



Center for Sacred Studies

Ministry Training Program - Program Format and Areas of Study

In the 1st year you will explore different doorways of perception and tools that provoke a relationship with the unseen.

During the 2nd year, you will study alternative tools to explore the psyche. The original people had a way of life that was taught to them by creation. It has its own rules and its own way of relating. You will discover many of the tools that will help facilitate that dialogue and help you actualize it in your own life, as a way of life.

Program Format and Monthly Requirements:

Online School Site Content to view and listen to:

- Instructor audio and video instruction (1.5 hours)
- Elders Corner audio and video instruction (45 minutes)

Conference Calls: 2 per month

- Group Conference with Instructor and Q&A's - Conference Call (1 hour)
- Group "Dialogue with Darlene Hunter (Darlene Hunter Chat)" – Conference Call (1 hour)

Self-Directed Study

- Assigned reading (time varies)
- Reflection paper assignment (time varies: 500-1000 words) due the last day of the month.
- Practicums.

Mentor Connection

- Individual session with your assigned mentor each month on phone (45 minutes)

Courses for Year One:

- **Following the Flow of a Prayer**
- **How to work the process**
- **Your spiritual practice**
- **Walking your prayer**
- **Spiritual Awakening**
- **Mystical Faiths**
- **World Trauma, Personal Trauma and Grief**
- **Death & Dying**
- **Prayer as Science**
- **Prayer as Action**

- **Prophecy**
- **Year One Retreat in California**

Courses for Year Two:

- **Earth Based Ways of Prayer**
- **Plant Medicine**
- **Archetypal Medicine**
- **Ritual**
- **Dialogue with Creation**
- **Spirituality & Practical Feet**
- **Communities**
- **Sustainability**
- **What is your personal code of ethics?**
- **Unity as a Practice**
- **Practical Applications of Your Ministry**
- **Graduation/Ordination Retreat in California**

Course Descriptions:

Following the Flow of a Prayer

As inspiration flows in we are asked to catch it, plant it, cultivate and actualize it. As we do, more is revealed and not only is our individual spiritual study expanded, but also our work with the collective moves forward. This module will present some of that story which brings us all together in collaboration with the Divine.

How to work the process

True communication is “communion”; the realization that humility can take us to communion through an evolutionary process of “moving up” the levels of awareness and being—until peace and love are all that exists. If we can accept humility as a part of us, then we can accept that one purpose of relationship is personal and spiritual development, rather than merely a grasping for something to make us feel happy and safe. In this transformation, relationships offer us a new kind of salvation, and we align ourselves with a greater awareness and consciousness that wants to be born into this world. The Power of Humility shows us how to change our conflicts into peace. At each moment, within each conflict that arises throughout our day— throughout our life— we are given the power to choose, and that is a Divine gift. Do I choose to protect my point of view, my position, and my ego’s limited perceptions? Or, through humility, do I choose not knowing, curiosity, and compassion? Do I choose to play the victim, to persecute or to rescue? Or through humility, do I choose to motivate, nurture, and empower? Do I choose separation, or through humility, inclusion? Do I choose fear, or through humility, love? It’s our humble choice.

Your spiritual practice

The Divine Mother has told us that each of us is an herb in Her garden. Your life work is to fully potentiate that herb. One’s spiritual practice cultivates that possibility. One’s

spiritual practice gives root to one's life. One's spiritual practice claims each day as sacred. Do you have a practice? Do you have a time each day you stop the world to sit and listen to your Self?

Walking your prayer

If you have found your spiritual practice, how do you take it into your everyday life? How do you walk your talk? How do we learn to live in the Now each moment? And when we practice that skill each day, what happens to the quality of our lives?

Spiritual Awakening

...*"An experience of clarity, revelation, and joy in which we become aware of a deeper (or higher) level of reality, perceived a sense of harmony and meaning, and transcend our normal sense of separations from the world."* (Steve Taylor, 2017)

Whether you are a minister, spiritual guide, counselor or just a friend, the phenomena of *Spiritual Awakening* is essential knowledge for competent guidance and care. These often-intense experiences point toward a natural, yet potentially disruptive process of growth and development that can be misinterpreted by western models. In this course, we'll explore some of the characteristics and challenges these experiences may take. We'll touch on the forms or types of awakenings, clarify the ego's critical role, and explore the more dynamic or psychologically disruptive experiences. Grounded in this broad exploration, we'll look at some of the practical tools used to facilitate and integrate these experiences.

Mystical Faiths

If we are to better understand the path we walk, it is helpful to recognize the wealth of wisdom of many different teachings, operating from a principle that all paths emanate from the same source, and an understanding that respect of every individual's perspective is the first step to Unity.

We will take the time to sit with the basic teachings of various faiths such as Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sufism, and Taoism. Many religions have a foundation in Mysticism, as well as contemporary teachers whose work it is to remind of this original.

World Trauma, Personal Trauma and Grief

How do you deal with trauma on a personal level, or in your community, or on a global scale? As a Minister, you will be asked to help heal traumas on all levels, from both inside and outside your culture. This module discusses approaches to healing trauma through awareness, empathy, ritual, and "love medicine".

