

THE SHADOW SPIRITUAL COMPANION

by Reverend SeiFu Anil Singh-Molares

We usually associate darkness and shadows with fear: of the unknown, of being lost and never finding the way home again, of getting swallowed up, of entering territories beyond redemption, the “dark night of the soul,” not seeing or being unable to see clearly, in a fog or a haze, and so on.

But if we allowed ourselves to lean in to our shadows, we might come to quickly regard them as our ultimate companions, directors, and guides. They show us our failings in their rawest, most unadulterated forms, without blink or solace. They are direct and revealing, exposing trauma, anger, fear, uncertainty, and many other shortcomings that we need to address. And it’s not as if we can avoid them in any event, because they don’t allow us to run away for long, despite our best efforts.

For all of us with strong, deep and undeniable spiritual longings, these traumas and fears can certainly be impediments to our flow and

alignment with the Universe or God. But they are also powerful invitations to process that which ails us.

Seen in this way, shadows are not always harsh, and can be gentle, like those arising with the sun in the morning, or those in the evening, when it sets. At night, they comfort us as they become softly illuminated by candles and intertwine with wafting incense. And they encourage us as we start seeing beyond our hard edges, and move into the unknown with grace, acceptance and faith.

continued on next page



Those spiritual shadows, then, even as they usher in the often necessary dark night of our souls, are also the ultimate harbingers of light. At the bottom of a well of darkness, they light up the top of the universe. If we let them, they can profoundly and astutely guide us through our discomfort and pain, helping us work through our losses and fears, and towards Love and Compassion. Into the bosom of however we might conceive our transcendent immanence.

The shadow is thus like compost to our spiritual flowering. It shows us what to process, and keeps pointing to what needs tending over and over again, as we slowly discern our way through heartbreak to growing insight and maturity.

And as our healing takes root, our shadows turn into fertilizers for our spiritual journey and ascendancy.

Like able spiritual companions, they mirror our progress, and continue to act as sentinels to our souls, always on the lookout for our relapses, and directing us to be honest on our paths.

And unlike most companions, and the things of this world, they never leave us, because we are them, beyond our arising. Our growing maturity, in fact, is a resolution into their essence, and a recognition that we are never separate. From them. Or anything. So much so that when we are gone, we are still truly here.

Our shadow remains forever. And it walks in our footsteps effortlessly and constantly. Why not embrace it? And move forward in its company with courage, determination, understanding and Love?



Rev. SeiFu

REGISTER NOW

SDI'S First Hybrid Conference - In-Person or Virtual



Valarie Kaur



Pat McCabe



Yavilah McCoy



Cornel West



Beverly Lanzetta



Ayo Yetunde

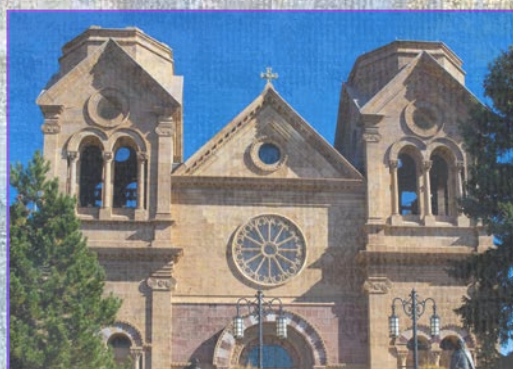


Fr. Greg Boyle



A full slate of
Workshops, Exhibitor
Tables, and Spiritual
Direction Offerings

Day-before Institutes,
One-Day Journeys, and
Post-Conference Retreat
to Ghost Ranch, NM are
also available



MAY 11 - 15 2022

REGISTER
BY FEB 28
AND SAVE \$100

ENGAGE SDI

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

sdicompanions.org

MAY YOU BE BLESSED

May you be blessed by the peace of a rhododendron thicket in the cool of the evening,
bird song symphony,
crackling-barked limbs spindling over your head,
leaves reaching down and spread as if in benediction.

May you be blessed by white blossoms and blue skies hanging on to the fading light,
spied as pinpricks through the canopy of leaves.

May you be blessed by the peace of aloneness and the stillness of a summer night.

Christine S. Davis is a poet, academic, artist, and spiritual director. Christine publishes poetry on the blog, "Focail do a Chara," which is Gaelic for "Words for a Friend." Christine writes about end of life, social justice, and compassionate living, at the intersection of contemplative and arts-based methods of understanding. Contact Christine at Csdavis2@uncc.edu.



JOIN US TO FIND
Spiritual Formation
in Today's World

A One-Year Online Offering from
The Academy for Spiritual Formation

Featuring Four, Three-day Sessions in 2022 with:



Chava Bahle



Hy Xuan Le



Valerie
Bridgeman



Cláudio
Carvalhaes

Academy.UpperRoom.org

Apply by February 11, 2022



The Academy
for spiritual formation
THE UPPER ROOM



Center for Spiritual Development

A Ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange

Sojourner's Well

REFRESHMENT FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2022

Spiritual Direction Across Diverse Cultures, Ethnicities and Spiritualities

PRESENTED BY: Sr. MaryAnne Huepper, CSJ, Li-Fang Sun &
Alex de la Vega

9 am - 12:30 pm, PST, via Zoom + in-person TBD

SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 2022

Narratives of Holiness: Biblical Wisdom in the Franciscan Tradition

PRESENTED BY: Sr. Mary Beth Ingham, CSJ, Ph.D.

9 am - 12:30 pm, PDT, via Zoom + in-person TBD

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 2022

Spiritual Direction with Victims of Abuse

PRESENTED BY: Kathleen Hope-Brown, D.Min.

