

EXAMPLES OF EVOCATIVE RESPONSES

1. Religious Experience

Was there a sense of something beyond yourself? What was important in that experience for you? Where were you as you watched the scene ... unfold?

Let's talk a little more about what happened when you prayed with that.

What is God saying to you? •

How is God calling you?

How has God treated you in the past?

Where is God in ... ?

Did you have a reaction to the Scripture you were praying with? Did it bring up a memory or a particular response in you that stands out?

Where was Jesus in the scene/memory? Near or far?

Can we stay with that longing and explore it.

What were you looking *for* asking *for* wanting?

What was the grace you were asking for? Did you receive the grace you asked for? It sounds like a (*special, profound, ...*) experience. Can you talk more about it? You were deeply moved by ...

Hmm ... God was tender, caring and loving (*stressing what was said*). It sounds like a very special place with God.

You said that you experienced a lot of ... (*peace, joy, etc.*) Can we stay there and explore it further?

When you let go of your control and listen from your heart about... what did you notice happening within you?

I hear a very tender and safe place ... (*of being held, with the Lord, ...*) [can you say more about that?]

What was that experience like?

That seems to really resonate with you ... [What was happening there?]

Let's go back there for a minute ... You might want to close your eyes ... What do you see there? [What else do you notice?]

You notice that God was like a divine physician opening up your wounds.

That's a beautiful analogy. 1) Can you say more about God as the divine physician or 2) what did you see emerging from the wounds?

What was happening inside of you as that... took place?

What did the Lord do when you brought the ... (*named experience*) to Him?

What was Jesus like for you there? [What did he do? How did he look at you?]

You find yourself more open and quiet to God's loving presence. What was the experience like to be there with God? [How did you sense God's presence?] What was stirring inside of you? [What resonates deeply within your heart?]

2. Felt-Experience

I sense some deep emotion. What's going on there? That seems like a raw place. What is happening there? Can you tell me more about what made you feel .. ? You seem

quite moved by ... What's happening there?
 How would you describe that experience through an image?
 Did you have a sense of what's happening?
 Let's stay with that memory/experience/ feeling. What else can you tell me about it?
 You saw yourself as a ... ?
 That sounds important! scary!
 comforting ... You were feeling ...
 Did that memory trigger something else for you?
 You were touched by ...
 What was that like?
 Can you describe the image of ... ? [What else did you notice there?]
 Can we go back to that experience of...?
 That sounds like a ... (*raw, peaceful, painful, dark, sad, gentle, consoling, angry ...*) place that you are in touch with. [What is going on inside of you?]
 What struck you there as you were experiencing ... ?
 You were ... (*feeling named-angry, hurt, sad ...*) [Where was that coming from?]
 That was a strong reaction to ...
 Can we stay there with that experience of... for a minute and see if anything else emerge for you ...
 Did that memory trigger something within you?
 I hear that you are tormented by the guilt (shame) of... What brought that... to the surface? [What is going on there?]
 I sense a deep ... What is going on inside of you right now?
 May I invite you to stay there for a moment? [What did you notice as you go back into that memory of ... ? What was happening inside you?]
 You were aware of that deep desire to ... emerging within you. Can you say more about it?
 You are ... (*name the feeling or emotion*)
 You felt... (*feeling named*) [What was going on there? What else did you notice there?]
 Can you describe what you were experiencing there?
 What did you feel? [Can you name what you were feeling? What feelings emerged as you stay there? How are you feeling now?] (*be careful with 'feelings' questions, use them appropriately*)
 You were (*hurt, sad, thankful ...*) by that experience?
 What was stirring deep within you as you sense ... ?
 What was that like to be there with Jesus looking back at that experience?
 When you image being in God's arms, what was that like? [What did you notice? Did you have a sense of how God was there?]

3. Areas of Unfreedom

Where do you go/what comes up when you ?
 How would feel without this (thing, person)?
 I
 .. ? sense t IS ... In you.

Some Well-known Blocks

in the

Spiritual Director / Accompanier

1. Bringing my own preoccupations with me.
2. Wanting to be assured that I am doing well.
Looking for affirmation.
3. Playing God - giving answers.
Being over-directive.
4. Not taking note of how the person is when they come - body language etc.
Not listening to the non-verbal.
5. Being over-awed by the other person.
6. Inordinate sympathy - I know just how you feel.
7. Too much re-assurance.
Avoiding painful situations.
8. Taking on the rôle of rescuer.
9. Resenting - not liking the person I am guiding.
10. Lack of confidentiality on my part.
11. Talking too much.
Not allowing the directee to talk about their own agenda.
12. Panicking about where to go next, instead of listening to what is being said now.
13. Forgetting that God is the Spiritual Guide - that I am but God's instrument.

THE CONTEMPLATIVE-EVOCATIVE METHOD OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

By Maureen Conroy, ESM

Contemplative Presence- a reverent attentiveness to the Directee's experiences and God's presence. An atmosphere is created in which such attentiveness can take place.

Evocative Approach- Directors can help reveal Directee's interior experiences in a free flowing and open-ended way. Directors can assist the Directee in discovering their interior realities through an exploratory, revelatory approach

The basic principle at work here is that feelings have greater power and insights deeper impact when the Directee discovers something for him or herself with the help of the Director rather than the Director pointing the way.

Contemplative Presence:

Gentleness
Reverence
Care, trust in God
Slow pace spaciousness
Attuned
Loving
Safe
Patience
Warmth
Attentiveness
Holiness, sacredness
Fully there

Contemplative Skills:

Focus on God
Listening
Allowing silence
Inviting silence
Renaming
Pacing, timing
Stop talking
Relax, breath awareness
Looking for a window
Empathy
Listen to non-verbal
Tune in to non-verbal
Gaze
Paying attention to inner
Self-awareness
Discerning
Staying connected with our body
Lingering
Savoring
Pausing

EVOCATIVE SKILLS:

Naming

Asking

Drawing out

Revelatory

What is happening in you as you say that?

Can you say more about

Unpacking, exploring feeling with

How does that feel?

What is your sense of?

What does that mean to you?

How might God see that?

Is there anything you want to say to God?

What might God want to say to you?

Where are you feeling that in your body?

How do you feel that in your body?

Whatever they say, then ask what is that?

Repeating their own words and inviting more

Unpack desolation, linger with consolation

Persistence

Letting an experience reveal itself, discover, reveal

Highlighting focus on feeling

Staying with feeling

Do you have an image

Interior texture, and sense

Does this connect with something in your life?

Clarifying

Open ended inquiry