



Spiritual Directions



Spring Newsletter 2007

Soul Work

“Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul”

John Muir

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I recently attended a residential retreat for men called “What is the Soul of a Man?” I was intrigued by the topic and looked forward to the opportunity to spend time with men. As I listened and responded throughout the weekend, I found I had a running conversation with the theme. Is the soul of a man different than the soul of a woman? Are we falling into a trap trying to create a difference where there is no difference? For me the soul is the essence of who we are. I do not believe there is a male essence and a female essence. There is essence expressed in a male or female form. Systems theory has helped us to understand how our connections condition our behaviour and roles. The expression of one’s self is conditioned by many influences: genes, environment, experiences and family to name a few. So in our culture we say men tend generally to be more like this, and women more like that. To me that suggests that men and women should only express themselves in certain ways. In soul work we do the inner work of connecting with our essence, and the outer work of expressing who we are. To do this we have to deal with the learned cultural impediments to our expression of who we really are.

Once we realize we are not being true to our selves we have begun the first task, becoming aware that what we see and feel and express may not be the essence of who we really are. When we refuse to settle for the definition given to us by family, society, partners, even ourselves, we are able to move toward a more authentic way of being.

The second task moves us beyond conditioning and beneath cultural expressions to connect with the life energy (desire of the heart) that wants to be expressed through us. This desire manifests over our life time and is essential to the creative process of the evolving universe. As we embrace this energy we engage in the work of love and justice, establishing relationships that express our passion and purpose in ways that we find compelling and fulfilling.

Soul Work is healing and empowering. We wrestle with the issues of love and power, self-acceptance and self-expression, feelings and identity. We name the impediments that are cultural, spiritual and personal. We move into the unknown; some call it moving into the darkness. Ultimately we find our connection to the Truth (often called God).

Spiritual Directions has several spiritual mentors who are trained to companion people in their soul work. We hope this summer will provide opportunities to renew your spirit. We will be preparing our new space for our fall program, and are open all summer at our temporary location and at the Strawberry Tree Studio.

John Griffith, Director



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MONDAY EVENINGS IN JUNE

\$15 each 7 to 9 pm

- **Dance with Your Healing**
with Margot Van Sluytman
June 4
- **Sacred Sharing Circle**
with Brenda Gibbs
June 11
- **Heart Math**
with Laura Dancsak
June 18
- **Celebrate The Artist Within** with
Straja Linder King
June 18
- **Dreamwork: An Introduction** with
John Griffith
June 25

Personalize Your Practice of Meditation

With
Norline Johnson
And
John Griffith
DROP IN
Tuesday Evenings
\$15 per session

COURSES & WORKSHOPS IN JUNE

- **Sounds Wonderful to Me**
with Marsha Read
4 Thursdays begins June 7, 7 to 9 pm.
- **The Essence of ARC**
with Pietro and Melanie Abela
June 6 & 7
- **Music Medicine**
with Nancy Doetzel
June 9
- **Beaded Spirit Feather**
with Mona Hooper
June 16
- **Summer Solstice Celebration**
with June Churchill
June 21
- **Dance With Healing: Writer's workshop**
with Margot Van Sluytman
June 23
- **Divine Inspiration**
with Margot McKinnon
June 23



A CALL FOR PAINT...

We need light coloured latex paint for renovating our new space this summer. Any light, neutral colour is fine because we are just using it for a primer coat. If you have some hanging around your house and want to get rid of it. we can use it! It would be much appreciated if you could drop it off, or let us know and we can pick it up.



The
Strawberry Tree Studio
is now in its
new location
at
The Canterbury Room
1121 14 Avenue SW

for more information please Call 210-2802 or
visit our website at www.spiritualdirections.com

... BOOK NOTES



Under Saturn's Shadow: The Wounding and Healing of Men

by James Hollis

This book is a concise survey of the issues facing men in our society. Hollis describes eight secrets that have to be acknowledged so men can do their soul work (my phrase). He introduces the effect of role expectations in men's lives in his first chapter and then goes on to deal with the way fear impacts men's lives. He explains that the lack of mentors and rites of initiation leave it up to the individual to do his own work in order to take his place in the world as a man. Our culture has no defining moments that make it obvious when boys become men. He talks about "the necessary wounding" that has to happen for men to move from the comfort of home to the place of identity, individuality, and responsibility. Then he describes the longing that men have for companions, father figures, mentors, and other men from whom they can learn (Chapter 4). He concludes his book by describing what healing looks like in the eight areas he identifies. It is well written and just over 100 pages. This would be a good book for both men and women –men who want to understand the soul work that can be done and women who want to understand the cultural and personal forces that effect men's identities and behaviours.



Love Is the Killer Application: How to Win Business and Influence Friends

by Tim Sanders

I want to thank the person who recommended this book because it is a fascinating read on how love is the ingredient that will win new friends and new business. His thesis is: to succeed in tomorrow's workplace, you need a killer application. He defines "killer application" as an excellent new idea that either supersedes an existing idea or establishes a new category in its field, and "love" as the selfless promotion of the growth of the other. When put together they lead to successful relationships in business (and personal life). In this book he unpacks the idea that love is the new way we do business, make friends and influence people. He explains that sharing our "intangibles" with others is of highest importance. This will establish our place as people of value (as friends or business partners). Our intangibles are: our knowledge, our networks and our compassion. In the last three chapters he gives examples of how important it is to continue to gain knowledge in our field of vocation or interest. This is not just to benefit ourselves but also so we can be generous and share this information with others. Sharing our network is the way we create new partnerships and expand our business and circle of friends. Being compassionate creates the quality in relationships that makes them last and grow. This is an easy read and very practical.