

men, women, and spiritual direction

The work comes from the old Cathedral of Bahia, Salvador, Brazil. It represents Saint John of the Cross and Saint Teresa in the hall of the Monastery of the Incarnation in Avila talking about the mystery of the Holy Trinity when suddenly they fall in ecstasy with the vision. Next to Santa Teresa is, possibly, developing direction, *St. Teresa*.



prayer and question

ground, breathe, centre, open

what has drawn you to this day?

what question are you carrying?

breakout rooms (*4 in each room; 20 minutes*)

plenary (*gathering the questions*)

breakout rooms

What drew you to this day?

Share experiences

What is your question?

Report back your questions

domination system

patriarchal	colonial (N&W over S&E)
hierarchical	racist (white over coloured)
men over women	capitalist (rich over poor)
adults over children	extractivist (man over nature)
binary	human exceptionalist
hetero-normative	religious chauvinist

the opposite of patriarchy is ...

not matriarchy but ...

- partnership *(Riane Eisler)*
- fraternity *(Germaine Greer)*
- mutuality *(Rachel Held Evans)*
- equality *(Kamla Bhasin)*
- reverence *(Janet Conner)*
- the Kingdom of God

Riane Eisler's Domination/Partnership Social Scale



Domination

Partnership

Family, Economic, and Social Structure

An authoritarian structure of ranking and hierarchies of domination in family, economics, and society, so children grow up in authoritarian, punitive, male-dominated families where they observe and experience inequity as the norm.

Democratic structure and hierarchies of actualization that empower rather than disempower. Caring is economically valued. Egalitarian and equitable adult relations are the norm. Parenting is not authoritarian but authoritative and non-violent.

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Domination

Partnership

Fear, Abuse, and Violence

High degree of fear and violence, from child- and wife-beating to abuse by "superiors" in families, workplaces, and society as required to maintain rankings of domination.

Low degree of fear, abuse, and violence, as they are not needed to maintain top-down rankings. Respect for diversity and human rights.

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Domination

Partnership

Gender Roles and Relations

Rigid, binary gender stereotypes, with "masculine" traits and activities such as toughness and conquest ranked over "feminine" ones such as caregiving and nonviolence in all people and in social and economic policy.

Fluid, nonbinary gender roles, so that difference is not equated with superiority/inferiority, dominating/being dominated. This inclusive, equitable view of differences in our species provides a model for relations not based on in-group vs. out-group thinking. High valuing of empathy, caring, caregiving, and nonviolence in all people as well as in social and economic policy.

Riane Eisler's Domination/Partnership Social Scale



Narratives and Language

Beliefs and stories that justify, idealize, and normalize domination and violence.

Beliefs and stories recognize our human capacities for negative behaviors but emphasize empathic, mutually beneficial, nonviolent relations and present them as normal, moral, and desirable.

<https://centerforpartnership.org/partnerism-partnership-systems/>

parable of the talents

Matthew 25:14–30

the domination narrative

the liberation narrative

Parables as Subversive Speech: William R. Herzog II

the partnership narrative

[we] must act in solidarity with [others] when confronting [...] injustices

breakout rooms

What are your responses to the input?

How do these issues show up ...

- in the world of spiritual direction training and practice?
- in your practice of spiritual direction?

Listening to the Köln Concert [by Keith Jarrett] – Poem by Robert Bly

After we had loved each other intently,
we heard notes tumble together,
in late winter, and we heard ice
falling from the ends of twigs.

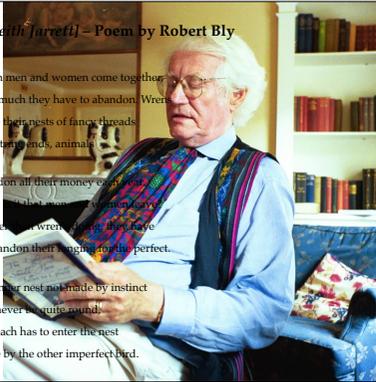
The notes abandon so much as they move.
They are the food not eaten, the comfort
not taken, the lies not spoken.
The music is my attention to you.

And when the music came again,
late in the day, I saw tears in your eyes.
I saw you turn your face away
So that others would not see.

When men and women come together,
how much they have to abandon. Wrens
make their nests of fancy threads
and stem ends, animal

abandon all their money and their
What is that woman doing for me?
Harder for wrens to sing, they have
to abandon their tongues to the perfect.

