Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (edited for Catholics taken from the SDI Guidelines)

A spiritual director’s ethical conduct flows from lived and reverence of God who is Love, who created everything out of love.

I. The Spiritual Director and the Self

Personal Spirituality

1. Spiritual directors are active in their ongoing personal growth by:

a. living a life of prayer, both personal and communal

b. and participating in regular spiritual direction

Formation

2. Spiritual directors engage in ongoing formation and continuing education by:

a studying scripture and the Church’s teachings in addition to theology, spirituality, psychology, and other disciplines as related to spiritual direction and spiritual growth

b. ongoing discernment in their call to the ministry of spiritual direction by nurturing self-knowledge

c. cultivating insight into the influences of culture, one’s social-historical context, environmental setting, and institutions on themselves and their directees

Supervision

3. Spiritual directors engage in supervision by:

a. receiving regular supervision from a mentor

b. engages in peer to peer or peer group gatherings

b. seeking consultations with others such as professionals, or licensed providers, or qualified persons in ministry as necessary.

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Personal Responsibility

4. Spiritual directors meet their needs outside the spiritual direction relationship in a variety of ways, especially by:

a. self-care, wisely balancing time for their spiritual life, family, personal relationships, work, and leisure.

b. being aware of their own values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors

b. recognizing and addressing the difficulties multiple roles or relationships pose to the effectiveness or clarity of the spiritual direction relationship

c. removing oneself from any situation that compromises the integrity of the spiritual direction relationship, yourself or the directee

Limitations

5. Spiritual directors recognize the limits of:

a. one’s energy thus accepting the number of spiritual directees which allow for full commitment

b. attentiveness by appropriate scheduling spacing of meetings and spiritual directees

c. competence by referring spiritual directees to other directors or qualified persons in appropriate fields when necessary.

II. The Spiritual Director and the Spiritual Directee

Contract

1. Spiritual directors initiate conversation and establish understandings with spiritual directees about:

a. the nature of spiritual direction – List what is it

b. the roles and responsibilities of the spiritual director and the spiritual directee

c. the length and frequency of spiritual direction sessions

d. the compensation, if any, to be given to the spiritual director or institution

e. the process for evaluating and terminating the relationship

Covenant - Trinitarian

Our relationship between the director and directee is rooted in Trinity

The Holy Spirit, the love between the Father and Son as members of the mystical body of Christ, The Church

Dignity

2. Spiritual directors honor the dignity of the spiritual directee by:

a. being aware of and respecting the spiritual directee’s conscience, faith tradition, theology, spirituality, values, culture, and abilities

b. inquiring into the motives, experiences, or relationships of the spiritual directee only as necessary

c. recognizing the directee’s autonomy

Morality

Spiritual directors’ moral behavior reflects the covenant relationship between God and themselves by awareness of:

a. establishing and maintaining appropriate physical and psychological boundaries with the spiritual directee

b. the intimacy inherent in such a relationship, and the potential for disordered affections of the directee or of themselves

c. any developments towards an imbalance in the relationship – leading to a perceived or use of ‘power over’

d. any words or actions which would foster dependency

Immorality

Spiritual directors are to

refrain from any sexualized behavior, exploiting the trust developed in the relationship, any

actions that seek to meet their personal needs at the expense of the directee, or any word or actions which are manipulative, abusive, or coercive.

Confidentiality

3. Spiritual directors maintain the confidentiality and the privacy of the spiritual directee by:

a. protecting the identity of the spiritual directee, maintaining anonymity in discussing with supervisors

b. keeping confidential all oral, electronic, and written matters arising in the spiritual direction sessions using HIPAA guidelines as our guide.

c. recognizing and disclosing to the spiritual directee the limitations of confidentiality of electronic communications

d. conducting spiritual direction sessions in environments allowing for private and confidential conversations

e. addressing to the directee their state’s legal regulations requiring disclosure without their consent to proper authorities, including but not limited to, child abuse, incompetent persons or elder abuse, and physical harm to self and others - the protection of life (suicidality or homicidality)

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III.

Spiritual Directors and Others

Colleagues

Spiritual directors maintain collegiate relationships with other spiritual care providers and professionals by

1. developing intra and interdisciplinary relationships
2. requesting spiritual director who is in therapy to inform his or her therapist about being in Spiritual Direction
3. securing written release information from spiritual directees when specific information needs to be shared for the benefit of the spiritual directee and to whom
4. holding in regard ministers, clergy, spiritual care providers, and other professionals and collaborating when asked
5. refraining from discussing with directees any disparaging opinions of others

*Faith and Spiritual Communities*

Spiritual Directors are responsible to maintain relationships to their communities of faith by:

1. drawing on the teaching and the spiritual practice of their community
2. respecting the spiritual directee’s relationship to his or her own communities

Society

Spiritual directors one presenting themselves to the public, preserve the integrity of Spiritual Direction by being in right relationship with persons and organizations:

a - representing qualifications and affiliations accurately

b. – respecting the dignity of all persons – as they are created children of God

I acknowledge that I have committed myself to the above professional ethical guidelines and moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.