

soul care® circles

Anam Cara



An invitation to return home...

“to come home is to return to the place of inner origin, that original imprint of God within. Therefore, coming home fills us with a sense of being in the right place, a sense of deep spiritual belonging. We all have this profound longing to come home, whether we recognize it or not.”

Sue Monk Kidd (When the Heart Waits)

“Home is another word for the Spirit that we are, our True Self in God.”

Richard Rohr (Falling Upward)

August 2023-July 2024

<p>Tri-fold Journey of Coming Home through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly Spiritual Direction ▪ Contemplation - Personal inner work through Weekly Meditations & Monthly Audios ▪ Twelve Monthly Soul Care Circle Gatherings 	<p>Themes to Explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contemplation and Entering Stillness ▪ Return home – Integrity with my True Self ▪ Posture of Prayer ▪ Aligning with Love & Drinking from the Well-Springs ▪ Enneagram Exploration & Understanding of Self ▪ Celtic Spirituality and Ancient Prayers ▪ Exploring Stories as a Pathway for Transformation (Gospel Stories & Myths)
<p>Finances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$225 per month + Spiritual Direction (see below) ▪ Monthly Spiritual Direction is required and is an extra fee ▪ Registration open until June 15, 2023 ▪ Non-refundable \$125 deposit due upon acceptance in program 	<p>Other Details</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximum 12 people per circle ▪ Location of Gatherings: Online or In person ▪ Various Groups - * see note ▪ Includes up to 30 Soul Care Community meditations, 2 workshops and 2 circle gatherings (all online – see below)

Please complete the attached registration form and send to: admin.soulcare@shaw.ca

More About Anam Cara

Anam Cara means 'soul friend' in Gaelic. The Anam Cara journey is to become a soul friend, first of all to yourself. Many of us are disconnected from our true selves and are living lives that are alienated from our true integrity and purpose. By becoming a friend of your own soul, you begin the journey of integration into wholeness. Secondly, you are invited to receive soul friendship through a Spiritual Director who will companion you in this inner journey on a monthly basis. Thirdly, you are invited into a community where you will grow in bringing your authentic self to others and build *anam cara* friendships. Lastly, you will discover and deepen into the purest *anam cara* relationship, that with Divine Love, your Source. This spiritual formation program is rooted in the Christian mystical tradition with aspects of Contemplation, Celtic Spirituality, Jungian Psychology and more.

This year creates a container of three elements that are key in our walk together.

I - Soul Companionship – Spiritual Direction

It is through one-on-one care that we walk with people on their authentic journey. It is a place where you can be seen, known and loved as you are. Together, we will learn to know ourselves, be known by another and deepen into connection with Divine Love.

II - Contemplation (Personal Inner Work)

Entering practices of contemplation allows us to grow in awareness, in consciousness, in understanding of who and Whose we are. Learning practices of stillness, silence, prayerfulness and attentiveness opens our whole selves to the Mystery of Love. *"Contemplation is a state of realized oneness with God. When engaged in contemplation, we rest in God resting in us. We are at home in God at home in us. Our role in contemplation is essentially receptive, in that when we are engaged in contemplation we receive a gift of Divine Awareness."* James Finley, *Christian Meditation* Through weekly written meditations and monthly audio meditations, you will be invited to deepen your inner prayer life and awareness of the Divine's Presence with you and in you at all times.

III - Circle Gatherings

Many of us have bought into the Western ideology that we can manage alone. Yet we find that this way of being is not working out so well in our lives. It is with new awareness and a growing vision for belonging and connection that we are creating intentional community through circle gatherings. These circles are meant to be places of oasis in our lives that are supportive, healing and transformative. Hearing each other's stories and experiencing mutuality instead of competition allows us all to grow and flourish.

This program connects each member to a circle which is connected to a larger community of people who are committing themselves to soul work. A tapestry of beauty is emerging from all of these lives living from greater places of integrity and honesty.

Each month the gathering will include a time of poetry, stillness, invitations to inner work, contemplative prayer practices, space for personal reflection, and more. There will be focus on a theme and you will have time to talk about that as a group and experience teaching around that topic. There will also be time for smaller groups of sharing. The schedule and specific themes will be provided for you upon registration.

* Anam Cara started with women's circles. We have diversified to hold circles for men and mixed groups as well. As a small organization, we are limited in the groups we can offer. In the future we hope to increase the kinds of groups we can offer to the community. Please indicate on the registration form which group you would like to be part of. Circles may be offered Online or In Person, depending on location and preference.

