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Contemplative Supervision Training for Spiritual Directors, Givers of the Spiritual Exercises and those in Ministry and Helping Professions

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Course Description:

This training equips experienced spiritual directors and givers of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises, with the skills and theoretical frameworks, and deepened personal formation needed to offer contemplative supervision. Rooted in the tradition of reflective practice, Ignatian discernment, and the art of sacred and holistic listening, this course which fosters vocational integration, ethical presence, mutual accountability, is for those in ministry and helping professions.

Target Audience:

- Spiritual Directors with at least 2 years of practice;
- Givers of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises; and
- Practitioners seeking to become supervisors of spiritual directors, ministers, and those in the helping professions.

Course Duration:

12 months (part-time on-line)

Learning Outcomes:

Participants will:

1. Understand the foundations, purpose and models of contemplative supervision.
 2. Cultivate the interior posture and presence required of a supervisor.
 3. Develop skills for reflective listening, discernment, and ethical holding.
 4. Engage in peer supervision and receive supervision on supervision.
 5. Apply with cultural awareness, supervision models in diverse ministry contexts.
 6. Integrate Ignatian discernment and psychodynamic frameworks for supervision practice.
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Core Modules:

To be delivered in Six three hour Workshops online .

1. Foundations of Supervision

- What is Supervision? Definitions and purposes
- Differences between supervision, mentoring, and spiritual direction
- Contemplative stance and theological grounding
- The supervisor's role in fostering discernment, accountability, and formation
- Reflective Practice

2. Dispositional Qualities of the Supervisor

- The inner life of the supervisor.
- The use of self as an instrument.
- Ethical presence and boundaries.
- Prayerful attentiveness and spiritual freedom.

3. Ignatian Perspectives on Supervision

- Supervision through the lens of Ignatian discernment.
- Supervision for givers of the Exercises.
- Accompanying others in discernment and decision-making.
- Discernment of spirits and its relevance in supervision.

4. Models and Methods of Supervision

Coursework will be drawn from the following models which address different learning styles:

- Reflective Practice Model
- Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

- Seven-Eyed Model of Supervision (Hawkins & Shohet)
- Integrative Development Models
- Transformational supervision
- Lucy Abbott Tucker’s reflective practice model
- Supervision using the Arts, Story, and Embodied Practices

5. Dynamics and Ethics in Supervision

- Intersubjectivity – mutual influence, relational presence, co-construction of insight and ethical encounter
- Power dynamics and cultural sensitivity
- Confidentiality and ethical dilemmas
- Working with resistance and shadow

6. Supervising in Diverse Contexts

- Ministry supervision across cultures and denominations
- Supervision in trauma-informed and intercultural settings
- Group and peer supervision models
- Issues arising in the practice of supervision
- Online and hybrid supervision challenges

Practicum and Integration

Participants are required to attend four online workshops, each lasting four days from 10:00 am to 4:15 pm. During these sessions, they will engage as trainee supervisors in the Kardia Heart Wisdom Program. In the course of these workshops, participants will receive:

- 40 hours synchronous learning
- 32 hours supervision practice – experiential learning
- 16 hours supervision on supervision

These sessions will include:

- Supervised supervision practice with feedback
- Reflective journaling and case studies
- Peer consultation groups
- Final evaluation

Assessment Methods:

- Participation in practicum and group supervision
- Reflective journals and supervision logs
- Case study presentations
- Supervisor feedback reports

Course Facilitators and Program Coordinators:

Dr Marlene Marburg AAOS Supervisor Trainer
CertProcessWork (PWI), DipAppSci, BTheol, MTheol, GradDipEd(Sec), PhD

Dr Bernadette Miles AAOS Supervisor
Cert IV Training and Assessment, BTheol, MAppSci (Org Dynamics), PhD

Mode of delivery:

Nine six-hour online workshops – synchronous learning
16 hours peer group supervision

Philosophy of Supervision: A Relational and Transformative Encounter

Supervision is a sacred and professional relationship rooted in trust, reflection, and accountability. At its heart, supervision is not merely a performance review or problem-solving task, it is a mutual process of growth, where the practitioner is supported to deepen self-awareness, ethical presence, and vocational clarity.

