

**ANAMCHARADAS DOCUMENTS
(MAY 2007)**

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Anamcharadas Vision Statement

We believe that, throughout history, God spoke through many prophets and, most fully in the person of Jesus. We believe that God speaks to us in all our life experience, revealing who God is and who we are. We recognise that, at the heart of each person there is a longing, which is a reflection of God's own passionate longing to be with us. Our longing moves us to make the search for God, following Jesus and living in the Spirit, the heart of our personal collective history.

Anamchairde therefore, undertake a peer ministry of companioning, based on Ignatian Spirituality. We commit ourselves to facilitating others in attending to God's call in the experience of their daily lives, and in their deepest longing.

We recognise the dignity and equality of all God's people, and we seek to make the service of companioning available to all. Our commitment to this ministry is our way of contributing to the realisation of God's dream for the wholeness of all creation.

We work in communion to foster this ministry by:

- * Developing in ourselves a contemplative stance in life
- * Providing training and supervision for those who are, or wish to be, engaged in this ministry
- * Encouraging, supporting and challenging one and other in our ministry
- * Undertaking to develop our own knowledge and skills
- * Seeking supervision
- * Contributing to the establishment and maintenance of structures within Anamcharadas which will at all times serve the ministry
- * Choosing to work in collaboration with other groups and individuals, out of a recognition that Anamcharadas is part of a wider movement in the church .

In its structures and relationships, Anamcharadas seeks to model church as People of God, called to live justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

Accreditation for Membership of Anamcharadas and for Companionship (Adopted by the annual gathering 2001)

1. Candidates for anamcharadas training will be selected by the teachers in the training team undertaking the training.
2. If after part one of the training trainees have the potential in the view of the actual training team to become companions they will be invited to participate in part two of the training programme.
3. If at the end of the training programme a trainee has the potential in the view of the training team to become a companion:
 - (a) he or she will be invited to become a member of anamcharadas. The person may then join a local group and may attend the annual gathering.
 - (b) a decision will be made by the training team, and then in a final dialogue between the person and one or more training team members it will be communicated to the person:

That the person is qualified to companionship on the understanding that he or she remains in ongoing companionship and undertakes supervision.
Alternatively, the training team may advise the person of the steps he or she can take to prepare to companionship in the future.

Accreditation for Teachers

(Drafted and endorsed by AIRC after discussion and endorsement by a teachers' meeting. Noted by the annual gathering 2001)

1. Members of anamcharadas may apply to the training team to become interns.
2. It will be a matter for the teachers in the training team to select interns. Not being selected for a particular training programme does not mean that the person is not suitable to be an intern.
3. An intern who in the view of the teachers on the training team has the potential to be a teacher shall be so informed at the end of the training programme.
4. Thereafter such a person may act as a teacher on a training programme.

Setting up a Training Programme

(Drafted and endorsed by AIRC after discussion and endorsement by a teachers' meeting. Noted by the annual gathering 2001)

1. Any two or more teachers may apply to AIRC to set up a training programme. AIRC may encourage two or more teachers to set up a training programme.
2. The normal ratio of teachers to interns as full time members of training team will be 1:1. This ratio may be changed with the consent of AIRC in the context of the particular circumstances of a programme.
3. The minimum and maximum number of participants on a particular training programme shall be set with the consent of AIRC, before the selection for training is complete.
4. AIRC may refuse to give its consent for a particular programme for good reasons. In very exceptional circumstances and for good reasons AIRC may terminate a particular programme.

Selection Guidelines for People Applying for Anamcharadas Training (Drafted and endorsed by AIRC. Comments requested at the annual gathering 2002)

Preamble

The aim of these guidelines is to formalise and make more transparent the selection process for those applying for anamcharadas training so that fairness is seen to prevail. The selection process is a prayerful, reflective, discernment process open to the Spirit at all times. The guidelines are not to be bureaucratically followed for their own sake. They are a practical guide to assist discernment. The criteria attached are central to the process. Departure from the guidelines is possible subject to the safeguards at paragraphs 16 and 15 below.

Prior companioning

As people express an interest in being trained as companions they are told about the requirement to be in companioning for about twelve months before the training commences. If the person needs help to find a suitable companion, this help is offered. Where possible the companion(s) recommended will be someone trained by anamcharadas, or if this is not possible someone recommended by an anamchara.

