



Members Handbook

Updated November 2024

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Assumptions and Definitions about Spiritual Direction

ACSD holds these assumptions about the practice of spiritual direction:

- God relates with individual people, alone and in community
- This relationship takes place in the context of a person's life and faith experience.
- This relationship is brought to awareness in contemplation and personal reflection.
- Dialogue about this relationship encourages growth.

ACSD's Definition of Spiritual Direction:

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

- Pay attention to God's personal communication to him/her
- Respond to and grow in intimacy with God
- Live out the consequences of this relationship

Spiritual direction requires a commitment to minister to a person love and respect for his or her dignity, value and destiny.

Members of the Association:

- Are people from many denominations and faith communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, engaged in the ministry of intentional, contracted spiritual direction
- Have satisfied the executive of the Association that they have had adequate training and have current supervised practice as a spiritual director
- Accept the need for regular:
 - Personal spiritual direction
 - Supervision of their spiritual direction work
 - Ongoing formation and training
- Require the highest ethical and professional standards of one another and have signed a covenant of ethics and standards of practice with the Association.

Membership Categories – Associate and Full

In 2023 The Executive simplified our Categories of membership along with creating a pathway for Spiritual Direction Graduates to be part of the association.

The following assumptions were made in accordance with the ACSD Covenant:

Spiritual Direction is usually a contracted one to one relationship over a period of time involving intentional meeting, although we recognise that Spiritual Direction skills may be involved in other situations.

One of the significant purposes of the ACSD is to recognise the professionalism of, and provide credibility for, those engaged in the ministry of Spiritual Direction. This implies that members of the Association are sufficiently qualified and have an agreed level of experience and competence.

- Our agreed simplified categories are:
 - **Associate membership** – Post Training for those at the beginning and end of their ministry, and for those whose primary ministry is not necessarily contracted one to one Spiritual Direction including those who are chaplains and those taking retreats
 - **Full Accredited Members** - this is for those who have completed at least 50 hours of Supervised Spiritual Direction post training, who have been an Associate for at least one year. Although on occasion an experienced spiritual director may be admitted directly to Full membership.

Note Emeritus membership – no new members will be admitted to this category after 2023.

- **Process for joining – STEP ONE**

Applicants who have completed their training can apply for Membership of the ACSD. Their application would proceed as normal: An application form supported by two referees and an interview by two ACSD members, one of whom is from the Executive.

- 1 Most interviewees are accepted as Associate members.
- 2 Those applicants who have completed 50 hours supervised Spiritual Direction may be accepted directly as Full Members.
- 3 Once Associate members have completed 50 hours of supervised one to one Spiritual Direction post graduation, they will be eligible to apply for full accredited membership of the ACSD.
- 4 Once you have been accepted for Associate or Full membership, you will be asked to sign a covenant, and pay a membership fee
- 5 You can then list yourself as a Spiritual Director on our website.

Why become a full member:

- Full members listings on the website come up first in searches
- Full members can vote in General Meetings and stand on Executive

- **Becoming a Full Member – STEP TWO**

Once you have completed 50 hours of Supervised Spiritual Direction (post graduation) you are invited to start the process to become a Full Member of ACSD.

At this point there is another application form, and your spiritual director and supervisor are contacted again. This is followed by another interview.

Any Questions to our Secretary acsdanz1@gmail.com

Foundational Aspects of the Formation and Training of Spiritual Directors

The following foundational aspects of formation for the ministry of spiritual direction are listed as a guide for interviews of applicants for membership of the Association of Christian Spiritual Directors. They will therefore be of interest to those who are in formation for the ministry of Spiritual Direction.

The intention has not been to create an exclusive or exhaustive list of criteria for membership. Rather, interviewers will use those descriptions with discernment, and with awareness that Spiritual Direction is more than simply a set of skills.

Undergirding the following is a commitment to:

- Inclusiveness – Ecumenical, Theological, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Language etc
- Tangata Whenua, Treaty of Waitangi and multi-cultural awareness
- Respectful and ethical practice
- Contemplative spirituality
- Creating an openness and hospitality within their own interior life
- Willingness to journey into the mystery of life

1. The Development of the following Practical Skills

Basic

- Communication/listening skills
- Understanding of Feelings
- Contracting

Commitment to ongoing skills development, for example

- Dream work
- Interactive Drawing Therapy (IDT)
- Focusing
- Working with images/metaphors
- Guided imagination
- Facilitating ritual

Practicum

- 2-3 ongoing directees
- Monthly supervision
- Use of verbatims, case studies etc.
- Over at least 2 years

2. Evidence of Personal Development

- Significant life experience
- Ability to reflect on one's own life and ministry
- Understanding of the process of personal transformation
- Sustained experience of receiving regular spiritual direction.

3. Evidence of Professional Development

- Biblical and theological literacy at an informed lay level
- Awareness of varying models of spiritual direction
- Clear grasp of the role of spiritual director and the differences between therapy, counselling, supervision and spiritual direction.
- Appropriate director-directee relationships
- Implementation of professional boundaries, ethical practice and contracting.
- Awareness of psychological aspects of spiritual Direction, including personality differences, (counter-) transference, sexuality, when to refer.

4. Exploration of Spirituality and Spiritual Traditions

- Contemplative spirituality
- Directed Retreats
- Lectio Divina
- Discernment
- Forms of prayer
- Spiritual journey
- Faith Development
- Images of God

Some insights into contemporary Spirituality, e.g.

- Creation spirituality
- Issues of Justice
- Spirituality of Aotearoa

ASCD Code of Ethics

Purpose

This Code of Ethics states the required standard for responsible conduct by Members of the Association of Christian Spiritual Directors Aotearoa New Zealand 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
- 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

4. Undergoing Professional supervision for your Spiritual Direction Practice

5. Being in regular Spiritual Direction yourself

● 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 they are reluctant to share
- boundaries – not engaging in inappropriate behaviour of a physical or emotional nature.

3. 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.

4. be sensitive to the need to refer a directee to a qualified counselor 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.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE ACSD Inc.

1. Any complaint about any member, whether from another member or any person, shall be lodged in writing with the **Secretary, PO Box 17727, Sumner 8840**

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.

- i. If this body effectively disposes of the complaint, the Executive may decide to take no further action.
- ii. 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

[ACSD Constitution](#) – click on link for latest

More Resources

1. [Spiritual Directors Record Keeping File](#)

This is an online Google Sheet that you can copy and use to record your Spiritual Direction, Supervision, Professional Development work.

2. [Facebook](#) Follow us on Facebook and share

3. [Website](#)

4. [List your self as a Spiritual Director](#)

5. [Find a Spiritual Director or Supervisor](#)

6. [Regional Groups](#) – all around NZ and online too

7. [Charities Details here](#) Registration Number CC24455

8. Bank Account ANZ 06-0501-0572015-00

9. Secretary – all enquiries to Admin@acsd.org.nz or acsdanz1@gmail.com