

Writing a Verbatim

THE VERBATIM offers an opportunity to observe a relationship at a particular moment. Group reflection on the conversation in verbatim form helps us to continue to gain insight into the nature and experience of spiritual direction—to gaze contemplatively “into the well of a direction experience.”¹ The verbatim is another invitation to listen. We listen the first time during the spiritual direction session. We listen the second time when we write the spiritual direction log and reflect prayerfully on the session. A third listening happens as we write the verbatim, and then a fourth as we reflect on the verbatim in peer group.

Consider prayerfully why you are choosing this particular conversation on which to write a verbatim. What questions are raised for you? How does it touch your growing edge(s)?

CONTENT: As you write the verbatim, arrange your entries under the following headings:

1. Personal background and spirituality of the directee:

a. Confidentiality

Names, places, and identifying traits should be changed to disguise the identity of the directee.

b. Other helpful information

In addition to the biographical facts and a general description of the person, include a summary of your understanding of his/her life, relation to and involvement in the church, relation to other people. How is God known by this person? In what ways is s/he growing spiritually? What seem to be the main blocks to further growth and change? Pay attention to the directee's inward and outward journey of faith and life.

2. Background and context of meeting:

Briefly describe the context of the meeting you are presenting. Is this the first/second/third session etc.? How did you prepare yourself and the place for this session?

3. Verbatim Form:

In the *right hand column*, write the conversation between yourself and the directee. Do not worry about your (possibly deficient) power of total recall; the verbatim will be “true”, even if you cannot remember every exact word. Remember to indicate nonverbal communication: pauses, tears, laughter, posture changes, etc.

¹ Maureen Conroy, *Looking into the Well*. Loyola University Press, 1995.

In the *left hand column*, write a few words to describe the feelings, interior movements, and counter-movements, occurring within yourself as you are giving spiritual direction.

(Optionally, you may use a *middle column* to indicate who is speaking, e.g. D1 indicates the first thing the director says; M2 indicates the second thing that the directee says.)

Example: (D is director, M is directee)

Interior "conversation"		Direction conversation
Eager, but a bit anxious	D1	How are things going?
I feel happy	M1	Good. Better than I had expected since last time I was here.
	D2	It's good to see you again. As we begin our time together, let's have a time of quiet. I'll begin the time of silence with a short prayer, and then when you sense you feel ready to move into conversation, please light the candle.
	M2	Okay.
	D3	Loving and listening God, we need your help as we settle into silence. (short pause) Holy Spirit, open the eyes of our heart and the ears of our soul to see and to hear who God is and what God is doing in our lives, as we wait in Jesus' name . . .
In the quiet I settle in, aware of clutter. Open my attention to God. Still feeling a bit tight. Notice tension in my hands. Relax and open them, God, rest and open my heart! I wait.		
	M3	<i>(M lights the candle and settles back into her chair. She waits a little while more in the silence.)</i>

Surprise. Thankfulness.

I've been trying to do what we talked about: opening my attention to *God* in the middle of what I'm doing.

D4 What do you notice when you become aware of *God* while you are active?

M4 Well, I don't feel as tight or anxious. It's like I have more space—inside that is.

4. Discussion of the relationship and work of the director:

- a. As you reflect on the spiritual direction session, ask the Holy Spirit to help and companion you. Trust the Spirit's presence and help as you begin.
- b. In this section you reflect carefully on the dialogue with the directee. Notice the movement and counter-movements within her/his experience. Notice how *God* seems to be coming to this person, and how they are noticing, paying attention, responding to, or resisting, *God's* presence and activity. Notice any patterns which show up in this person's experience.
- c. Be attentive to your own inner experience before, during, and after the session. How does any of this show up in your verbal responses, body language? What do you notice is appearing in the left hand column? Identify your responses, reactions; your own movement and countermovement. Was this session mostly one of peace and encouragement to you, or one of frustration/desolation? What was the strongest feeling/response within you? Describe *God's* felt presence during the session. Which is stronger? *God's* felt presence, or absence?
- d. Reflect on your own presence during the session, the essential nature of your style:

Focused

Companioning

Evocative

(evoking deeper reflection)

Discerning

(Listening for *God's* guidance)

Open, present but detached

Fragmented

Self-absorbed

Directive

(telling the person what to do)

Talkative

Trying to fix,
problem solving

Empathic	Advice-giving
Peaceful	Anxious/driven
Hospitable to person's story and God's presence and action/work within them	Hearing the story, but not "standing still" to notice and savor God's presence and work
Detached	Interpretive - telling person what their experience is/means

In what way were your own issues triggered? How did you respond?

