



Frequently Asked Questions

1. How is the Curriculum Organized?

The curriculum of Kol Dodi introduces foundational skills of personal spiritual development and formation as a spiritual director for the first 9 months. The second 9 months build upon these skills while introducing practical tools and necessary information for serving as a Jewish spiritual director.

Jewish spiritual direction is a contemplative practice of spiritual accompaniment that is learned through experience over time. The curriculum thus consists of plenty of intrapersonal and interpersonal practice time, listening for and sharing about the sacred dimension of one's life—individually, and in dyads, triads, small and large group constellations (see below).

These practices will include mindfulness/relational mindfulness; prayer; the cultivation of soul traits (tikkun middot); contemplative text study; and embodied creative process, drawing from IJS core practices in service of this practice of Jewish spiritual direction. Participants will be introduced to traditional and contemporary liberatory practices from the larger field of spiritual direction as well.

Participants will also be expected to complete readings, view recordings and complete writing assignments rooted in Jewish spiritual vernaculars of qualities and values we consider to be central to the formation of a wise, loving, steady and ethical spiritual direction presence.

See [this visual representation](#) of the 7 central qualities that frame the Kol Dodi formational learning journey. Notice that these qualities are represented in a circular, relational shape rather than a one-way linear form. We will follow a learning curriculum that is progressive, yet the goal is transformational cumulative immersion, rather than an acquisition of information that could possibly leave the participant fundamentally unchanged, but for increased knowledge.

Towards the end of providing foundations for transformational ripening as a spiritual director, here are highlights of the learning journey participants can expect to embark upon through study and practice over these 18 months:

Part One:

1) Loving Connection-Hesed

- Cultivating Loving Presence in Spiritual Direction: Relational Mindfulness and Soul Traits
- Trauma-Informed, Somatic Awareness and the Spiritual Direction Relationship
- Gevurah-Setting Limits and Boundaries-for Hesed's sake: Safety in the Spiritual Direction Relationship
- Imagining the Divine– Names and Images of God and God-Talk in Spiritual Direction

2) Silence and Stillness-Shabbat Mind

- Shabbat as a Stance of Mind, Body, Heart and Soul in Spiritual Direction
- Mindfulness Practice, Prayer and Spiritual Direction
- Reverencing, not Repairing: the Stance of the Spiritual Director
- Jewish Year Cycle: Spiritual Rhythms Shaping Experience

3) Emergence-Hithadshut

- Creative Process and Spiritual Direction
- The Wisdom of Not Knowing: Cultivating Curiosity as a Spiritual Director
- Dark Night of the Soul: Working with Doubt, Grief, Loss, Faith, and Emergence
- Working with Resistance and Avoidance in the Personality Self: Interior Movement, Fear and Trust in the Spiritual Life
- Discernment and Appreciative Inquiry in Spiritual Direction

4) Diversity and Integrity-Shivim Panim

- Bringing the Whole Self to Spiritual Direction: Shadow Work and the Spiritual Director
- Seventy Faces of the Divine: Beyond Normative Narratives of God
- Queer and Trans Spiritualities and Intimacy with God
- Transference, Projection and Differentiation in the Spiritual Direction Relationship
- Working With Diverse Spiritual Types

Part Two:

5) Inclusion and Equity-Tzedek u'Mishpat

- The Prophetic Voice as Spiritual Guide
- Understanding Systemic Oppression and Spiritual Life
- Anti-Racism, BIPOC Experiences and Spiritual Accompaniment: Cultivating Liberatory Practices
- Conscious Use of Power and Authority as a Spiritual Director: Supervision and Accountability

6) Practice for Social Transformation-Tikkun HaNefesh, Tikkun Olam

- Dreams and the Sacred Imagination in Spiritual Direction

- Right Livelihood: Spiritual Direction as a Profession? A Calling?
- Establishing a Spiritual Direction Practice: Communities, locations, fees, etc
- No Inner, No Outer, No Other, No Stranger: Spiritual Direction Practice and Social Transformation

7) Lifelong Practice-Avodah

- A Long-Term Relationship: Director and Directee Over Time
- Working with Aging and Elderly Directees
- Group Spiritual Direction and Peer Supervision
- Ongoing Supervision for Spiritual Directors: Peer and Individual
- Conscious Closures

2. What are the Time Commitments and Program Structure?

- **Retreats:** In-person attendance at two residential retreats, [Trinity Retreat Center](#) in West Cornwall, CT (likely to be in April 2027 and April 2028) and full participation in 5 zoom intensives.

