

## **Companionship Comments**

### **Pathways To Promise, Craig Rennebohm**

1. Companionship welcomes the stranger and comes alongside the person who is most isolated, especially individuals and their families who face a severe and persistent mental health challenge in their lives.
2. Companionship is a public ministry, a relationship of care shared in the context of community.
3. Companionship is done as part of companionship group, a local community of companions active in a local congregation, mutually accountable to one another, and to the life of the congregation.
4. Companionship is guided by the spiritual norms and ethical values of the local congregation and tradition of which it is a part.
5. Companions are recognized by the local congregation, serving when the congregation gathers, when there is need for a simple presence with members of the congregation, and at points of need in the neighborhood and wider community.
6. The practices of companionship have been developed to help grow a basic relationship in which moments of the human journey toward healing and wholeness are shared.
7. Companions do not make diagnoses, refer a person for treatment or provide counseling or therapy.
8. Companions support a person and their family in finding appropriate spiritual resources and building a circle of care and services.
9. Companionship moves through stages of approach, sharing and encouraging a person to partner with others in recovery, into mutuality.
10. Companions do not give or receive material gifts.
11. Companions do not meet alone or talk privately with a person being companioned, nor does a companion offer or agree to hold any particular matter in confidentiality or secrecy. "We talk about what is common in human life, about what is most general in our experience."
12. Every moment of need, each request for some specific help is an opportunity for community. The good enough companion is one who does nothing for another, but creates a moment where another can see the possibility seeking help and support with others.
13. Companionship training includes an understanding of crisis and emergency and an encouragement to call on community resources for consultation and assistance.
14. Companionship is part of the life of a caring congregation, which includes also knowledgeable religious leaders, a mental health team and an ongoing relationship with mental health neighbors and resources in the community.
15. Local companionship groups are encouraged to connect with companions in other congregations in their neighborhood and in congregations of their spiritual tradition.
16. Pathways to Promise, a national interfaith mental health education organization provides a range of companionship resources including power point training presentations, printed resources, and a growing network of Pathways Regional Consultants who can help you develop companionship groups in your congregation.