- e. In what way can you/did you relate the directee's story to the Biblical story?
- f. As you bring yourself and the directee into the presence of Jesus, what do you notice?

5. What question(s) do you bring to peer group?

Sources:

Conroy, Maureen, *Looking into the Well*. Loyola University Press, 1995.

Guenther, Margaret. Center for Spirituality verbatim material. General Theol. Seminary, NY.

Miller, Wendy J. *Spiritual Direction resources, EMS*.

Verbatim: Spiritual Companionship

Pseudonym of Person(s): _____ Date: _____

Your Name: _____ Sm Grp Supervisor: _____

Consider prayerfully why you are choosing this particular conversation on which to write a verbatim. What questions are raised for you? How does it touch your growing edge(s)?

Arrange the content of your verbatim under the following headings:

1. Personal background and spirituality of the directee:

- a. **Confidentiality** : (Names and identifying traits should be changed to disguise the identity of the directee)
- b. **Other helpful information** : (Include general biological facts, general description of the person; include a summary of his/her life, relationship to the church, to other people. How is God known by this person? In what ways is s/he growing spiritually? What seem to be the main blocks to further growth and change? Pay attention to the directee's inward and outward journey of faith and life.

2. Background and context of meeting:

(Briefly describe the context of the meeting you are presenting. Is the first/second/third session etc.? How did you prepare yourself and the place for this session?)

3. Verbatim Form:

(In the *right hand* column write the conversation between yourself and the directee. Do not worry about your (possibly deficient) power of total recall; the verbatim will be "true", even if you cannot remember every exact word. Remember to indicate nonverbal communication: pauses, tears, laughter, posture changes, etc. In the *left hand* column, write a few words to describe the feelings, interior Movements, and counter-movements, occurring within yourself as you are giving spiritual direction.)

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Interior "Conversation"

Direction Conversation

Interior "Conversation"		Direction Conversation

4. Discussion of the relationship and work of the director:

- a. As you reflect on the spiritual direction session, ask the Holy Spirit to help and companion you. Trust the Spirit's presence and help as you begin.
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- c. Be attentive to your own inner experience before, during, and after the session. How does any of this show up in your verbal responses, body language?

What do you notice is appearing in the left hand column?
 Identify your responses, reactions; your own movement and countermovement.
 Was this session mostly one of peace and encouragement to you, or one of
 frustration/desolation?
 What was the strongest feeling/response within you?
 Describe God's felt presence during the session. Which is stronger? God's felt
 presence, or absence?

d. Reflect on your own presence during the session, the essential nature of your style:

Focused Companioning Evocative (evoking deeper reflection) Discerning (Listening for God's guidance) Open, present but detached Empathic Peaceful Hospitable to person's story and God's presence and action/work within them Detached	Fragmented Self-absorbed Directive (telling the person what to do) Talkative Trying to fix, problem solving Advice-giving Anxious/driven Hearing the story, but not "standing still" to notice and savor God's presence and work Interpretive - telling person what their experience is/means
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In what way were your own issues triggered? How did you respond?

- e. In what way can you/did you relate the directee's story to the Biblical story?
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Interior "Conversation"		Direction Conversation

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 presence, or absence?

j. Reflect on your own presence during the session, the essential nature of your style:

<p>Focused Companioning Evocative (evoking deeper reflection) Discerning (Listening for God's guidance) Open, present but detached Empathic Peaceful Hospitable to person's story and God's presence and action/work within them Detached</p>	<p>Fragmented Self-absorbed Directive (telling the person what to do) Talkative Trying to fix, problem solving Advice-giving Anxious/driven Hearing the story, but not "standing still" to notice and savor God's presence and work Interpretive - telling person what their experience is/means</p>
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In what way were your own issues triggered? How did you respond?

k. In what way can you/did you relate the directee's story to the Biblical story?

l. As you bring yourself and the directee into the presence of Jesus, what do you notice?