Death & Dying

Many people believe that it is the beliefs about death held by a collective that shapes the culture. This module will be a study of death as a doorway— a doorway of perceptual shift in relation to the consciousness of one's reality. How do we care for this doorway? How do we prepare ourselves to walk through the doorway? What is our relationship with the body? What is our body's experience of Spirit? How do we learn

to respect the different ways people must go due to karmic work? How do we learn to serve the process? Our Lady says that it happens in stages. In order to move from one state of consciousness to another, to bring mystical vision into this reality—or to return to the place of vision— there are five steps:

Preparation
Purification
Initiation
Integration
Actualization

By exploring these developmental stages, we will examine traditional and nontraditional approaches in order to better understand our perceptions of, and personal relationship to, this very important topic.

Prayer as Science

“A prayer that is strong and deep will definitely receive God’s answer.... By the application of science in religion, your uncertain belief in spiritual possibilities can become realization of their highest fulfillment.”

Paramahansa Yogananda

Consciousness is an intelligence that wants to dialogue with us and through us, in order to make of us an instrument of prayer. Is there a common ground between the world of science and the world of prayer? Can prayer be approached as a science? How does the anecdotal evidence from over thousands of years hold up in today’s environment? These are some of the questions that will be touched upon in this module, as well as material related to both our personal approach to prayer and those of more traditional approaches.

Prayer as Action

Once we begin a prayer, then we must follow it. If we follow it, a way of life reveals itself, and we begin to realize that everything is connected. We begin to move, realizing that our actions will be felt by the next seven generations. In this way, we are a walking prayer, and all life is seen as sacred. In this way, we approach life, rather than attack it.

Prophecy

The Original Peoples and Nations have been guided by prophecy since the beginning of time. These are original instructions given by Mother Earth herself, that help us walk through our evolution in a collaborative alliance with Creation. We are in a great turning time on this planet that has been prophesied for many generations. The Earth Herself is giving direction for the actions needed. The architecture of this reality has been constructed by the choices we have made in such pivotal times. How can we awake and take the steps needed to construct a reality based on the Original Principles of collaboration, reciprocity, heart, unity and all life is sacred? Can we listen to the divine intervention offered through the prophecies coming from the different cultures of the four directions that gives guidance in these tumultuous times? We are reminded by the Elders of Colombia that the end is

falling into the beginning, to be aware of what is breaking down, focusing on what is breaking through. It is now time to unify our diversity as One People for One Earth. These are the voices of the ancestors guiding our way.

Earth Based Ways of Prayer

When we have entered into a conscious relationship with Creation, we can begin to study Earth based ways of prayer. As our Grandmothers teach, “We join with all those who honor the Creator, and to all who work and pray for our children, for world peace, and for the healing of our Mother Earth.” Our approach to this way of prayer is different than what is commonly promoted, as the heart rather than the mind leads it. It is an approach that brings to light the elements of Earth, Air, Water, and Fire. One that acknowledges the world of Spirit, and that teaches us ways to discipline ourselves so that we respond to life rather than react to it. In this way, we educate ourselves from our experience, and the relationships involved in manifesting that experience. Earth based ways of prayer teach us how to dialogue with the archetypes: the inherited patterns of thought or symbolic imagery derived from the past collective experience, and present in the individual unconscious. Using the 5 steps of transformation given in previous modules, the focus of this module begins to move the lens of perception from the Western model of relating to an Earth based model of relating.

As a result:

1. We see where we think we are victims.
2. We realize we have choice and define the problem
3. We accept the problem, and embrace the challenge.
4. We meet the challenge through completing the tests.
5. When we complete the test, then we can hear the message.
6. When we listen to the message, we come to know our personal myth.
7. When we know our personal myth, we begin to glimpse the Divine play at work in the world.

Plant Medicine

The plants of Creation are Guardians of this Earth. Some are here to heal us and keep us in balance, while others are here to teach us a way of life that can sustain Life. In this study, we will examine a continuum that teaches how to integrate learned intellectual concepts with spiritual practices that maintains a way of life. We will learn how to connect with the Spirit of plants in order to facilitate the healing of the individual and the collective.

Archetypal Medicine

This study will begin to describe how Consciousness forms a field. The field is organic in nature, and has evolved throughout time. As a collective, we have been in the study of what the Hopi's call the Fourth World. It has been a study of sacrifice, of learning how to hold paradox, of learning to declare our differences and identify the “I”. The new field of study is the Fifth World of Unity. The World of Unity is cultivated through acts of service, and a way of being which honors the connectedness of life. It is said that our suffering pushes us until our vision pulls us. Archetypal Medicine teaches one how to dialogue with the vision

that is pulling. It requires a maturity of character, and a devotion to one's part in the Divine Play.