The inner nest not made by instinct
will never be quite round,
and each has to enter the nest
made by the other imperfect bird.

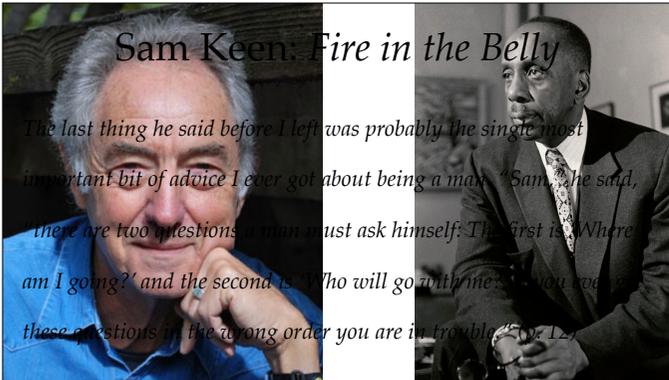


David Deida: The Way of the Superior Man

If you have a masculine sexual essence then you would probably admit, if you were being brutally honest, that your intimate relationship is just not as important to you as the "mission" in your life - but you still want a full and energetic intimate relationship, perhaps quite badly. How do you deal with this misunderstood dilemma? (p. 9)

Sam Keen: Fire in the Belly

The last thing he said before I left was probably the single most important bit of advice I ever got about being a man. "Sam," he said, "there are two questions a man must ask himself: The first is 'Where am I going?' and the second is 'Who will go with me?' If you reverse these questions in the wrong order you are in trouble." (p. 12)



danger: violence and sex

power & control

hierarchy

abuse

rape

toxicity

infidelity

coincidence of opposites

Life is born out of the spark of opposites. (Carl Jung, CW 7, Para 78)

woman and man

feminine and masculine

masculine spirituality and feminine/womanist spirituality

danger/fear/risk/toxicity/abuse – domination

attraction/creativity/risk/adventure/fun – partnership



dealing with attraction

what to do?

indulge – feed

reject – starve

inquire – be curious – be kind

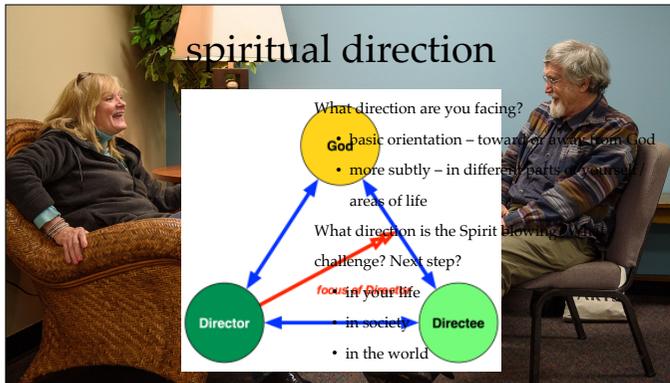


breakout rooms

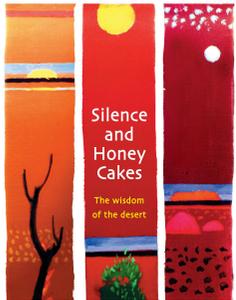
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- in your practice of spiritual direction?



Rowan Williams



Our life and our death is with our neighbour. If we win [another], we win God. If we cause [another] to stumble, we have sinned against Christ. (Anthony the Great)

One of the great temptations of religious living is the urge to intrude between God and other people. We love to think that we know more of God than others; we find it comfortable and comforting to try and control the access of others to God. (p.25)

the differentiated self

edwin friedman – *a failure of nerve*

grounded, centred, non-anxious:

- this is me
- my values & goals
- my needs & desires
- my boundaries
- take responsibility for self

danger: disconnection

connection:

- belonging
- relationship
- difference
- curiosity
- to care and not to care

danger: loss of self

spiritual direction and the 'other'

when we are solidly based we can listen to those in a different place

- attend to your own spiritual well-being

key qualities in spiritual direction with difference:

- ignorance / unknowing
- curiosity
- kindness
- humility

which direction leads to life – for me, for now?

spiritual direction and the 'other'

trust God:

- "Teach us to care and not to care/Teach us to sit still." (TS Eliot)

what do men want?

- acceptance and understanding
- adult challenge and accountability

what do women want?

the empowering relocation of authority and responsibility

breakout rooms

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