The Selection Guidelines

Applying

1. The selection process is carried out by the teachers in the training team (i.e. those who have been accredited as teachers and who have acted as teacher at least once).
2. Applicants are sought by suitable means (e.g. word of mouth, presentations to appropriate groups, suggestions to those being companioned who appear suitable, contacting those on any waiting list maintained by AIRC etc.).
3. In so far as practicable each applicant is given a brief oral outline of the spirit of anamcharadas, the way companioning works, the role for which one is trained and the training programme. This is to allow the person make a preliminary assessment of whether they wish to apply.
4. If the person wishes to apply the application outline is sent to them with a suggested date by which the form should be returned.
- 4A. The application form is attached to these guidelines. It may be changed from time to time by AIRC on its own initiative, or at the request of teachers or other members of anamcharadas. AIRC may consult teachers and interns on changes to the form, either in writing or by means of a meeting.
5. An applicant whose application has been on hand for a considerable time is given an opportunity to update the application before a selection begins.

Interview

6. Normally each applicant who has filled in an application form is interviewed, unless there is a short listing process. The interview is conducted as part of a process of discernment open to the spirit by at least two teachers from the training team. Before the interview the teachers reflect prayerfully on the application form and on the selection criteria attached. The teachers should agree between them on the questions they intend to ask and the issues which they feel need to be explored with each applicant.
7. After the interview each interviewer considers the interviewee prayerfully in the context of the attached criteria. Where they find it helpful the interviewers may develop a marking scheme with broadly similar maximum marks for each criterion. The interviewers confer together prayerfully on each interviewee.
- 7A. The criteria are attached to these guidelines and are related to the application form. It may be changed from time to time by AIRC on its own initiative, or at the request of teachers or other members of anamcharadas. AIRC may consult teachers and interns on changes to the criteria, either in writing or by means of a meeting.
8. The primary purpose of the interviewers is to decide whether a person has the potential to be a trainee and ultimately a spiritual companion. If there are more persons qualified than places on the programme a selection is made based on a combination of:
 - the relative strengths of the applicants, and
 - the need for a diverse group so that trainees are exposed to a variety of experiences in the training group.

Prior Short Listing

9. Applicants may not be interviewed if:
 - s/he appears to be clearly unsuitable from the application form,
 - s/he clearly does not or will not have the requisite number of months in companionship before the programme begins,
 - there are so many applicants it is not feasible to interview them all.
10. The purpose of the short listing is to select people for interview. Two or more teachers will undertake any short listing. They do not have to be the same teachers that interview applicants. The teachers reflect prayerfully on the application form and on the selection criteria attached and then confer prior to making a decision.

Notification

11. Applicants are notified in writing of the outcome of any short listing. Applicants who are chosen after the interview are notified in writing and asked to confirm in writing that they wish to accept the offer.
12. Those who are unsuccessful are notified in writing with outline reasons. The option of oral feedback from one or more of the selectors is offered to the applicant in writing.

Review

13. Where a person is aggrieved at not being selected or not being called for interview and remains so after oral feedback and discussion with the selector(s) the option of a review is offered to the applicant. This appeal is heard as soon as possible and in so far as possible before the programme starts.
14. The review procedure is as follows:
 - (i) AIRC selects two teachers (reviewers) who are not members of the training team to review the particular case and the selection procedure generally.
 - (ii) The two reviewers review the application form, other forms if relevant and any notes, seek information and views from the selectors, **and** from the applicant orally and/or in writing.
 - (iii) The two reviewers may consult with AIRC and the training team but the decision is for the two reviewers to make.
 - (iv) The two reviewers are to have regard to the practicality of their decision.
 - (v) The two reviewers issue a written decision as soon as possible to the applicant, the selectors and AIRC. This decision is final.

Report to AIRC

15. At the end of the selection process the selectors report in writing to AIRC setting down:
 - (i) any minor departures from the selection guidelines with reasons,
 - (ii) any significant departures from the guidelines with reasons already notified to AIRC (paragraph 16), and
 - (iii) any views or comments on how the selection process worked.

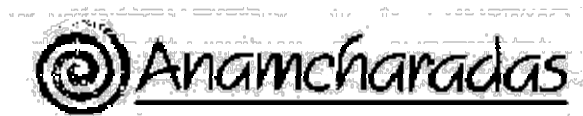
Departure from the Guidelines

16. Where for good reasons the selectors find it necessary to depart in any significant way from these guidelines they discuss and agree it with the training team, where possible, and inform AIRC as soon as possible of the change and the reasons for the change.

Selection Criteria

Prior to considering application forms or prior to interviewing individuals, those who are called on to select should spend some time prayerfully with these criteria and discuss them with each other to clarify their understanding of them.

