

Spiritual Friendship Tools

We were not made to go through life alone. While many of us know this intuitively, we still struggle to connect with other people in meaningful ways. We may have a long list of people we know – family, neighbours, colleagues, teammates, etc. But do we have any friends whom we really “know”, and who “know us”, people with whom we can share our dreams, fears, struggles and victories? Even in the church community we often focus on spiritual ideas and guard against sharing with others about how our own personal, spiritual life is going.

Spiritual friendship is simply a mutual agreement between two or more people to share your spiritual journeys with one another and grow together as you seek to grow in your relationship with God. Spiritual friendships can exist in a variety of formats, including formal or informal meetings, same gender or mixed gender groups, and between only 2 people or in a small or even mid-sized group.

For our purposes at Centre Street Church, the following tools are designed to be used in a group of 3-4 people who want to pursue spiritual friendship and experience what it means to walk together with a few others as you follow Jesus.

The following are several tools to help you know what spiritual friendship is all about, how to develop spiritual friends in your own life, and how to start on this journey together. You can start with the first introductory tool, and proceed through the rest, or you can pick any one tool and try it out together. The most important thing is to do it – to find a couple others with whom you can be your real self and begin to go deeper with God together. Go to it!

Level 1

Read the section on “Spiritual Friendship” in Adele Calhoun’s book [Spiritual Disciplines Handbook](#)* (pages 151-154). It provides a good introduction to what spiritual friendship is, and an assessment of it in your own life. Complete the reflection questions and at least one of the spiritual exercises on your own. Share what you discovered with 2-3 friends.

http://b5d29352f4cbb4f36764-64716aaac85f98c90d1d9176c94b76d6.r70.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/t/0e1071241_toolboxsfhb.pdf

Taken from *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us* by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun. Copyright(c) 2005 by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun. Used by permission of InterVarsity Press PO Box 1400 Downers Grove, IL 60515. www.ivpress.com.
<http://www.ivpress.com/cgi-ivpress/book.pl/code=3330>

Level 2

Option 1

Ask 2-3 friends to commit to going through [Spiritual Friendship](#) by Mindy Caliguire together. There are 4 sections to the book. Read through 1 section on your own (takes about 10 minutes 3-4 times a week), and meet once a week to

* Most resources are available through the Applesseed Resource Centre (library or bookstore).

go through the Group Discussion at the end of the section. On the fourth week, evaluate what you learned and decide on your next step of growth together.

Option 2

Access the free online course by Larry Crabb about soul care, which is hosted by RBC Ministries' website – www.christiancourses.com (see instructions below). The courses are delivered in either video, audio or PDF format. Go through lessons 6-10, one lesson at a time, and meet regularly with 2-3 friends after each lesson to discuss and help each other apply it in your own life circumstances. Determine what material you want to use next in order to continue to grow as spiritual friends and in your relationship with God.

Instructions: Once on the website, click “Non-Certificate Program Courses (Free)” to access the free courses, then “First Steps in Christian Counseling”, and then “SoulCare Foundations 401: Community-Where SoulCare Happens”. You will need to create a login for yourself (free) so that you can access the course. You will now be able to see all 10 lessons. To focus on spiritual friendship, go through lessons 6-10.

Level 3

Find 2-3 friends who will commit to reading the first 3 chapters of David Benner's Sacred Companions* (on spiritual friendship) and discussing each chapter together (including several of the reflection questions at the end of each chapter). Determine what material you want to use next in order to continue to grow as spiritual friends and in your relationship with God.

Going Deeper Resources*

SoulTalk by Larry Crabb

Sacred Companions by David Benner

“Quality Friendships” (part 5 of the God’s Way to Joy-Filled Living series), sermon by Dr. Henry Schorr, November 13, 2005 – available as CD or DVD

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