Ritual

In this study, we will make a new relationship with ritual. From where does it originate? How is it passed on? Our habits can form our daily ritual, and those rituals can define the richness of a culture or its lack. First Nation Peoples have been given ritual by Creation and by the Original Peoples of this Earth. Those rituals have been passed down—often orally—through the generations, so that when one sits within it, there is a line that brings all the prayers said along that line—since it first began—into the present moment. Contained within these traditions is an understanding that specific actions create specific results. Ritual, in this sense, defines the sacred container, and the protocol that maintains that container. Protocol does not establish a rigid rule, but rather provides a guidepost that points the direction in which to proceed. It is much like a telephone number: a specific phone number reaches a specific endpoint. In order to connect with the line of prayer the ritual calls forth, then one must follow the protocol that defines the requirements of that specific container—in order to call forth the “intelligence” which is present in that container. Additionally, in order to maintain what is learned while in that container, one must put in to daily practice what the container teaches. As an individual's relationship to ritual shifts, so does their way of interacting socially. For this reason, we will study a medicine village vs. a hierarchical system, exploring such integral questions as what maintains the integrity of each, as well as the inherent ethical implications of both worlds.

Dialogue with Creation

If we have forgotten how to dialogue with Creation, where do we start? In asking that question, we declare a wish to relate. The Old People say that relation is the seed of life. In this module, we will take a moment to examine how our culture relates to the Earth in contrast to how other cultures have historically related to the Earth. How has our relationship with the Earth changed throughout time? If we were to listen to the Earth, what would she be telling us She needs right now? Once we begin to dialogue, how do we nurture this new relationship with Creation? The Original Peoples were given a way of life that had rituals and rites of passage that marked the seasons of the Earth. Each line from those original days relates the story of the Earth told through prophecy and declared through song.

Spirituality & Practical Feet

In this study, we will expand what we have learned and add tools to apply to our everyday life. We think of the communities we are part of as a form of wealth and need to increase our skills to cultivate that wealth. With these skills we create an environment where we become instruments for positive change in the paradigm shift that is happening today. We have made relations with our Spirit, establishing trust in that which calls us. We have learned to follow rather than grab for what we want. As we stand up inside ourselves, we begin to define a culture that recognizes the abundance and flow of energy received and given - the gifting economy vs. the consumer economy. The gifting economy is driven by the knowledge that all will be provided if we but listen and follow our guidance. It is rooted

in the old cultures of sacred reciprocity and cultivated by love, generosity, and gratitude. The consumer economy is driven by fear of not enough. It is rooted in competition and cultivated by how much we can consume rather than sustain. We move from consumerism to gifting through the economics of learning to share, following the laws of Nature, of Mother Earth.

Communities

To live in a community centered in Spirit, one must be willing to work the process. You have to step out of “I” thinking. You emerge from someone who sacrifices to make things happen to someone who is in service to the Divine. It is that act of service that allows things to naturally evolve in community. When we sit in circle in community, we realize that everyone is an aspect of ourselves. When you apply the concepts you will have learned through these studies, you will have a tool that cultivates respect and acceptance. When you learn to walk with your prayer, you will have a focus that will nurture growth and clarity of purpose. Communities require the development of a sacred witness that can maintain its integrity and facilitate day- to-day experiences of individuals with one another in a way that is kind. The first step a community must take is to accept where they are. Then, without judgment, there must be a commitment to higher consciousness and those things that attract higher learning. There must be an examination of choices, and an ever-present awareness that every choice made affects the next seven generations. Integral to healthy community is the necessity to honor the sacred hoop of life in the established social structure, so that individuals representing every station of life have a voice. These are a few of the concepts we hope will stimulate your study in your own community.

Sustainability

How can we look at our imbalances as opportunities for practice instead of merely as problems? How can we utilize our excess, or surplus, energy to address our weakness or deficient energy? In this module, you will have the opportunity to see how to bring collaboration and right relationship to these seeming polarities, in order to evoke balance and sustainability in a system. How can you apply what you are learning to your personal, emotional, and spiritual life?

What is your personal code of ethics?

Integrity in a system is determined by how well centered it is. Does it know itself? Is the container sealed? Is it leaky? Is it losing energy? If so, how? These are all questions that one might ask while beginning to set up a spiritual practice. This process is much like what one would do if they were to investigate their body’s integrity. If one’s body is not able to maintain its integrity, then it usually falls out of balance, losing its energy, and functioning in a way that is neither efficient nor healthy. This course will help you discover how to bring your spiritual practice into integrity, by defining your own personal code of ethics.

Unity as a Practice

In this module you will utilize your sacred witness, and review your life, and how it is working. Do you know all its parts? Do you know which ones are coming out of an unconscious state? Do you know what triggers you and throws you into an unconscious state? Are you embracing your shadow? Are you embracing your power? Unity is a practice of integration. It is a practice of acceptance, and it is a practice that requires you to know yourself.

Practical Applications of Your Ministry

There are many ways you may be called in service as you step into your Ministry of Walking Prayer. Your walk is individual and unique and will draw to you that which you will serve. Assistance will be given to help you find the style that will activate the archetypal energies that will empower you in offering ceremonies, in offering spiritual direction, in co-creating beautiful safe space in any environment as you become present to what Spirit brings to your door.