

FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE

A Secure guide to Develop a Fraternal
Conversation



United States
Spiritist Council

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Prepared by: Jussara Korngold





**To be fraternal is to assist those who have no hope.
It is to unite oneself to the needy of body and soul.
It is to extend your hand to those who are falling from the abyss.
It is to inspire confidence and to transmit love.
It is to offer friendship without asking anything in return.
It is to give yourself to others without reserves and demands.
It is to maintain your thoughts in God and to transform your siblings
in the purpose of your life.
It is to feel in your heart the happiness of being and of making
someone happy.
It is to transform other's pain in one's own pain.
It is to reach the sky and to touch each of the stars
It is to walk through the pathways that will lead you to Peace.
It is, mainly, to know how to love.**

THE SPIRITIST CENTER AND THE SOCIETY



The main purpose of Spiritism is to offer assistance to those who seek guidance or relief for their sufferings. Quite often, these people come from other disappointing experiences and they seek Spiritism as a last resource for the solution of their problems and afflictions.

It is the role of the Spiritist Institution, through Fraternal Counseling, to have trained counselors who present an adequate profile for the task at hand, as well as, to set up the basis for a satisfactory performance of this pivotal spiritual activity.

The work requires much seriousness, discipline and love. It is noteworthy to realize the importance of this service in the Spiritist Center, due to the responsibility it represents, regarding the incarnate and discarnate Spirits, in order not to commit errors that may compromise Spiritism and in particularly harm the needed person send to us by God.

CONCEPT OF FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- It is the assistance that seeks through the open and fraternal dialogue to offer the person who comes to the Spiritist Center the opportunity to talk freely and in private character, about one's difficulties. The counselor will try to provide to the attendee the necessary guidance and motivation. If needed, the counselor can also offer some evangelical guidelines in order for the attendee to have a broader understanding of one's problems, and to indicate the most appropriate activities of the Spiritist Center according to the attendee's needs.

PURPOSES OF FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- 1. To encourage the attendees to present their problems with faith, patience, hope and balance;
- 2. To motivate in them the practice of fraternity and solidarity;
- 3. To provide in those deprived of hope, the desire to overcome the difficulties derived from the vicissitudes of life;
- 4. To provide consolation and spiritual comfort to the afflicted ones, with view to alleviate their pains;
- 5. To present the therapy of inner transformation as an essential resource to the assistance of the attendee;
- 6. To make a triage to direct the attendee to the fraternal counseling offered by the Spiritist Center.



It is important to remember that the majority of people, who seek for the services of the Spiritist Center for the first time, do that in search of assistance for oneself or for others. Few are those who come due to curiosity, or to learn about Spiritism, but whatever the situation may be, the Fraternal Counseling will always be an adequate recommendation.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- 1. It is intended for the people who come to the Spiritist Society seeking orientation, enlightenment and moral-spiritual help.
- 2. Whenever possible, it should be held in a separate room, away from the other activities of the Spiritist Society, preserving the necessary privacy, so that the afflictions and the problems of the assisted individuals can be kept private, as well as to avoid embarrassments that can impede the dialogue.
- 3. The furniture should consist of a small table, the basic books, such as “The Gospel According to Spiritism,” and “The Spirits Book,” and messages for distribution.
- 4. It is advisable to have available the addresses of other spiritist institutions, with their meeting schedules and activities, as well as other institutions that can be useful to the assisted.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- 5. It is also important to have a list of the basic spiritist books and other complementary books that are related to the type of assistance being provided, which can be suggested as an aid to achieve spiritual balance. In this case, the level of difficulty and knowledge of Spiritism of the assisted person should be taken into account.
- 6. Punctuality and assiduity should be observed in all tasks.
- 7. Arriving a few minutes in advance provides the opportunity for renewal and spiritual preparation.
- 8. Conversations should be avoided in the room before the beginning of the meeting, giving preference to silent readings.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- 9. There should be avoided the collection of contributions, donations or sales in the public meetings in order to avoid characterizing payment for benefits.
- 10. Manifestations of discarnates should be avoided in the public meetings, which will happen in private meetings for that end.
- 11. In the case of mediumistic manifestation on the part of the attendee, the counselor, with affection and firmness, will guide the entity and the medium, emphasizing the necessity of discipline.
- 12. On the day of the task, spiritual preparation is indispensable, through readings and prayer, but, most importantly, through the control of emotions.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- 13. Attacks, censorship or disrespectful comments to other religions should not be allowed.
- 14. The activities of this department should be planned in advance, by elaborating the program and schedule with dates and staff.
- 15. The tasks should be accomplished, as much as possible, in rotation or turns, so that all workers have the opportunity of learning through service.
- 16. All workers should be motivated to participate in the courses offered by the Spiritist Society.

GUIDELINES FOR THE FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- 17. Under no circumstance should the counselor interfere with the medical orientation indicating the interruption of medications and medical treatments, under the pretext of "spiritual" advice.
- 18. The counselor should take into consideration that not all problems are a consequence of spiritual attachment or mediumship, but rather that many are consequences of one's personality.
- 19. The counselors should meet periodically with the direction of the Spiritist Group to analyze the treated cases, besides studying ways for a more efficient performance in the work.

