

Testimonials



'I've been privileged to have had access to ongoing personal and professional development throughout my career, but the Spiritual Companions course has had more impact than any other. I am more able to be fully present to any situation, better understanding both the implicit and explicit dynamics, and knowing how to act from a place of compassion. More importantly, I can resource myself through my own connection to the wonder and energy of life and to my inner wisdom, which gives me greater resilience.

It has enabled me to bring a sense of love and meaning to my life and my work.'

Sarah Jane Williamson, Associate Director of Strategy and Delivery, Rethink Mental Illness



'Before the course I had done lots of personal development, therapy and awareness work, but on some level life was still an effort and I was living in tension. Through the teaching of simple and accessible meditation practices the course helped me to become more grounded, more kind, more loving — more me, more of the time. It helped me to establish a daily spiritual practice of my own which I'd never really managed to do before and I learned the value and joy of service and just being kind to people.'

Pete Brown, IT project manager



'Overall, the course was a blessed, safe oasis giving me time and space to be and reflect, empty and stretch, expand and deepen connection and spiritual practice. It was a blessing too to learn and share with the same group of peers on a regular basis. Alongside this, the commitment of an ongoing rhythm and group accountability and encouragement were invaluable. The holistic nature and breadth of the material covered in a spirit of exploration with a warm, generous, experienced facilitator transparently consolidating alongside us. And of course, a wonderful opportunity and gift of practising spiritual companionship and embodiment.'

Ila Mazumdar, primary school teacher



'This course taught me to fully connect with my higher self and the universe around me. It has enabled me to develop a daily practice of connecting with the wonder and richness of life, which has in turn hugely enhanced my wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around me. My spiritual development was on the 'back burner'. It is now fully on the 'front burner' and has become embedded in me as part of my daily life. This course fundamentally changed my life for the better on many levels.'

Diana Brown, administrator



'What I got from the course was a beautiful deepening into spiritual practice leading to a far clearer idea of how this can be of service. I now find myself very comfortable sitting with pretty much anyone and simply being with them, with their beauty and with their difficulties. As a few more layers of my own pretense have been stripped away I can meet others from a more real and loving place. And I guess I also developed a quieter confidence in my own spirituality. What a wonderful experience!'

Phil Roberts, leadership facilitator, coach and mentor



WILLIAM BLAKE: 'As if an angel dropped down from the clouds'. ILLUSTRATION TO 'HENRY IV'

Spiritual Companions Trust



Diploma in Practical Spirituality and Wellness

SPIRITUAL HEALTH FOR EVERYONE

Ofqual Register: Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Practical Spirituality and Wellness (VRQ)

Qual No: 601/8673/2 Sector Subject Area: Health and Social Care



The first UK course integrating Spirituality and Healthcare accredited by Ofqual

- Learn about the health benefits of spirituality
- Develop your own spiritual health practice
- Help others

'Spirituality emphasises the healing of the person, not just the disease. It views life as a journey, where good and bad experiences can help you to learn, develop and mature.'

Royal College of Psychiatrists



'Health is a dynamic state of complete physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.'

World Health Organisation



PROFESSIONAL BENEFITS

- Gain a professional qualification to give person-centred and holistic spiritual support and pastoral care.
- Become part of a professional network with peer support, insurance scheme and ongoing CPD.
- Set up an independent practice.
- Work professionally or as a volunteer in multi-disciplinary teams e.g: hospices, hospitals, schools, colleges, prisons, etc.
- Integrate spiritual health into your current career.
- Acquire practical strategies and concepts that can immediately be shared with others.

PERSONAL BENEFITS

- Strengthen your physical and psychological wellbeing through a daily spiritual health practice.
- Support friends, family and colleagues through improved relationships, communications and caring skills.
- Develop a meaningful lifestyle of mindfulness, compassion and service.

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The Course Consists of Four Units:

Unit 1. SCIENCE AND CONTEXT

This unit introduces you to the history, culture and science of the relationship between spirituality and medicine. You look at the evidence base, the physiology and the psychology of how spirituality can benefit health. You are supported in developing and clarifying your own language and terms of reference, so that you can communicate effectively with clients and colleagues in multicultural and interdisciplinary environments. You also reflect on how all of this is relevant to your own personal experience of illness and health.

