



WHAT IS SPIRITUAL DIRECTION?

Spiritual direction is a centuries-old practice focused on spiritual life development through a church or monastery and as a service provided by individual pastors, priests or religious teachers. In spiritual direction, we come together to explore God's work within your life. Listening together, incorporating scripture, and teaching and suggesting spiritual disciplines to further unfold your connection to God. It creates a safe space for questions and seeks to offer practical spiritual advice for navigating your relationship with God, and in turn, all those around us.

Below are other common questions regarding spiritual direction.

WHAT DOES A SPIRITUAL DIRECTION SESSION LOOK LIKE?

Spiritual direction sessions can vary. A session might look like a typical counseling session with two people sitting together or perhaps a couple meeting with a spiritual director. We can gather online, talk over the phone, meet in person at a local coffeeshop, or take a walk through a local park. There are very few logistical confines to spiritual direction sessions. We might talk over coffee in my home office or find a quiet private place at a local church to meet. The goal is to take the time to invest in your spiritual growth and find a setting where you feel the most comfortable.

WHAT DO WE TALK ABOUT IN A SPIRITUAL DIRECTION SESSION?

Spiritual direction is creating a space to help you listen to what is happening within you. Topics can include work, family, finances, parenting, vocation, identity, spirituality, difficult conversations or relationships and upcoming dreams and goals. Those are all part of your soul at work. We will explore your story by tracing back, practicing being present and seeking to understand how you have been uniquely designed. We might read a book together, read through scripture or talk through spiritual exercises, allowing you to set the pace and tone of our sessions.

HOW LONG IS A SESSION?

An ideal spiritual direction session will last right around an hour and a half. I like to book at least a ninety-minute session when first starting spiritual direction. However, a session can be shorter. Perhaps a simple touch base on a particular issue or a talk through an upcoming situation, sorting through ideas and formulating the best way to handle something. The length of time for your sessions can be determined season by season as your schedule and needs allow.

IS THERE TEACHING DURING A SESSION?

At first, there is a lot of listening on my part, hearing where you are, where you've been and where you hope to go on your spiritual journey. As we move forward, we might explore practicing different spiritual disciplines such as prayer, silence, study of scripture, journaling and others. We will discuss and discover facets of your personality through tools such as the Enneagram, Strengths Finder, Myers-Briggs, Love Languages and Temperaments. In its nature, spiritual direction offers guidance. We journey together with honest conversation and a commitment to both challenge and encourage.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE DONE WITH A SPIRITUAL DIRECTION SESSION?

The results of a session will vary from person to person. Some truths you discover will need to be explored for a few days or even years. You may quickly realize things in your life that you would like to change, and the journey of spiritual direction will guide you through those processes as you allot time. There is no time limit to life change, nor any proven expedited process. It is a journey with a variety of “speed limits” to shift through. You may continue to practice spiritual direction for many years, or you may introduce yourself over a few months and periodically return for a spiritual check-in.

DO I HAVE TO SIGN UP FOR SEVERAL SESSIONS?

You can request appointments as you feel led. I have suggested a variety of variations to choose from. However, regular time spent in spiritual direction is the best practice for the soul. If you feel there are things in your life that need attending to, consider meeting every other week. Beyond those initial meetings or more difficult seasons, a regular practice can be once a month or every six weeks.

HOW IS A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR DIFFERENT FROM A LIFE COACH OR COUNSELOR?

Good life coaches and counselors are most likely very good listeners, and listening is also a lot of what happens in spiritual direction. Coaching differs from spiritual direction in that coaching includes set plans or goals. Counseling typically offers methodologies to address a particular problem or mental health scenario. Spiritual direction, in its purest form, is more mysterious as to the end results and format. It's a theological approach with similar aims as counseling and coaching but with a distinct effort and energy put toward seeing God's work in and through your life. Plans can be made, and attending to your soul will have an impact on your overall mental health. It should also end up influencing difficult problems or seasons of life. However, it is important to note that spiritual directors are not necessarily licensed counselors or certified life-coaches. Although many spiritual directors may also carry those credentials, typically a spiritual director has a different level of educational and experiential background. If you feel that you need coaching or to meet with a licensed counselor, I would love to help connect you with a local practitioner.

If you have any other questions or would like to book a session, contact me at hello@jennifermazzola.com.