5. What question(s) do you bring to peer group?

Home-Based Practicum

B

Assignments

(For Completion Between Training Retreats II and III)



Training in Spiritual Direction and Congregational Formation

Home-Based Practicum Guide - B

Between this second and third instructional gathering for training in spiritual direction, please attend to the following:

- Attend to your own rhythm and rule of life and prayer (practice of spiritual disciplines).
- Meet with your spiritual director.
- Notice how you are listening:

Within informal conversations

Within more formal conversations

(Review notes and readings on listening as a spiritual director)

- Choose two conversations (formal or informal) on which to write two verbatim. Guidance for writing a verbatim is provided starting on page HBP-15. See HPB-19 for two blank copies of the verbatim form, or look on the program website for a template. Send to your small group supervisor before the next instructional gathering.
- Complete the Personal Progress Report B, and send to your small group supervisor before the next instructional gathering. See B-13 for a blank copy of Personal Progress Report B, or look on the program website for a template.
- Your small group leader will advise you of the date to send in your Personal Progress Report and the two verbatim.
- Make enough copies of one verbatim to share with your small group members at the second training retreat.

Home-Based Practicum and Self-Care B
(Copy 1)

Name: _____ **Small Group Sup.** _____

(check each of the sections, 1-4, as you complete them)

**Check when
completed)**

1. **Engagement in home-based ministry:** (give a brief, one or two sentence description)

1. _____

2. **Self-care**

a. Tend to my own rhythm and rule of life and prayer

2a. _____

b. Meet with a spiritual director:

2b. _____

_____ I already meet with a spiritual director regularly

_____ I am looking for a spiritual director

_____ I need help finding a spiritual director

3. **Tending the ministry of soul-care**

a-1. Complete **two verbatim**

3a-1. _____

See Home Based Practicum and Personal Portfolio binder,
HPB-19 or look on the program website for template.

a-2. Send **one verbatim** to your small group leader by

_____.

3a-2. _____

and **one verbatim** by _____.

Make enough copies of one of your verbatim for sharing and reflection in your small group during Training Retreat III.

b. Complete the "Personal Progress Report B". See B-9.

Send in to your small group leader by _____.

4. Reading in preparation for Training Retreat III.

Read the assigned chapters in the books listed on the reading lists for Retreat III. See B-13 and B-15 (Bakke and Miller guide).

And (as you choose) other suggested books and resources. See B-14.

3b. _____

4. _____

Home-Based Practicum and Self-Care B
(Copy 2)

Name: _____ **Small Group Sup.** _____

(check each of the sections, 1-4, as you complete them)

**Check when
completed)**

5. **Engagement in home-based ministry:** (give a brief, one or two sentence description)

1. _____

6. **Self-care**

a. Tend to my own rhythm and rule of life and prayer

2a. _____

b. Meet with a spiritual director:

2b. _____

_____ I already meet with a spiritual director regularly

_____ I am looking for a spiritual director

_____ I need help finding a spiritual director

7. **Tending the ministry of soul-care**

a-1. Complete **two verbatim**

3a-1. _____

See Home Based Practicum and Personal Portfolio binder,
HPB-19 or look on the program website for template.

a-2. Send **one verbatim** to your small group leader by
_____.

3a-2. _____

and **one verbatim** by _____.

Make enough copies of one of your verbatim for sharing and reflection in your small group during Training Retreat III.

b. Complete the "Personal Progress Report B". See B-9.

Send in to your small group leader by _____.

8. Reading in preparation for Training Retreat III.

Read the assigned chapters in the books listed on the reading lists for Retreat III. See B-13 and B-15 (Bakke and Miller guide).

And (as you choose) other suggested books and resources. See B-14.

3b.

4.

Personal Progress Report - B
Home-Based Practicum and Self-Care

Name _____ Date _____

Group Supervisor _____

A. YOUR OWN SOUL CARE

1. What feeds you?

- a. Reflect on what nurtures your soul, spirit. (eg - spiritual reading, creation, prayer, other?)

2. Practice of spiritual disciplines:

- a. Reflect on your experience of prayer and spiritual disciplines.

- i. In what ways is your capacity for noticing and appreciating the presence of God developing in your own life and experience?

- ii. How are you becoming more open and receptive to God?

- ...within your own interior awareness?

- ...in your everyday life?

- b. In what ways do you find yourself resistant to *God*?

- c. Are there any changes that you are noticing in the way/s that *God* is present to you?

B. MINISTRY PRACTICUM

Ministry of Spiritual Direction/Tending the Soul (one-on-one, small group, congregational ministries of various kinds)

Your reflection in this section is on your experience of spiritual companionship.

- 1. In what ways has your capacity for noticing *God's* presence and activity developed?
 - a. Within yourself as you offer spiritual guidance?

 - b. Within the experiences of others?

- 2. In what ways are you growing in your awareness of your own issues as you offer spiritual guidance?
 - a. How are you noticing and responding to these issues?