Unit 2. PERSON-CENTRED SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

In this unit you explore and experience the spiritual practices that benefit health and wellbeing. You are supported in clarifying and implementing the approach that best supports your own daily spiritual health practice. In this way you experience for yourself the benefits and challenges. This all takes place within a group of supportive peers and tutors. From this personal experience and observing the diversity of approaches in your fellow learners, you then explore how best you might support others from diverse cultures and with different learning styles to develop their own spiritual health practice.

Unit 3. DEVELOPING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

In this unit you learn about the crucial importance of reflective practice for self-care and development. You will explore the different reflective strategies, choose the approach that best suits you and implement a daily practice of careful and honest self-reflection. This is built on a foundation of mindfulness and the compassionate witnessing of your thoughts and feelings. You will study how reflective practice is a crucial element of self-managed healthcare and psychological wellbeing. You will also look at the psychological and mental health challenges that may be linked to spirituality.

Unit 4. SPIRITUAL CARE IN PRACTICE

This unit builds on the knowledge and practice of the other three units, focusing on the actual giving of spiritual care and enabling others to develop their own spiritual health practice. You will be introduced to and required to practice the fundamental skills of whole-body listening and how to facilitate a developmental conversation, one-to-one and in small groups, around the health and wellbeing benefits of spirituality. You will learn how to lead individuals and small groups into meditation. You will also study the psychological challenges that may arise in an enabling relationship and be introduced to the crucial topic of risk and the procedures for assessing and referral.

Our Definition of Spirituality

We always encourage people to develop their own definition of spirituality. That said, we find that the following definition is appropriate and helpful in most educational and healthcare environments.

Spirituality is everyone's natural connection with the wonder and energy of life – and the instinct to explore that experience and its meaning.

Spirituality affirms that human development is about the growth of compassion and awareness, heart and mind.



APPROACH

Our approach is person-centred and holistic. Our first enquiry is always: 'What works best for you?'

RELEVANCE

There is an increasing need for spiritually competent people, whose approach is holistic, highly inclusive and who celebrate diversity. This is particularly relevant in the fields of healthcare, education and pastoral care. This is based on two important developments:

- 1: The growing evidence base for the beneficial links between spirituality and health.
- 2: A general social tendency away from membership of a single religious faith to a more general spiritual approach.

HISTORY

The qualification has its roots in courses that were trialled by Dr William Bloom in the Alternatives Programme of St. James's Church, Piccadilly, London.

These were then integrated into the Certificate of Professional Practice in Spiritual Studies and Companionship, which was accredited by the College of Teachers.

When the College of Teachers ceased their accreditation services, the course was developed and improved with a new accrediting partner, the Crossfields Institute.

It achieved Ofqual accreditation in March 2016.

This whole process has been under the umbrella of the Spiritual Companions Trust, an educational charity.

ADMINISTRATION

Entry Requirements

There are no formal academic entry requirements other than being 18 or older.

There is an application form, which requires you to give some life history and describe your motivation.

Our main concern is that learners demonstrate the potential to develop emotional literacy, a welcoming attitude to diversity and mature self-management.

Assessment and Accreditation

Assessment is via a portfolio that contains reflective notes, a diary of insights and observations, and mini-essays.

Digital Technology and the Internet

We ask all students to have access to the Internet as the portfolio is web-based and some small group sessions may happen via Skype.

Timing and Structure

The course consists of 90 hours in-person classroom contact organised in 3-hour sessions. These sessions may be arranged over weekends or shorter or longer periods depending on the centre delivering the course.

Students are also organised into small peer support groups, who meet several times during the course either in person or by conference call/Skype.

Students are also required to support their learning between modules with time spent: reading, doing spiritual practice, companionship others and reflective writing assignments.

Course Dates and Location

For timing and location please visit our website: www.spiritualcompanions.org