

Spirations Institute
for
Interspiritual Formation



Spiritual Direction Training for Women

CIRCLE Information and Application Materials

www.spirations.com

CURRICULUM

CIRCLE Retreat Format

The retreat-based program is structured into nine quarterly three-day retreats in circle. Each mirrors our body-mind-spirit intentions and invites a variety of learning styles, or *ways of knowing and being*. Included in the retreats are:

- Sacred Circle
- Ritual
- Prayer and Meditation from a variety of traditions
- Singing and Chanting, Body Movement, Sacred Arts
- Leaning into one's interior
- Personal Solitude
- Full Group Presentation
- Small Group Processing
- Practicum groups
- *The Integrative* – in which each student invites the Circle into her journey over the last quarter. Past Integratives have included group ritual, song, dance, poetry, art, readings and visualization.

Home Study

In addition to the Circle retreats, the following components round out the program experience:

Daily:

- Enliven your senses to the nuances of living through your body-mind-spirit
- Grow your "Story Lens" and widen your "Story Pouch" by daily integrating story's gifts into the fiber of your being

Weekly:

- Study of assigned and elective texts, journal subscriptions, audio CDs and online explorations with accompanying personal reflections

Monthly:

- Meeting with a spiritual director of your choice
- Visit one spiritual gathering your choice (Included but not limited to: Buddhist meditation, Native American rituals/ceremonies, Christian worship services—including those of other languages/cultures, Jewish temples, Muslim Mosques, Quaker meetings, Sufi Dances of Universal Peace, Women's rituals, Bible Studies, concerts, Unitarian Universalist gatherings)
- Participation in the school's private online forum

Practicum and Internship: Many Streams of Practice

Essential to the program are Practicum and Internship experiences.

At Spirations, it's been our experience that participants seek varied outcomes from their training. Some seek credentialing that allows them to comfortably begin a practice in the classical sense of contemplative spiritual direction. Others wish to broaden their skills for use within their current environments and roles as co-workers, healers, teachers, mothers and grandmothers, and citizens of a global planet.

During year one, Practicum Groups meet during Circle retreats allowing participants to begin practice mentoring and story midwifing each other. In order to facilitate the loving nurturance and unfolding of participants' desired training outcome, Spirations offers liberal options for the internship, occurring during the second year. In the creation of their own internships, participants are invited to focus their endeavors with individuals and communities to which they feel called. Some examples of internship focus include integrating bodywork or the healing arts, companioning children and youth, those in religious leadership, women emerging from abusive situations, individuals and families encountering death, or persons from the GLBTQ community. The settings in which one centers her internship may range from the traditional "two-chairs-in-an-office" to backdrops of wooded walking trails, park benches, coffee shops, airplane seats, church children's nurseries, and the telephone.

This structured and expansive process allows participants to practice, form, and hone their unique and beautiful personal styles of Story Midwifing in a secure and supported environment, as well as truly personalize their explorations.

Curriculum Topics and Emphases:

- Spiritual Director as Story Midwife
- The Universal Story: The New Cosmology and Stories of Origin
- Dream, Symbol, and the Inner Life
- Compassion and Lovingkindness Through the Buddhist Lens
- The Dance of Light and Dark and Dark Nights of the Soul
- Maiden, Mother, Crone: Exploring the Feminine Face of God
- Enfleshment: Body, Sexuality and Soul
- Shamanism: The Spirituality of Indigenous Cultures
- Weaving Stories Together: The Intersections of Universal Story, Community Story, Personal Story

Who Should Apply

Spirations may be for you if:

- You love people and their stories, and believe you can change the world by listening your companions' stories into being.
- You recognize something deeper within you longing to be born.
- You wish to offer yourself to the world.
- You are ready to fully explore your own spiritual life and expressions.
- You long to creatively and compassionately journey in a community of women that will help you process your callings and hone your skills.
- You are looking for teaching staff that values your life experience and will gently invite you to explore your edges and live into your stunning fullness.

Prerequisite Experience

Spirations honors the whole of one's life story as groundwork for the program. Central considerations in participants are:

- A mature and ever-unfolding sense of self;
- An eagerness to engage new possibility;
- The ability to move compassionately in a diverse community.

No previous formal academic training or particular professional experience is necessary for admission to Spirations, and no preference is extended to applicants with such training or professional experience.

Participant Selection

Participant selection is based on application and group interview with co-leaders Trish Bruxvoort Colligan and Cindy Chicoine, and other program applicants. For those who live at a distance, telephone interviews may be arranged.

Certification

A certificate of completion through Spirations Institute will be presented at the conclusion of the program.

Graduates will readily say that Spirations has profoundly changed the landscape of their lives. During and following the training, some will identify spiritual direction as part of their vocation, perhaps opening a practice; many more will integrate their learning into their current careers, or recognize a sense of empowerment to a very different career path; others engage the program primarily for personal transformation. All graduates – regardless of their chosen career path – leave the program with a greater sense of healing and compassion – for self and others – in their wings.

Through Spirations I have experienced profound life changes on many levels, including clarity on forming a new business venture and exploring the depths of my creativity.

*Betsy Leighton,
Minneapolis, MN*

In the work place, while teaching yoga, or sitting with someone in sacred space, I feel the shifts and changes of my Spirations experience working through me to offer a richer deeper, experience to those around me.

*Kathy Schutz, Yoga Instructor and Spiritual Director
Milwaukee, WI*

Spirations invites you to become a story midwife in a world asking for listeners.

*Susan Hodges, College Professor, Reiki Master, and Spiritual Mentor
Waukesha, WI*

***Read more testimonials from Spirations Participants at:
www.spirations.com/quotes.html***

Location and Dates

Sinsinawa Mound Retreat Center:

<http://www.sinsinawa.org/MoundCenter/index.html>

Just over the Mississippi River from Dubuque, Iowa and a stones throw from Galena, Illinois. For those traveling by plane, the nearest airport is in Dubuque, and taxi service is available.

Located on 450 acres of lush woodlands, orchards, vineyards, fields, and gardens, Sinsinawa Mound offers an ideal atmosphere for the personal transformation and group gatherings inherent to the Spirations Community Retreats.

Sinsinawa Mound is committed to study, education, spirituality, and the arts. Through their programs and retreats, persons from many spiritual traditions are invited to experiences of intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic awakening.

In the Sinsinawa Dominican tradition of hospitality, guests are refreshed and renewed by the time spent in the midst of glorious natural surroundings.

All accommodations are private, single rooms with twin beds. Bath facilities are shared.

Retreat Dates:

2008

May 9-11

August 1-3

October 31 - November 2

2009

January 30 – February 1

May 15-17

August 28-30

November 13-15

2010

January 29-31

April 23-25

Application Process Timeline

Application due: October 1, 2007

Group Interviews:

Des Moines: October 10 (evening) and October 11 (morning)

Cedar Rapids: October 19 (evening) and October 20 (morning)

Acceptance Letters: December 1, 2007

Registration Fee and program commitment: January 1, 2008

Tuition and fees for CIRCLE program

Application Fee (nonrefundable): \$50

Registration fee upon program commitment: \$500

Tuition and lodging fee: \$4,500

Total tuition and lodging fee (with registration fee included): \$5,000

These fees are all inclusive, covering entire program tuition and private lodging and meals for all retreats. Also included are some of the required reading and listening materials.

Upon acceptance, participants will be asked to commit themselves to the entire course of the program by returning a nonrefundable registration fee of \$500.

Payment plans may be established, and credit card payments are warmly accepted with a small additional fee.