

2024–2026 Spiritual Companionship Training Program Outline

Overall Class Schedule & Dates

- **Class Night:** Wednesdays on Zoom (6:00 PM – 8:00 / 9:00 PM Eastern)
- **Semester 1 (Fall 2024):** Sept 11, 18, 25 | Oct 2, 9, (*Oct 16 No Class*), 23, 30 | Nov 6, 13, 20, (*Nov 27 No Class*) | Dec 4, 11, 18
- **Semester 2 (Spring 2025):** Jan 15, (*Jan 17–18 At Home Retreat*), 22, 29 | Feb 5, 12, 19, 26 | (*Mar 5 No Class*), Mar 12, 19, 26 | Apr 2, 9, 16
- **Semester 3 (Fall 2025):** (*Sept 12–13 Wisdom House Retreat*), Sept 17, 24 | Oct 1, 8, (*Oct 15 No Class*), 22, 29 | Nov 5, 12, 19 | Dec 3, 10, 17
- **Semester 4 (Spring 2026):** Jan 14, 21, 28, (*Jan 30–31 Retreat*) | Feb 4, 11, (*Feb 18 No Class*), 25 | Mar 4, 11, 18, 25 | (*Apr 1 No Class*), Apr 8, 15 | **Graduation: April 18, 2026**

Detailed Curriculum by Semester

Semester 1: Taking a Contemplative Stance (Fall 2024)

- **Opening Class (Potluck):** Welcome, introductions, history of spiritual direction, and book group reflections on summer readings.
- **Class 2 — Contemplation:** Taking a contemplative stance, listening skills, contemplation using the senses.
- **Class 3 — Triads & Nature Meditation:** Group contemplative stance, real-play in triads, guided outdoor meditation ("Pleasures of Presence").
- **Class 4 — Authentic Self:** Theological foundations (Teresa Blythe *Ch. 3*), "SoulCraft" / soul initiation, video discussion on living authentically.
- **Class 5 — Anam Cara & Intimacy:** Intimacy with others, the Divine, and Earth; soul friendship; following the thread.
- **Class 6 — Individual Spiritual Direction:** Demonstration & real-play of one-on-one direction; contemplation of personal relationships using photo exercise.
- **Required Core Text:** *Spiritual Direction 101* by Teresa Blythe (Chapters 1 & 2 before class start, Chapter 3 & 5 during semester).

Semester 2: Spiritual Formation & Human Development (Spring 2025)

- **At-Home Retreat:** Jan 17–18, 2025
- **Core Themes:** Discernment, consolation and desolation, stages of faith, human sexuality and intimacy, images of the Divine.

- **Focus Areas:** Formulating focus questions for verbatims, working with volunteer directees (seekers), peer supervision group orientation.

Semester 3: Deep Sense of Connectedness & Applied Skills (Fall 2025)

- **Wisdom House Silent Retreat (Litchfield, CT):** Sept 12–13, 2025
- **Detailed Class Topics:**
 1. Introduction to the Experience Cycle (Phase 1)
 2. Listening Across the Divide
 3. Companioning Spiritual-But-Not-Religious (SBNR) Seekers
 4. Dreams in Spiritual Companioning (Guest presenters: Judy & Andree)
 5. Trauma (Part 1: Advanced Hybrid Workshop) & Trauma (Part 2: Experience Cycle Phase 2)
 6. Mystics and Mystical Experience
 7. LGBTQ+ Panel Discussion
 8. Twelve Steps & Spiritual Companioning (Experience Cycle Phase 3)
 9. Eco-spirituality (Guest presenter: Dr. Lisa Dahill from HIU)
 10. Integration & Synthesis

Semester 4: Conscious Living, Practice & Graduation (Spring 2026)

- **Semester Retreat:** Jan 30–31, 2026
- **Loss & Grief Presentation:** March 18, 2026 (Led by Joe Colletti & Louise — includes Loss Inventory Timeline exercise)
- **Core Themes:** Rituals, navigating obstacles in spiritual companioning, world religions, establishing an independent practice.
- **Graduation Day:** April 18, 2026