

Becoming a spiritual director/ companion



Are you good at listening?

Are you a person that others seek out to talk to about their faith?

Are you interested in being a spiritual director/ companion?

What is spiritual direction?

This is an ancient ministry, sometimes called *spiritual accompaniment*, *prayer guidance*, or *soul friendship*. It is about taking the time to meet with another person and talk about his or her spiritual journey and prayer.

Why?

People seek this ministry at different points in their lives and for various reasons. It can be a way

- to make better sense of a faith journey.
- to find clarity and support at times of significant life choices.
- to respond more deeply to God's presence and move toward wholeness and freedom.

Many people find that, at particular points in their pilgrimage, this pattern of reflective companionship can be a significant help.

Who?

The person offering this ministry needs to be a person of prayer who makes the commitment to accepting the other as they are and where they are. The companion or guide's role is to support the other in discerning God's activity in their lives.

What?

The important thing is that this is a 'sacred space' into which someone *can* bring anything but into which they do not *have* to bring anything. There are no expectations, and no judgement. It is a listening and accepting space.

How?

People usually meet face to face, normally in the accompanier's home, but other arrangements can be made if, for whatever reason, this is not possible.

I want to explore this ministry further – what do I do next?

Talk to your own spiritual director. If you do not have one, finding one would be a good place to start. See the leaflet on the diocesan website. Contact Mark Booth – spiritual.direction@cofesuffolk.org , 01728 454349.

Speak to the Spirituality Advisor, Anne Spalding (anne.spalding@cofesuffolk.org , 01394 610065). The Spirituality Advisor is part of the Diocesan Spirituality Group which seeks to support people involved in this ministry. It runs training days covering aspects of spiritual direction and spirituality. See the Spirituality area of the Diocesan website (under Life & Faith) at www.cofesuffolk.org for more details.

Read about this ministry. There are some suggested books in the resources section of the Spirituality area on the Diocesan website.

Go on a training course. *London Spirituality Centre*, which is close to Liverpool Street, runs a 3 year course called 'Encounter': see <http://www.spiritualitycentre.org/index.php/developing/encounter-the-london-course> .
Cambridgeshire runs a 1 year training course: contact the course administrator, Janice Randall, on randall.janice@gmail.com (01223 236956) or write, enclosing an A5-sized SAE, to 17 Brackenbury Manor, Kay Hitch Way, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9YY.
For *Chelmsford* diocese 2 year training course contact: Fran McEvoy franmcevoy@hotmail.com , 01702 330178 (<http://www.spiritual-direction-in-essex.org.uk>).

