

Soul Spark Events

2021-2

with
Nick Helm



**Using Zoom Well in
Spiritual Direction**

Introducing...



- Myself:
 - spiritual direction / training / training trainers 20+years
 - now self-supporting minister in Hereford Diocese and Advisor in Spirituality / freelance - focus on SD
 - zoom: done 100s of hours of SD, retreat accompanying, training in last 20 months - steep learning curve
 - initiated conversations around SD and Zoom

www.soulspark.online/zoom-sd password: **zoom 2021**

Introducing...

- Today:
 - Setting The Scene
 - Director-Directee Experience
 - Challenge of Transitions
 - Between Transitions
 - You the Director
- There will be breaks, group conversation, space for questions...



Introducing...

- **Using Zoom today:**
 - Keep on mute except in groups
 - Use Chat (to Everyone) for feedback
 - Raising Hand
 - Breakout Rooms



Setting the SCENE

Spiritual Direction is

- a relationship with the intention of supporting and nurturing another person's relationship with God
 - holding space
 - holding focus
 - enabling God to be the director
 - enabling God to be recognised, experienced, responded to



Setting the SCENE



Communication

- all communication is mediated
 - *inwardly* - what is shared, how it is spoken of
 - *outwardly* - language, context
 - *medium* - sound, written, transmitted (eg. phone, internet, hardware, software ...)
- when very familiar with a particular medium it is ***easy to forget how much we are assuming*** in this complex process

Setting the SCENE

The Digital Medium

- **Zoom** (not the only option!)
 - all have limitations and peculiarities
- **Experience** has proved...
 - SD is possible!
 - God is in the process!
 - This is not a ‘virtual’ encounter - it is **real!**



Setting the SCENE

Adjustments

- to basic practice
- to inner disposition / expectations
- to actual practice



Setting the SCENE

Using Technology

- practice brings confidence - so 'do it'
- plenty of online guides - 'search it'
- **Today**
 - not too technical
 - explore how to do SD on Zoom better
 - help to thinking things through
 - sharing helpful ideas and experience



Director - Directee Experience



- **Getting There:**
 - *Face to Face:*
 - Directee: travel - knock on door - welcome - cuppa? - chat - settle - start...
 - Director: preparation of space - preparation of self - knock - welcome - cuppa? - chat - settle - start...
 - *On Zoom:* click - in!

Director - Directee Experience



- **Being there:**
 - *Face to Face:*
 - listening - responding - exploring - God - you - life - Spirit's lead - concluding
 - *On Zoom:*
 - listening - responding - exploring - God - you - life - Spirit's lead - concluding

Director - Directee Experience



- **Leaving there:**
 - *Face to Face:*
 - Director: finished? - get up - coat - door - goodbye - reflect / self-supervision - supervision...
 - Directee: finished - get up - coat - door - goodbye - travel / reflect - follow up ...
 - *On Zoom:* finished? - yes - click - out!

In Groups



- What brought you here
- Swap experiences of handling shift online
- What are you most grateful for?
- What least grateful for / most challenged by?
- 15 minutes in groups of 3 or 4
- Two bullet points:
 - 1 positive, 1 challenge/question

Challenge of Transition

Starting Well

- **Helping yourself to Adjust to Medium**
 - ***Preparation:***
 - what can you do to prepare well?
 - practicalities - resources to hand
 - prayer / centring / poise
 - ***Arriving:***
 - Marking the entering into 'sacred space'
 - Candle, silence ...



Challenge of Transition

Starting Well

- **Helping Directee Adjust to Medium**
 - ***Mechanics*** - connecting / fall back
 - ***Their Space*** - light / sound / background / hide self-view
 - ***Your Space*** - light / sound / background / hide self-view
 - ***Boundaries*** - door / phone / computer alerts / doorbell ...
 - ***Our Space*** - naming and entering its reality



Challenge of Transition

Starting Well

- **Helping Directee Adjust to Process**
 - ***Preparation:***
 - invite preparation
 - offer ‘review’ type exercises
 - for busy zoomers - what helps make this difference to a work conference call?
 - ***Arriving:***
 - Marking the entering into ‘sacred space’
 - Candle, silence ...



Challenge of Transition

Ending Well

- **Directee:**
 - time for post meeting reflection
- **Director:**
 - Awkwardness of clicking 'Leave'
 - 'I'll leave you to find your way out'



Challenge of Transition



- ***Reflection:***

- what wisdom have you been discovering?
- what might you incorporate to your practice?
- what challenges do you need / want to rise to?
- what questions remain?

Between the Transitions

The Filling!



- Spiritual Direction is Spiritual Direction
- but there are differences!

Between the Transitions

- **what you see:**

- head / shoulders / their environment
- picture quality

- **what you hear**

- sounds amplified / lost / interference

- **how you relate / interact:**

- face to face not oblique
- looking into space



Between the Transitions

- **the interchange can be**
 - harder work - more tiring
 - using a different balance of senses / internal processes
 - *visual* - limited body language
 - *aural* - words / tone
 - *presence* - sense of their being
 - *intuitive* - sub-conscious 'listening'



Between the Transitions



- **the interchange can**
 - have *greater focus* - medium seems to sharpen interaction
 - have *greater detachment* - poise can be easier
 - have *more awkward silences*
 - have *difficulty engaging with strong emotions*
 - be *more stilted* - talking over each other

Between the Transitions



- **the interchange**
 - can need *adjusting to* over several sessions
 - can be *surprisingly fruitful*
 - is *worth reflecting* on and *working at*

Any Questions?



You the Director

- **Implications for your Basic Practice**

- go to computer/tablet rather than front door
- setting the environment - making explicit what was implicit in the way you prepared the room for meeting people



You the Director



- **Implications for your Inner Disposition**
 - welcome the opportunity for change - growth - learning...
 - accept changes so that your struggling with them doesn't get in the way of your attentiveness
 - hold your poise, your focus, your trust in the process and in your calling / gifting / faith
 - return to *beginner's mind*

You the Director

- **Implications for your Actual Practice**

- take opportunity to develop
- when changing more preparation and reflection on experience is needed
 - be attentive to the niggles
 - to your energy and needs
- keep centred on God and your role



You the Director



- ***Reflection:***

- ***what insights have emerged?***
- ***what do you want to incorporate into your practice?***
- ***what challenges do you need / want to rise to?***
- ***what questions remain?***

www.soulspark.online/zoom-sd

password: zoom2021

- links & slides from today
- blog posts, resources ...
- mailing list
- future online sessions
 - 12 Jan - Cycles of Grace
 - 5 Feb - Ignatian Prayer
 - 8 March - Discernment in Spiritual Direction



Thank You!