3. What responses do you notice emerging within yourself as you listen to other persons share their experience?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
Compassion/empathy				
Trying to fix/advice giving				
Panic				
Theologizing/Rationalizing				
Seeking to avoid being present				
Hooked into other person's feelings				
God-aware in self and other				
Being open and present				
Turning to God for help when unsure				

Further reflection:

Compassion/empathy

Trying to fix/advice giving

Panic

Theologizing/Rationalizing

Seeking to avoid being present

Hooked into other person's feelings

God-aware in self and others

Being open and present

Turning to God for help when unsure

Required Readings for Training Retreat III and Helpful Bibliography

Tending the Soul During the Dark Night Journey

In this third training retreat, we will continue to pay attention to the soul journey and stages of spiritual development. We will reflect on the work of spiritual direction in connection with discerning stages and growth, especially the Dark Night of the Soul.

Required Readings:

Heath, Elaine. *The Mystic Way of Evangelism: A Contemplative Vision for Christian Outreach*. Baker Academic, 2008. Introduction and Ch. 1.

John of the Cross. *The Collected Writings of John of the Cross*. Institute of Carmelite Studies Publication. 1991. (See separate "John of the Cross" reading guide for selected readings)

May, Gerald. *Addiction and Grace*. Harper San Francisco. 1988.

_____. *The Dark Night of the Soul*. HarperSan Francisco, 2004.

Miller, Wendy. *Invitation to Presence*. Ch. 3.

Articles/Papers (in Articles binder)

Culligan, Kevin, OCD. "The Dark Night and Depression." In *Presence: The Journal of Spiritual Directors International*, Vol. 10, No. 1. 46-55.

Pfaff, Nancy. "Spiritual Direction and the Dark Night of the Soul" in *Presence: The Journal of Spiritual Directors International*, Volume 4, Number 2. 32-42.

(See reading guide for selected readings from Bakke and Miller)

Other Helpful Bibliography (not required, but for your interest)

Brueggemann, Walter. *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Augsburg/Fortress, 2002.

Cronk, Sandra. *Dart Night Journey*. Pendle Hill Publications, 1991. (Out of print, but usually available through Amazon)

Dent, Barbara. *My Only Friend Is Darkness: Living in the Night of Faith with St. John of the Cross*. Institute of Carmelite Studies Publications, 1992.

Green, Thomas H., S.J. *When the Well Runs Dry: Prayer Beyond the Beginnings*. Ave Maria Press, 1992.

_____. *Drinking From a Dry Well*. Ave Maria Press, 1992.

Nemeck, Francis Kelly, OMI and Marie Theresa Coombs. *The Spiritual Journey: Critical Thresholds and Stages of Adult Spiritual Genesis*. The Liturgical Press, 1991.

Olsen, Charles M., *The Wisdom of the Seasons: How the Church Year Helps Us Understand our Congregational Stories*, Alban Institute 2009. Chs. 3 and 5.

Kolodiejchuk, Brian, M.C., Ed. *Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light*. Doubleday, 2007.

Murcell, Gordon, Ed. *The Story of Christian Spirituality*. Fortress Press, 2001.
Ch.7 "Catholic Saints and Reformers." pp.208-212 John of the Cross

Rupp, Joyce, OSM. *Little Pieces of Light . . . Darkness & Personal Growth*. Paulist Press, 1994.

Schrock, Daniel P. *The Dark Night: A Gift from God*. Herald Press, 2009.

Washington, James Melvin, Ph.D. *Conversations with God: Two Centuries of Prayers by African Americans*. Harper Perennial, 1995.

Wright, Wendy M. *The Vigil: Keeping Watch in the Season of Christ's Coming*. Upper Room Books, 1992. "Living the Season: Dark" pp.116 - 128.

Note: Other articles and some helpful bibliography for each training retreat will be made available during the course of the training.

Guide Sheet for Reading and Reflection B

Training Retreat III

Jeannette Bakke's book, *Holy Invitations: Exploring Spiritual Direction*. Baker Books. 2008. Fifth printing 2008. (Indicated below by 'B')

Wendy Miller's book, *Jesus our Spiritual Director: A Pilgrimage Through the Gospels*. Upper Room Books, 2006. (Indicated below by 'M')

Training Retreat	Text	Chapter(s) to read	Reflection Questions with which to engage
III. Tending the soul in Dark Times	B	3 4	1, 2, 3, 6
	M	12	Reflection - p.175

