction recovery. Mindfulness is the process of bringing one’s attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment. (Wikipedia)
To live in recovery means to “live one day at a time.” In sobriety programs and communities this mindfulness phrase is repeated frequently. This project’s creative approach to spiritual direction acknowledges that the path with a Higher Power and the path of sobriety are one in the same. Through this creative approach the directee journeys with a Higher Power by learning mindfulness for “living one day at a time” through techniques, such as breathing exercises, walking meditation, guided meditation, and qigong.



Please contact us for further information about any of these final projects
or for details about Metagem's formation programs.

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