



Membership Covenant

Association of Christian Spiritual Directors Inc.

Introduction – Who are we?

The Association is a group of Christian Spiritual Directors in Aotearoa-New Zealand. It is approved as a non-profit body in accordance with section 61(34) of the Income Tax Act 1976.

Membership of the Association is open to people who:

1. Are active Christian people from many denominations and churches throughout Aotearoa-New Zealand;
2. Have satisfied the executive of the Association that they have had adequate training and supervised practice as a Christian Spiritual Director;
3. Accept the need for regular
 - i. Personal spiritual direction
 - ii. Supervision of their spiritual direction work
 - iii. Ongoing formation and training
4. Have covenanted with the Association as attached.

Definition of Christian Spiritual Direction

Christian spiritual direction is a pastoral ministry in which one Christian person helps another to:

- pay attention to God's personal communication to them
- respond to and grow in intimacy with God
- live out the consequences of this relationship

Christian spiritual direction is based on God's covenantal relationship with men and women in Jesus Christ. Covenant speaks of mutual respect, trust and faithfulness and has a sacred character.

Therefore Christian spiritual direction requires a commitment to minister to a person with a Christ-like love and respect for his or her dignity, value and destiny.

More information available on our website

Website: www.acsd.org.nz email: acsdanz1@gmail.com Phone: 0272890383

Covenant: I _____ covenant as follows:
(Print name)

1. I accept the definition of Christian spiritual direction as stated above
2. I believe that:
 - (a) God communicates directly with individual people, alone and in community with others;
 - (b) This communication takes place in the context of a person's life and faith experience;
 - (c) This communication is brought to awareness in contemplation and personal reflection;
 - (d) Dialogue about this communication encourages growth.
3. I recognise that the primary focus for spiritual direction should always be on the significance of God's presence in the life events of a directee and how he or she can better learn to discern the unique voice of God within themselves.
4. I recognise that the foundation and energy of this covenant is God's grace and acknowledge that My commitment to prayer is an essential element of this covenant.
5. I accept that should I fail to recognise and abide by the standards of practice set out in this Covenant and the annexed Code of Ethics the Executive of the Association has the right to terminate my membership following appropriate discussion with me.
6. I accept that notice of termination of membership will be given in writing and there shall be no appeal from the Executive's decision.
7. I accept that in the case of serious malpractice by me, including professional sexual abuse, I am personally responsible for my actions.
8. I accept the Code of Ethics set out in Schedule A to this document, commit myself to that Code of Ethics and agree to be bound by it.
9. I recognise that my annual application for renewal of my membership (by Subscription and the addition of the signed declaration from both my spiritual director and supervisor) is a renewal of this Covenant.

Signed by member _____ **Date** _____

SUPERVISOR:

I am receiving regular supervision from the person below for my ministry as a spiritual director

Print name _____ *Date* _____

Phone _____ Email _____

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

I am receiving regular spiritual direction from

Print name _____ *Date* _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Signed on behalf of the Association of Christian Spiritual Directors Inc:

_____ **Date** _____
Print name & office

SCHEDULE A: CODE OF ETHICS

ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS INC

Purpose

This Code of Ethics states the required standard for responsible conduct by Members of the Association of Christian Spiritual Directors Inc.

Responsibilities of Directors for their Own Training and On-going Formation

The Member commits themselves to:

1. Increasing their professional knowledge and insight by: on-going study and education in Scripture, Christian faith and teaching, Christian ethics, spirituality and prayer and in the human sciences
2. Developing professional competence and accountability by:
 - On-going practice of interpersonal skills and exercise of abilities of rapport building and discernment and openness to God's grace in their work
 - An openness to God's grace in their work
 - Regular supervision of their work by a qualified and competent person, or in a peer group of qualified and competent directors. The focus of such supervision is to be on the director and the integration of their personal development.
3. Fostering a healthy growth in their own spiritual life by:
 - practicing personal disciplines of prayer love and detachment
 - openness to the Holy Spirit
 - a contemplative reflection on their own experience
 - engaging in regular spiritual direction as a directee
 - maintaining a responsible relationship to a faith community

Responsibilities of Directors to their Directee(s)

The member commits themselves to:

1. Initiate and establish agreements with directees about the
 - nature of spiritual direction
 - roles of director and directee
 - length and frequency of direction sessions
 - remuneration to be given to the director
 - procedure for on-going mutual evaluation of the relationship
2. Respect the directee's
 - right to confidentiality except where a directee becomes a threat to themselves or to others
 - vulnerability
 - moral, religious and spiritual values – refraining from imposing their own values on the directee
 - privacy - not inappropriately probing any directee for information that s/he is reluctant to share
 - boundaries – not engaging in inappropriate behaviour of a physical or emotional nature.

