

We are Patty Hogan and Cyndi. We've been in a disciplining relationship, specifically in Spiritual Direction, for about 8 years. We generally meet monthly by Skype.

We were connected by a friend of Cyndi's who was in my first year of Spiritual Direction training with me. She suggested we connect over issues of Cyndi's struggles as a cross cultural missionary in Brazil. Cyndi agreed to be one of my "guinea pigs" as I was learning to function as a Spiritual Director and we have continued as Director – Directee since then.

Spiritual Direction is a unique form of discipling. The aim of Spiritual Direction is for the Directee to deepen their attunement to the Holy Spirit's move and work in their lived experience, and to deepen intimacy with God. The Holy Spirit is the true Director, while the human Director's work is a form of listening that involves their attention to emotions, prayer life, and the Directee's experiences of God and others.

Patty: My experience as a Spiritual Director for Cyndi has definitely helped me to love and follow Jesus and become more like him in my attitude and actions. The sacred gift of vulnerability and trust from others grows my vision and experience of seeing God's movement and work, often shaping me as well as my Directees. My long partnership with Cyndi in Direction has not only honed my skills as a Director, but Cyndi herself has been God's conduit of blessing and formation in my own spiritual life.

Cyndi: Hebrew 6:12 "We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised."

My relationship with Patty began almost 8 years ago when I was struggling as a new missionary in Brazil. I had actively 'followed' Jesus for many years in my Canadian context, but loving and following Jesus in a foreign context landed me in the deep end of the pool; disoriented by a new culture, new language, a half empty nest, and periods of intense loneliness I felt deeply the absence of a guide to orient me in this new season of my life. Often, after skyping with friends and family in Canada I felt sad that no one really understood my challenges. Feeling exiled and overwhelmed, I reminded God of His promise to me that He would meet our needs in a sun scorched land. (Isaiah 58:11) God answered this deep need through Patty Hogan, a woman whose faith journey is deep and compelling, and included many years in cross cultural ministry.

Patty has reflected to me the **unconditional love and acceptance of God** - this has been the most humbling gift to receive over the long haul from her. Loving and following Jesus is not for the faint hearted – the more we follow Jesus into new things the more trusting we must become. Following Jesus to Brazil ignited deep fears of rejection, failure, abandonment, and grief for all of the things that I had left behind in Canada. If I was going to fulfill God's purposes for me in Brazil I needed someone who had already grown through similar cross cultural challenges. Patty having already lived (fruitfully) through many similar challenges listens to my struggles, culture clashes, problems learning a second language, parental fears, etc. Patty doesn't give me trite answers but emits a gentle confidence that God is present to transform me, sustain me

and use me through these difficulties. She could've easily concluded that I wasn't 'missionary material' as one of my fellow missionaries concluded, rather, she has been able to see God at work in my struggles to mature and equip me. Our conversations often affirm me and settle my heart – *cultivating deeper intimacy with God*. If my needs and struggles aren't off putting for her, maybe God's okay with me too, the *whole package that is me* - my strengths and my weaknesses. It's a strong temptation for missionaries, albeit subconsciously, to repress much of our humanity in order to write that next "Everything's great update" to our supporters. My humanity, all 31 wonderful (and not so wonderful) flavors of it, has always been received in our dialogues; authenticity is restorative and ensures integrity in my ministry. I have become a more loving, patient, compassionate mother figure to those I'm leading in Brazil because of my relationship with Patty.