The training program ends in November 2028 with an online closing ceremony after which participants who have successfully fulfilled requirements will receive a certificate of completion.

- **At-Home Work Includes:**
 - **Daily** 15 minute minimum personal spiritual practice
 - **Weekly** study/practice 1 hour online session with *chevruta* (study partner)
 - **Monthly** readings (Approximately 4 hours/month depending on your reading pace)
 - **Monthly** 1 hour meeting with spiritual director (independent of Kol Dodi and IJS)*
 - **Monthly** 1 hour meeting with mentor. Reflection paper to be submitted at least 2 days prior to meeting.
 - **Monthly** 90 minute online meetings with mentor in small groups. To include group spiritual direction and supervised spiritual direction practice.
 - **Bi-Monthly** 90 min Online Didactic Learning Sessions taught by Core or Guest Faculty.. Recordings of sessions will be provided.
 - **Starting in 10th month:** monthly online or in person meetings with 2 directees (separately), under supervision of mentor (2 additional hours/month)

* A Spiritual Director will not be provided by IJS.

Scheduling for *chevruta* pairs, meetings with mentors and small groups, directors and directees will be set up individually.

Didactic Learning Sessions will be recorded for viewing if in-person attendance isn't possible.

Hevruta partners will be assigned with sensitivity to scheduling needs.

We will do our best for all online sessions and classes to be accessible across time zones and work commitments, and expect participants to make every effort to participate live.

3. Will the in-person retreats be hybrid as well, for those who may have accessibility needs to attend remotely?

Due to the highly interactive and personal nature of the learning and practice, the in-person retreats will not be hybrid. Didactic learning session components may be recorded, but participants are expected to attend in person unless unforeseen circumstances arise. Individual exceptions will be made on a case by case basis.

4. What will it all cost? Payment Schedule and Amounts:

- \$120 with application
- \$11,000 for tuition and a single room at in-person retreats or \$9,000 for tuition and a shared double room at in-person retreats.
- We offer several payment plans for tuition. Participants can make 10 equal monthly payments, 40 equal quarterly payments, or payment in full at time of enrollment.
- Additional expenses include meetings with spiritual directors and transportation to/from retreats. All room/board costs are covered by tuition.

5. Are Scholarships Available?

Yes. Priority will be given to Black and Indigenous People of Color and to LGBTQ-identified individuals and according to needs. A confidential application form is included in the application.

6. What is the expectation as far as Hebrew proficiency is concerned?

You don't need to be able to read Hebrew to participate. All Hebrew materials will be available in translation or transliteration as needed.

7. Can my spiritual director write a letter of recommendation for me? Can I continue with my spiritual director if they are a Kol Dodi faculty or mentor if I am a participant?

If your spiritual director is one of the 6 members of the Kol Dodi faculty/mentor team, they can't write you a letter of recommendation, nor continue to serve as your spiritual director once the training begins. If they did, this would be a potential conflict of interest in terms of the recommendation, and a boundary issue regarding participation.

8. Do you accept participants from other faiths?

Yes. This is a spiritual director training program grounded in Jewish practice, spiritual life and language, but you do not need to be Jewish to participate.

9. What is the best way to find a spiritual director, and what if I haven't yet been in spiritual direction?

[Click here to find a list](#) of suggested spiritual directors. This list is updated periodically and is intended as a helpful resource for the use of those who are applying to Kol Dodi. Spiritual Directors International also maintains a [directory](#).

If you have not yet been in spiritual direction, you can still apply as long as you intend to begin in spiritual direction by April 2026, and continue in it regularly (monthly).

10. What are your hopes for the make-up of the cohort? What is your commitment to having a diverse cohort?

Our hope is that this program will be able to serve a diverse group of participants in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and sexual identity, disability, spiritual/religious practice, and Jewishness. In order to put our values into action, we will be prioritizing applications and financial aid for Jews of Color, LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities.

In addition, we are aware of the systemic structures of dominance, power, and privilege that need to be named, questioned and addressed throughout our learning, practice modules and sessions, reading materials and more. Whenever possible, we will directly include voices of Sephardi, Mizrahi and other Jews of Color in our curriculum.

Our larger vision is to be change agents in the broader spiritual direction community as well as in the Jewish spiritual direction community. We hold the intention that Kol Dodi will contribute to the evolution of Jewish spiritual direction as a liberatory contemplative practice that promotes our core value of Practice for Social Transformation/Tikkun HaNefesh and Tikkun HaOlam (see above).