

What is the difference between spiritual direction, pastoral counseling and psychological counseling?

| | Spiritual Direction | Pastoral Counseling | Psychological Counseling |
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| GOAL | To assist a person to discover God acting in his or her life and to facilitate that person's creative, loving response to God; presupposes a certain degree of healthy psychological functioning and a fidelity to daily personal prayer. | In a faith context to facilitate a person's growth to greater personal integration and freedom of choice through self-knowledge and awareness of God's healing grace. | To facilitate a person's growth to greater personal integration and freedom of choice through self-knowledge. |
| PROCESS | In the context of a one-to-one helping relationship, director and directee together attend to and discern the primary relationship and call of God in the directee's life and his or her response to the mystery of grace. | The therapeutic relationship between counselor and client discerning together the personal meaning of experience in light of faith | The therapeutic relationship between counselor and client. |
| TECHNIQUES | Interaction between <i>spiritual director</i> and <i>directee</i> , utilizing self disclosure, support, questions, clarifications and reflection on patterns of prayer and on creative, redeeming, and sanctifying action of God. | Instruction between counselor and client utilizing self-disclosure, support, observation, clarification, interpretation, reflection on God's love and forgiveness | Interaction between counselor and client utilizing self-disclosure, observations, support, clarifications, interpretations, etc. |
| AREA OF FOCUS | Directee's relationship with God as experienced and developed through prayer, life experience and relationships | Client's life experience (past and present) events, thoughts, relationships, feelings, especially areas of pain, family or origin; all these seen as revealing God's call to the client. | Client's life experience (past and present) events, thoughts, relationships, feelings, especially areas of pain; family of origin. |

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