



# Spiritual Life Center, Inc.



## IS ANYBODY REALLY LISTENING TO YOU?

### Spiritual Companions Groups

When you want to share some of your deeper thoughts and feelings, who listens to you? When you want to talk about what is in your heart and soul, to whom can you turn? Sadly, in today's society it can be hard to find such a companion. Cell phone texting won't suffice! Happily, there are options. One is to find a spiritual director. Another is to take part in a spiritual companions group. (You can register for one at the bottom of this article.)

A Spiritual Companion Group is composed of five to eight people who meet together periodically to share matters that are spiritually significant to them. A trained and experienced spiritual director facilitates the group. **These groups provide a great opportunity for spiritual growth.** Diversity is valued: persons of any spiritual tradition, or no tradition, are welcome to participate.



Here's a general idea of how such a group works. One group member volunteers to be the "Presenter" on a particular day. The others serve as "Companions". After several minutes of quiet and stillness, the presenter shares something of spiritual importance to him or her. It might be a question about God, or a decision they are wrestling with, or a wonderful experience they have had, or a vague sense of longing for something more—anything at all.



Another period of silence follows. During this time, each of the companions opens his or her heart to receive whatever the Spirit might bring up in them. Then slowly, one by one, the companions may take turns responding to the presenter. They speak with great respect, sharing what they heard or

noticed while the presenter was talking. The presenter may choose either to listen quietly or to engage in dialogue with the one who speaks to them. The presenter can affirm or correct the companions' impressions and, by doing so, the presenter becomes clearer about his or her own thoughts and feelings.

Companions do not give advice; they do not attempt to "fix". Companions do not "cross-talk" with each other. (Cross-talk occurs if one companion responds to what another companion has said, thus creating a dialogue between the two of them.) The focus remains on the presenter. The facilitator assures that these guidelines are followed.

From time to time, a companion may ask an evocative question that invites the presenter to explore the situation more deeply. Alternatively, any of the companions might simply hold the entire group in silent prayer while others speak. **It is a very peaceful, very meaningful time together.** The presence of the Spirit in Spiritual Companion Groups is palpable.

The members continue in this fashion until the presenter feels that it is time to pause. Then the group engages in a final period of silence. Following this, the members share something about what each has experienced during the session and the meaning it has for them personally.



## WHAT COULD THIS GROUP DO FOR YOU?

A Spiritual Companions Group can help you to:

- Recognize, claim, and trust your experiences of God
- Integrate spirituality into your daily life
- Find meaning in hopes, struggles, or losses
- Discern and make difficult choices
- Increase sensitivity to Justice, Peace, & Environmental Concerns
- Be part of a spiritual community.



There is a special power in a group whose members are dedicated to one another's personal welfare and spiritual growth. The group creates a small but very powerful community, a type of community that is hard to find in most institutions and in our society. This is why Spiritual Companion Groups are becoming more and more popular--because they are meeting a need. The world desperately needs more such communities.

We invite you to take part in one of the spiritual Companions Groups that will be starting up in January and run for six consecutive weeks. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are interested in taking part, as **space is limited**. “Life happens”, and absences may sometimes occur, but one should make a commitment to be present at meetings—the group is not the same without you. We ask for a contribution of \$65 for the series of six sessions. If that would prove a hardship, please let us know and we will make other arrangements. For more information, please call **860-243-2374** or contact Oscar Brockmeyer at [obrockmeyer@spiritlifectr.org](mailto:obrockmeyer@spiritlifectr.org)



Come, Grow with Us!