9 am - 12:30 pm, PDT, via Zoom + in-person TBD

www.thecsd.org | (714) 744-3172 | thecsd@csjorange.org



NORTH PARK
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

TRAIN TO SERVE AS A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

**Embrace the call and prepare to engage the church
and the world with your gifts.**

- ▶ Affordable and flexible graduate-level training
- ▶ Practitioner-based experiences and reflection
- ▶ Grow with a small, supportive cohort
- ▶ Continue working or serving while you train
- ▶ Complete certificate in just over two years

The C. John Weborg Center for Spiritual Direction offers one of the leading spiritual direction certificate programs in the Evangelical tradition. Located in one of the most diverse zip codes in the nation, our Chicago campus offers a truly transformative learning environment.

APPLY NOW

www.northpark.edu/spiritualdirection

IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME

Like bedrock
formed deep inside the earth' crust
he stands solid, unadorned,
a symbol of
strength.

The bounty of summer –
muted rust and deep
gold – crunches
underfoot. Naked
branches creak, crack,
in the cool wind.

Autumn – a time
to go within,
to see
oneness
with creation.

A time
he stands
his ground.



Lucinda Hage's son was born 35 years ago with a genetic condition that resulted in a significant intellectual disability. Paul's early life was one of segregation, medical appointments and disappointments. He overcame the early expectations of his potential and, as adult, Paul is taking his rightful place in his community.

Welcome to Living Well



Activate Self-Encounter

and discover more of ...

- who you are
- who you could become



www.virginiawatersselfcare.com.au

Listen

PUBLISHER: Spiritual Directors International

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND EDITOR:

Rev. Seifu Anil Singh-Molares, MTS

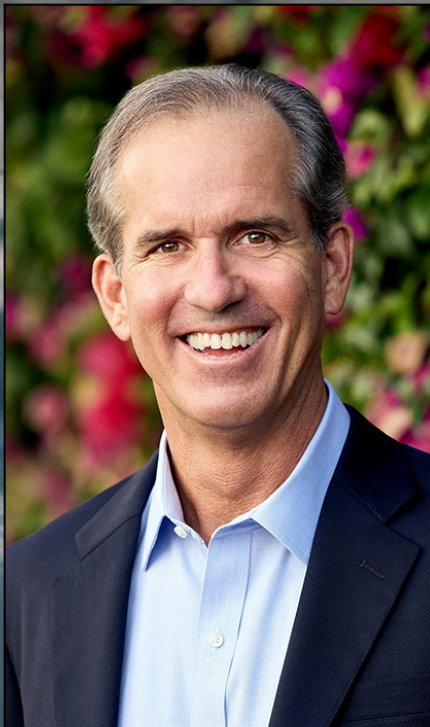
PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR: Matt Whitney

SUBMISSIONS: listen@sdiworld.org

ADVERTISING: ads@sdiworld.org

Listen is published four times a year. The names **Spiritual Directors International™**, **SDIWorld™**, and **SDI™** and its logo are trademarks of Spiritual Directors International, Inc., all rights reserved. Opinions and programs represented in this publication are of the authors and advertisers and may not represent the opinions of Spiritual Directors International, the Coordinating Council, or the editors.

We WELCOME your feedback on any aspect of this issue of LISTEN, or on SDI as a whole. Please send your comments to
LISTEN@SDIWORLD.ORG

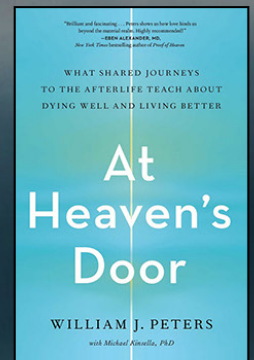


A Free SDI Event **Shared Crossing**

Exploring Shared Death Experiences
for the Dying and Their Loved Ones
Friday January 21, 2022, 4-5 PM (PST)

For Spiritual Companions and
All Those Who Attend the
Dying

Presenter:
William Peters, MFT, M.Ed
author of *At Heaven's Door*



Whatever your
spiritual orientation,

wherever you are
in your journey,

We are with you.

BECOME AN SDI MEMBER

All SDI Members receive discounts on SDI's educational offerings, and gain exclusive access to our various online resources, such as Discussion Forums, Group Spiritual Companionship and our new, beautiful online version of Presence Journal.

Choose the membership that is right for you!



VENUS
(STUDENT)

For those who are
training to become
spiritual companions.



NEPTUNE
(STANDARD)

For all kinds of
spiritual companions
and deep listeners.



JUPITER
(ENHANCED)

For those who are
able to support SDI
at a higher rate.



COSMOS
(PREMIUM)

For our most active
and supportive
companions.

Join us today at sdicompanions.org.

Crossing long fields,
frozen in its saddle,
my shadow creeps by

(Matsuo Bashō)



artwork inspired by "Whirling Snow," Kamisaka Sekka, 1909.



Listen is an outreach publication of SDI - The Home of Spiritual Companionship. When you visit the SDI website at www.sdicompanions.org, you can learn about retreats, programs, conferences, and other educational events related to spiritual companionship. You can read descriptions of the spiritual direction relationship from a variety of spiritual traditions, and discover excellent questions to ask yourself and any potential spiritual directors you choose to interview. To locate a spiritual director or companion, go online to *Find a Spiritual Companion Guide*. More than 6,000 spiritual directors are listed at

www.sdicompanions.org.

The Home of Spiritual Companionship
PO Box 3584 | Bellevue, WA 98009