Such inappropriate behaviour includes

- Spiritual abuse – use of the director's own spiritual insights and experience to manipulate or control the directee
 - Professional sexual abuse – sexual gratification of the director or directee through inappropriate contact – verbal, emotional, physical, or other, between them.
3. be sensitive to the need to refer a directee to a qualified counsellor or psychotherapist, such instances including when a directee:
 - is experiencing a serious psychological or emotional disorder
 - needs more time to explore some life issues, e.g. a marital problem
 - would benefit from specific therapies, e.g. to aid resolution of earlier experiences such as sexual, physical or emotional abuse

Responsibilities of Directors to Other Members of the Association

The Member commits themselves to:

1. Respect and honour other members of the Association
2. Encourage them to uphold the required standards of the Association as set out in the Membership Covenant and Code of Ethics.
3. Respond to a perceived breach of this Covenant and Code in the spirit of the Christian Gospel by:
 - drawing the perceived breach to the attention of the member concerned
 - Referring the matter to the Executive if the perceived breach continues.

SCHEDULE B: COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS INC.

1. Any complaint about any member, whether from another member or any person, shall be lodged in writing with the Secretary.
2. Any complaint shall be related to a breach of the Code of Ethics (Schedule A) and shall specify the grounds for complaint.

3.1 The following complaints procedure shall be observed. The Executive shall have the following discretions:

- 3.1.1 If the nature of the complaint indicates that the subject material should be dealt with by any Court or tribunal, the Executive may decline to investigate or deal with the complaint until such a body has dealt with the issues which are the subject of the complaint.
 - If this body effectively disposes of the complaint, the Executive may decide to take no further action.
 - If the Executive decides to take further action they shall follow the procedures set out in 3.2 of this Schedule.
- 3.1.2 The Executive may decline to investigate or consider the complaint if the nature of the complaint indicates that the subject matter is petty, frivolous or inconsequential.
- 3.1.3 If investigation or consideration of the complaint are likely to require extensive inquiries, a considerable time input, or advice to the Executive from professional advisers, the Executive may at any time:
 - i. Decline further to investigate or consider the complaint, or
 - ii. Require the complainant to deposit with the Association such sum as the Executive thinks fit to reimburse the Association wholly or partly for the costs of those making the inquiries or considering the complaint and/or the Association's professional advisers' fees before further investigating or considering the complaint.

3.2 The following procedures shall be observed when a complaint about any member is investigated and considered:

- 3.2.1 The member shall be given a copy of the complaint.
- 3.2.2 The member shall have the opportunity to provide a detailed written response to the complaint within two weeks after receiving a copy of the complaint.
- 3.2.3 Further inquiries may be made by or on behalf of the Executive, and the results of those inquiries shall be made known to the complainant and the member.
- 3.2.4 The Executive shall allow the complainant and the member the opportunity to be heard by the Executive or any special committee established by it for the purpose of hearing and deciding upon the complaint.
- 3.2.5 Any such committee shall not contain any person who has any direct or indirect interest in the complaint.
- 3.2.6 Any such committee will contain one person from a similar professional organization who is not a member of the Association of Christian Spiritual Directors Inc.
- 3.2.7 The Executive or any special committee hearing and deciding upon any complaint may:
 - i. Dismiss the complaint or
 - ii. Uphold the complaint and take one of the following actions
 - reprimand or admonish the member
 - suspend the member from membership for a specified period
 - suspend the member from membership until the Executive is satisfied specific outcomes of educational or remedial work have been achieved by the member
 - alter the membership classification of the member
 - expel the member
- 3.2.8 The Executive or any special committee hearing and deciding on any complaint shall respect the confidentiality of the proceedings.
- 3.2.9 The decision and any reasons (without any obligation to give such reasons) for that decision shall be conveyed to the complainant and the member in writing.
- 3.3 The decisions of the Executive or any special committee hearing and deciding upon any complaint under this Rule shall be final and binding on the complainant and the member complained against and shall not be subject to any review or challenge.

4. A member whose membership is terminated under these Rules

- 4.1 will have his/her name removed from the membership list
- 4.2 is not eligible for any reimbursement of fees or subscriptions
- 4.3 shall cease to claim membership of the Association.