

Deep Listening

By Yvonne Tso, Spiritual companion/director and Health & Wellness Team Member

I want to talk a little about spiritual direction/spiritual companionship ... what it is and what it is not. Ultimately, a person who serves as a spiritual companion is involved in deep listening – deep listening to the person being companioned and deep listening to God. It requires the spiritual companion to be free of his or her own biases and opinions. It requires the person to be free of his or her own ego and focused solely on the relationship between the person being companioned and God.

One of the most important elements of spiritual companionship is that the person being companioned feels safe in the presence of the companion ... safe enough to be able to share anything. I imagine that is how the woman at the well felt with Jesus (John 4:4 - 42), despite her status as a woman, and worse, a Samaritan. She felt safe enough to be forthcoming about her own life and her questions. Such it is, or should be, in a spiritual companion relationship.

Even if you are not trained as a spiritual director or companion, you can still incorporate these elements into your daily relationships. That is what I wish to encourage today. If we could all listen a little more to each other, I think this world would be a better place, because it means that we, like God, care enough to hear another's story and thereby recognize its worth. And I mean **really** listen, not listen as a way to bide time before providing our own opinion. Often, listening so the other person can talk and sort things out themselves is just what they need. That is one way that God provides guidance. God is ultimately the spiritual director, not us.



If, on the other hand, you would like to pursue training as a spiritual companion/director, I would love to refer you to where I was trained at the [Audire Spiritual Direction training program](#) in Orlando. [Note: “Audire” is the Latin word for “to listen.” The conch shell was our reminder to listen.]

The goal of spiritual direction/spiritual companionship is always to help facilitate a more intimate relationship between each of us and God. The practice of deep listening, to each other and to God, even outside of spiritual direction, will help us all as we seek to further God's kingdom in this world.

Yvonne Tso, Spiritual companion/director and Health & Wellness Team Member

Questions? Contact Yvonne Tso: YLTSO22@gmail.com