Soul Care Community Opportunities

Your participation in Anam Cara includes access to all Soul Care Community gatherings for no additional charge. These gatherings are online and recorded, so if you cannot attend live you can still view through the recording. They are a wonderful opportunity to be part of a larger community, to learn together, and to practice themes from the different spiritual formation circles. These gatherings include:

1. Up to 30 Online Morning Soul Care Community Meditations (30 minutes each)
2. Two 90- minute Online Soul Care Community Retreat-like Gatherings Jan. 1, 2024, and March 30, 2024
3. Two 90- minute Online Soul Care Community Workshops

Commitment

1. Spiritual Direction - You will be committing to a monthly Spiritual Direction session for 12 months. Our recommendation would be that you start Spiritual Direction with one of our Spiritual Directors before you start Anam Cara to begin your inner work.
2. Monthly Group Meeting - You will be committing to a monthly group session. Everyone's participation will be an integral part of the experience and so your participation is greatly valued each month.
3. Weekly Reflections- You are invited to spend 30 minutes to 2 hours per week in response to the weekly reflections. You will have opportunity to read, reflect, journal and spend time with an audio meditation. These elements are not mandatory but are encouraged to enhance your experience in the soul journey.
4. Monthly Book Reading – Books are chosen each month to enhance, support and enrich your soul journey from the perspective of various authors. These readings are not mandatory but highly recommended.

5. Financial Commitment – You will be committing to a \$225 monthly payment for 12 months plus the additional monthly Spiritual Direction fee. Scholarships may be available.

Confidentiality

We ask that all that is shared in our circles be held in confidentiality. This is a vulnerable place and we need to honour each person in our circle with their privacy. Also, it is important for you to know that what is shared in Spiritual Direction is also held in confidence by your Spiritual Director. Only if we feel that you are in danger will there be shared information with our team so that we can support you in the best way possible. You will be asked to complete confidentiality and consent forms during the registration process.

Further Information

Spiritual Direction is not therapy. It is a relationship where one is invited to pay attention to the inner direction of the soul. Sometimes therapy is necessary as an accompaniment of this journey. We ask that you would be attentive if therapeutic issues arise where you need extra support in your inner life.

Our monthly group sessions with Anam Cara are not based on a support group format. Our circles are a place to practice soul care together, to be attentive to our own inner journey and to those we are with. They are also an opportunity to receive instruction and direction from facilitators who have been walking this journey for several years.

Acceptance into this program is done through discernment of the Anam Cara Team. You will also be asked to complete a personal/spiritual autobiography.

More information about Monthly themes and Dates of gatherings will be sent to you upon acceptance into the program. Please note there is a \$125 non-refundable deposit required upon acceptance. Monthly fees will be made by automatic credit card payment. If you require a different method of payment, please let us know. Some scholarships are available upon request. Please indicate on the registration form.

A word from the Founder and Director, Cathy AJ Hardy

It is with a sense of awe and gratitude that I welcome your interest in Anam Cara, the entry program into the Soul Care Spiritual Formation Circles that began here in the Fraser Valley of BC, Canada in 2015. Soul Care began in 2002 when the first Soul Care Retreat was launched. Over the years, many retreats offering silence, music, contemplative practices and spiritual direction were had across Canada. In 2015 there was an invitation to offer something beyond a retreat experience and the first 12-month program, Anam Cara, began with 12 participants. At this time of 2023, there is a three-year Spiritual Formation Program and a Soul Care Spiritual Direction Training Program available.

I believe we are all invited to return home, returning to the essence of who we are. As we return to this essence, we discover the incredible resources within and are able, in turn, to offer ourselves in loving service to the world. However, most of us have forgotten who we are and are attached to what we can see on the outside of our lives. The journey of Anam Cara is one that guides us in and down to the wellspring within. Brother Roger of Taize was like a spiritual father to me and his writing guided me to begin this journey of 'in and down', a long journey over many years. This journey changed the trajectory of my life, healing my soul and inspiring me to live from the calling deep within. Together now with others of similar heart and passion, we are walking with a sense of on-going commitment to the way of the wisdom, the way of Love, the path of descent (as the mystics called it) that we might live from the truth of our being. To share this walk with others has become one of the most fulfilling aspects of my life. Together, as we journey in an Anam Cara circle, we participate in group work, individual soul work and spiritual direction. Rooted in the Christian Mystical Tradition, these programs also hold elements of Jungian psychology, poetry, journaling, prayer, art, Celtic spirituality and more.

May you be guided as you seek direction about entering this soul journey.

In peace,

Cathy



Anam Cara Registration

Please answer the following questions in a separate document or email and submit to admin.soulcare@shaw.ca

Name:

Pronoun Preference:

Email:

Phone:

Address:

Circle Preference: _____ In Person _____ Online

1. How did you hear about Anam Cara?
2. Is there a circle that you are aware of that you would like to apply to?
3. What is drawing you to be part of Anam Cara at this time?

4. Tell us a little about yourself and your spiritual journey so far. (A more in-depth Spiritual autobiography will be asked of you upon acceptance).

5. What are some of your hopes/longings as you prepare to join Anam Cara?

6. What are places of growth you would like to face in your own journey?

7. What would some of your fears be about being in Anam Cara?

8. Is there anything else you would like to share about yourself that would be helpful for us to know?

9. Are you currently in Spiritual Direction or would you be entering this for the first time? If you are in Spiritual Direction, for how long?

10. Are there any concerns about meeting the commitments listed on Page 3?