

Art and Practice of Spiritual Direction Discernment Guidelines

Prayerfully reflect on how you find each criterion developing in you. Refer to the Art & Practice Discernment Process Criteria. Please keep your responses to four to five sentences. Be focused and concrete in your responses. Email to your mentor by 1/3/22.

- 1. FREEDOM:** Demonstrates willingness and sufficient interior freedom to engage resistance and fear as it arises today. Alternately, is the focus on doing it “right,” being “finished,” so that such human struggles are only historical or that having the answers is more important than holding the questions well?

- 2. CAPACITY TO BE A LEARNER:** Evidence of capacity to engage this process as a *learner* through willingness to:
 - Enter the story of one’s own life for fresh revelation?
 - Enter activities and experiences with a willingness to be surprised?
 - Bring the whole self to the program and mentor group?

- 3. CONTEMPLATIVE LISTENER:** Evidence of a growing capacity to receive one’s own story and that of others contemplatively and with compassion? Alternatively, are distancing behaviors like analyzing, judging, “smoothing over,” or “fixing” present?



4. **COMMITMENT:** Demonstrates priority for the internship *as a formation process*. Is there evidence of sufficient time and interior space to attend to what the process stirs within? Is there sufficient space and willingness to set aside the many good things that compete for time and attention? Is sufficient time made for reading and reflection? Concretely, is attendance regular? Are papers completed on time?

5. **WHAT DO YOU SEE** as your growing edges in your development as an intern spiritual director?

6. **DISCERNMENT OF CALL** includes all the above as well as validation of the call by the community. Is the person's capacity for "holy listening" affirmed by classmates and mentors? Is there evidence that others in the intern's life seek him/her/them out to share their faith journeys?

*Adapted from the
Bread of Life Center
Sacramento, CA*

