

## A Beautiful Adventure: the Gift of the Arts in Spiritual Formation

with Carolyn Arends

### Reflection Guide: Session 1

1. Have you ever had an experience where you were “saying even more than you was even saying”? Perhaps in a conversation with a friend – where they interpreted deeper meaning from your words than you realized or intended? Or perhaps it was the other way around, a friend said something and it meant more to you than they realized. Or have you experienced deeper meaning in a poem, a song, a piece of art? How has the experience of meaning in these situations impacted your spiritual life? What response arises in you as you remember these experiences?

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2. Carolyn identifies a common internal belief that we’re not “artsy” or creative. Has that been part of your internal narrative? Was Carolyn able to challenge the idea that you’re not creative? Given some of Carolyn’s descriptions, how might you describe your unique creativity? Reflect on times that you made “cosmos out of chaos.”

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3. What are some of the most significant influences that have been part of your spiritual formation? In what ways have you been intentional about prioritizing what shapes and forms you spiritually?

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4. As you review the lists of spiritual disciplines, which ones have you practiced? Have you been drawn to different disciplines at different times in your life? What energized those shifts? What most welcomes the Spirit of God to pray in you today?

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5. As you reflect on your spiritual journey, have you spent more energy training or trying? How might you embrace the idea of training in a way that will be life-giving for you?

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6. Were you familiar with the principle of indirection? How might this apply in your life today? Name the issue where you would like to experience change. Quiet your mind and invite the Spirit to help you recognize an indirect practice you can embrace that may help you experience progress.

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## 7. **Review Practice:**

What image came to mind for you as a metaphor for your inner life? Did you attempt to draw this image? Take some time now to translate the image from your mind to paper .... and if you find yourself resistant and telling yourself, "I can't draw" receive that as an invitation to stillness, allowing God's Spirit to remind you of your unique creativity.