



FINDING SPIRITUAL ACCOMPANIMENT

About

Many people find a spiritual accompanier (also called a spiritual director) helpful. They can make a real difference in your life. This leaflet explains what accompaniment is and how to apply.

Anyone can apply, of any faith or none. We welcome people from all backgrounds, particularly those with disabilities and those from minority groups.

What people get from accompaniment

Commonly benefits include:

- Feeling closer to God
- Feeling loved by God
- Feeling freer and more affirmed in faith
- Feeling supported during tough times

Finding a spiritual accompanier

To find a spiritual accompanier, you can either use your own networks to search for the right person or contact us (see over). We run the local Spiritual Accompaniers' Network for several Christian denominations. We can connect you with a member of our Spiritual Accompanier Referral Group who will help you find someone suitable.

How do I go about it?

Choosing an accompanier is a personal decision.

1. As you set out, pray for wisdom and discernment
2. Reflect on what you are seeking through the relationship and trust your instinct
3. Contact us (see opposite)

You may withdraw at any stage without explanation.

Process

Step 1 – Contact Us

You can contact us in the following way:

 sheffdio.org/accompaniers

 suzanna.upperdine@sheffield.anglican.org

 Diocesan Church House, 95-99 Effingham Street, Rotherham S65 1BL

 01709 309 147

Step 2 – Referral

- Suzanna Upperdine, Administrator, sends you a short form to fill in and send to a referrer
- A referrer talks with you, then suggests one or two accompaniers
- You contact one or both to see who appears the most suitable.

Step 3 – First meeting with your accompanier

- The first meeting is to get to know each other and check if it's a good fit. Be honest about how it feels
- The accompanier may suggest meeting a few times before reviewing the relationship

Step 4 – Further meetings

- You can talk about your life, feelings, when you notice God, worries, surprises, and hopes
- Meetings usually last an hour
- Review the arrangement each year

Further Information

Fees

Some accompaniers are free. Some ask for a donation. Some charge a fee. If you would have difficulty paying, say so on the form. You will not be excluded.

More information

We offer spiritual accompaniment to over 250 people on behalf of the churches in Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham, Goole and surrounding areas. Our team of accompaniers is ecumenical. All our accompaniers receive regular supervision and safeguarding training.

For more on what spiritual accompaniment involves:

- Visit **www.retreats.org.uk/spiritualdirection**
- Read Helm, N. and Hoare, L. (2019) *Seeking Spiritual Direction: How to Find Support for Your Spiritual Life*. Cambridge: Grove Books
- Arrange an informal conversation with **spirituality.adviser@sheffield.anglican.org** or phone Revd Dr Julian Raffay on 07907 331 859

Concerns

If you have any questions or concerns, we want to hear from you. Please do not hesitate to contact either Suzanna or Julian.

Acknowledgements

The Sheffield Spiritual Accompaniment Referral Group prepared this document using material from **The Retreat Association, Kerridge House, 42 Woodside Close, Amersham, HP6 5EF.**