Supervision assumes that all practice, spiritual, pastoral, clinical, or educational, is influenced by the inner life of the practitioner. Therefore, supervision offers a holding space where the internal and external dimensions of practice can be explored in the light of compassion, courage, and truth.

Core Beliefs

1. **Relationality:** Supervision is grounded in intersubjectivity and mutual respect. Growth happens within relationship, through shared reflection and attuned presence.
2. **Ethical Formation:** Supervision cultivates integrity, responsibility, and attentiveness to power, privilege, and vulnerability. It safeguards the practitioner and those they serve.
3. **Reflective Practice:** Through intentional reflection, supervision enables practitioners to integrate experience, emotion, knowledge, and faith into wise action.
4. **Transformative Potential:** Supervision is more than maintenance; it is a space for transformation—of practice, identity, and vocation.
5. **Holistic Attention:** Effective supervision considers the personal, professional, spiritual, and systemic dimensions of the practitioner's life.
6. **Sacred Listening:** In contemplative supervision, the process honours the presence of God or the sacred as an active participant in the supervisory conversation.

Purpose of Supervision

- To nurture reflective capacity, enabling the practitioner to respond rather than react.
- To safeguard ethical standards, ensuring practices that are respectful, inclusive, and responsible.

- To support personal integration, connecting inner life with outer action.
- To develop competence and confidence, appropriate to the practitioner’s developmental stage.
- To discern meaning and movement, especially in times of uncertainty or transition.

Supervisor Competencies:

- Supervisory Presence and Relational Attunement
 - Cultivating safe, respectful, and reflective supervisory relationships.
 - Demonstrating empathic listening, appropriate use of silence, and attuned communication.
- Reflective and Integrative Practice
 - Facilitating supervisee self-awareness and integration of personal, professional, and spiritual dimensions.
 - Supporting reflective practice as a habit of ethical and vocational growth.
- Model-Informed Flexibility
 - Drawing from and adapting multiple supervision models (e.g., reflective, developmental, seven-eyed, contemplative).
 - Matching supervisory approach to supervisee’s context and stage of development.
- Ethical and Cultural Awareness
 - Applying ethical principles across supervision contexts, including confidentiality, boundaries, and power dynamics.
 - Recognising and responding to cultural, social, and spiritual diversity in supervisees and their clients/directees.
- Contextual Adaptability
 - Providing supervision in varied settings (clinical, ministerial, spiritual direction) and modes (in-person, online, individual, group).
 - Tailoring supervision to the needs of interdisciplinary practitioners.
- Ongoing Formation and Self-Care
 - Practicing self-reflection, supervision-of-supervision, and self-care.
 - Committing to professional development and inner life awareness.
- Specialised Supervision for Spiritual Exercises
 - Understanding the unique dynamics of the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises.
 - Supervising those who give the Exercises with sensitivity to spiritual movement, boundaries, and process-based reflection.

Assessment of Core Competencies:

Contemplative Supervision Training equips participants, especially spiritual directors, givers of the *Spiritual Exercises*, and those in ministry or helping professions, with a rich blend of competencies that integrate spiritual depth, ethical awareness, and relational skill. Core competencies are evaluated through careful observation of supervision sessions conducted by trainees, as well as assessments of their interactions with facilitators. Assessment includes written reports.

2027 Program Dates:

Fridays 9.30am - 4.15 pm

7th, 21st May and 4th June 2027

20th August, 3rd and 17th September 2027

5th, 19th and 26th November 2027

Applications and Cost:

The 2027 fee for the training program is \$3,000.

To apply for the program, please complete the application form and return it to enquiries@kardia.com.au before the 30th November 2026. Please note that places are limited.