1. Evidence of his/her awareness of God / Christ acting in his/her life
Evidence of transformation in the relationship.
What are his/her images of God / Christ ?
What resources does the person draw on in his/her life ?
What evidence is there of a contemplative stance ?
Is there evidence of the person having the grace of the principle and foundation ?
Is the person free to look at negativity within themselves and in society ?
2. What are his/her relationships with other people like ?
3. What are his/her experiences of being companioned ?
4. What are his/her experiences of listening to others ?
What evidence is there of their ability to listen to others ?
5. Evidence of a real desire for this ministry, evidence of a calling.
Evidence of opportunity and desire to use the skills which will be learned.
6. Potential to benefit from the training.
Potential to contribute to the training.



Application for Anamcharadas Training Programme in Spiritual Companioning.

To apply for the Anamcharadas Programme please submit the following:

- (1) Personal Details: Name, Address, Email Address Phone Number: Mobile Number, Date of Birth, Religious Affiliation, Occupation: A recent photograph of yourself.

- (2) A reflective exploration of your life's journey to date. Please allow yourself space and time to complete this, and plan on writing 5 to 8 pages. As your life story is a very broad theme we suggest that you include the following areas in whatever order you wish:
 - Your relationship with God, and how this has changed throughout your life.
 - Significant relationships: family, close friends, partner/spouse, community etc.,
 - An experience of joy/happiness.
 - An experience of darkness/sadness.
 - A recent prayer experience,
 - A time when you felt close to God – retreat/holiday/guided prayer or other.
 - Some social or world issue that engaged you.
 - Your sense of where you feel called at present.
 - Your strengths and weaknesses.
 - Your experience of church.

- (3) What draws you to the ministry of spiritual companioning within Anamcharadas now?

- (4) Describe an experience of receiving ongoing spiritual companioning/spiritual direction or equivalent.

(5) Describe a time when you listened deeply (please respect confidentiality).

If you find writing very difficult please feel free to record (clearly) your application on an audio tape.

Your application will be carefully considered by the team and will be confidential to the team members. It will be returned to you, if you do not participate in the programme. For those who do take part, autobiographies will be returned to them during the programme.

You may also be invited for an interview with team upon receipt of your application.

Please return your completed application before 30th April, 2004, to Anamcharadas, c/o Clare Gill, Birch Cottage, Kilgarron Hill, Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow. Tel: 01-2828948. Email: cgill@eircom.net.

The programme is both theoretical and practical:

Theory Listening skills, the spirituality of St. Ignatius, basic psychology, recommended reading in preparation for each session.

Practice Reflection on your own life's journey. Journaling, art, guided prayer ritual, group sharing, and individual work, practice of listening skills, supervision.

As a participant you will be required to take part in the full programme, (see dates listed below).

You will also be required to be companioned monthly throughout the programme. A contribution will be asked for, and this needs to be negotiated at the outset with your chosen spiritual companion. A list of available supervised anamchairde will be provided. (Please inform the team if you already have a spiritual director or spiritual companion)

At the end of the first year, participants will be strongly recommended to take part in a 6 or 8 day directed retreat (during the summer months) as part of their discernment process.

Cost: The cost of the programme will be €900 per annum (2 academic years €1,800). This does **not** include overnight accommodation / meals, or your personal individual companioning sessions, (Tea coffee etc., will be provided) Participants are encouraged to seek sponsorship/grants from their communities/parishes. Payments may be made in instalments if necessary, and special provision will be considered for the unwaged.

You could do this programme if:

- You and we feel that you have life experience, and spiritual/emotional history which reflects an ongoing response to your relationship with God.
- You are taking your own prayer life and your seAIRCh for God seriously.
- Preferably if you have had some sort of spiritual companionship and/or retreat experience.
- You have a real desire to work with others as a Spiritual Companion.
- You are willing to commit yourself to the full training programme and your application is accepted by the team.

Dates for 2004- 2006 Programme:

2004

October	9 th /10 th .
November	13 th /14 th
December	11 th /12 th

2005

January	8 th /9 th
February	12 th /13 th
MAIRCh	12 th /13 th
April	9 th /10 th
May	14 th /15 th

Ongoing: (Second Year)

2005

October	8 th /9 th
November	12 th /13 th
December	10 th /11 th

2006

January	7 th /8 th
February	11 th /12 th
MAIRCh	11 th /12 th
April	8 th /9 th
May	13 th /14 th