PREPARATION PRIOR TO THE FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE



- 1. The director and the workers of the Fraternal Assistance should be gathered, ready to begin the tasks, about fifteen minutes prior to the hour established for the public attendance.
- 2. Preparation: reading of evangelical lessons from a spiritist book. Some books, indicated as a suggestion, are the ones by the spirit Emmanuel, channeled by Francisco Cândido Xavier: “Our Daily Bread,” “Way, Truth and Life,” “Source of Life” and “The Vineyard of Light.” (3min.)
- 3. Prayer: It should be simple, clear, objective and concise, seeking harmony with the Spiritual Plan and the participants' harmonization. (2min.)
- 4. Public Assistance: During the time previously scheduled.
- 5. Final prayer: Simple and concise, of gratefulness and closing of the task. (2min)

PROFILE OF THE COUNSELOR



- One of the fundamental conditions required from the spiritist worker to become a counselor is the effort he or she is making regarding inner-transformation. It is essential that one possess moral condition, evangelical knowledge, maturity and discernment to deal with unusual and most diverse and sometimes surprising situations.
- Other requirements are:



- 1. High moral conduct;**
- 2. To love others;**
- 3. To have empathy for others;**
- 4. To have completed the preparatory courses on Spiritism;**
- 5. To be humble and aware of one's duties and limitations;**
- 6. To be indulgent;**
- 7. To maintain the habit of praying and studying the spiritist teachings;**
- 8. To participate in at least one public meeting per week;**
- 9. To be tolerant without connivance;**
- 10. To appreciate the contact with others and to know how to talk to people;**
- 11. To be responsible regarding one's commitments;**
- 12. To have discernment and shrewdness, indispensable for the performance of the task;**
- 13. To know how to listen;**
- 14. To be discrete; to have emotional balance and patience;**
- 15. To be integrated to the activities of the Spiritist Center and to know the various services offered by it.**

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



- 1- Be conscious of the responsibility, be prepared, and identify oneself with the task;
- 2- Be prepared for the task on the previous day, by being in harmony with the Spiritual Benefactors that help in the work, and by reading edifying materials;
- 3- Enter the room minutes before the beginning of the work, with elevated mental level;
- 4- Before giving any guidance, seek the support of the Higher Spirituality, opening the intuitive channels in order to receive the necessary inspiration and guidance;
- 5- Maintain a simple and kind behavior of fraternal energy; be humble and simple in speaking, in the gestures and attitudes, and in the way of getting dressed;

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



- 6- Have empathy (put oneself in the other's position) in order to better understand one's problems, involving the person in vibrations of peace and happiness;
- 7- Have good knowledge of Spiritism, high moral conduct and participation in the activities of the Spiritist Society;
- 8- Base the answers, information and enlightenment according to the Spiritist principles and the moral of the Gospel, avoiding to emit opinions of a personal character;
- 9- Remember that the task is to listen to the person being assisted, directing the dialogue towards the aspects that can be relevant in guiding the person in his/her difficulties, without being caught up in your own curiosity;
- 10- Pay close attention to what the attendee has to say, listening to him or her with kindness and interest, trying to inspire confidence and to encourage him or her to speak openly. This attitude will permit you to liberate the attendee from any tension or expectation, inducing him or her to confide on you;

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



- 11- Conduct the dialogue with objectivity and the adequate brevity according to each case, without however prolonging it excessively in respect to other people who are waiting for their time;
- 12- Avoid becoming emotionally involved with the problem, and attuning to the vibratory level of the assisted;
- 13- Avoid feeling shocked, judging, condemning (even intimately), or adopting attitude of prejudice, listening carefully, and maintaining charitable serenity and impartiality;
- 14- Maintain the necessary privacy about everything said or heard, in respect for the person's pain;
- 15- Don't think about your own problems, but rather focus on the greater problems of others;
- 16- Don't talk about negative personal experiences and avoid any statements that could provoke embarrassment or uneasiness;

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



- 17- Don't judge others' problems as being of lesser importance, but rather give to everyone the same attention and courtesy, understanding and fraternity.
- 18- Recognize your own limitations and be aware that it is not expected from you to solve others' problems, but rather to enlighten them according to the spiritist guidelines;
- 19- Be aware that, as a rule, the person who is there have already resorted to all forms of assistance and therapies and, in the majority of the cases, one is waiting for magical or miraculous solutions from Spiritism;
- 20- Talk with the assisted using simple, yet appropriate words, and always be fraternal, respectful and true, never displaying an air of pretense superiority, and assuming that you can solve their problems. Avoid trivial conversation, sterile discussions, and political, religious or evangelical disputes;

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



- 21- Maintain yourself in a neutral position regarding sentimental problems, due to the delicacy of the subject. However, you can recommend the patient to trust GOD, to listen to one's heart, to seek for peace, harmony and concord, to maintain mental discipline and to seek inspiration in prayer;
- 22- Do not promise any cure;
- 23- Do not give diagnosis nor give any revelations;
- 24- Do not send or direct people for mediumship meetings;
- 25- Do not criticize any religious affiliation or belief;
- 26- Motivate the attendee to make efforts towards self-healing and self-assistance, re-educating oneself and loving oneself;

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



- 27- Emphasize to the person that his/her own effort is fundamental in the process of recovering his/her inner balance; love, forgiveness, honesty and solidarity, as well as understanding and good work are the paths to balance and harmony, while hatred, envy, selfishness, pride and sadness are doors to derange and unbalance;
- 28- Explain that despite all efforts, ultimately one's will receive assistance according to one's own merit and personal effort. There are no privileged beings in God's eyes. Justice rules above all else, but it is always alleviated by the mercy of love;
- 29- Guide the assisted to the meetings of the Study of the Gospel and passes, whenever necessary, and also suggest the participation in groups of social work and study meetings on Spiritism;

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



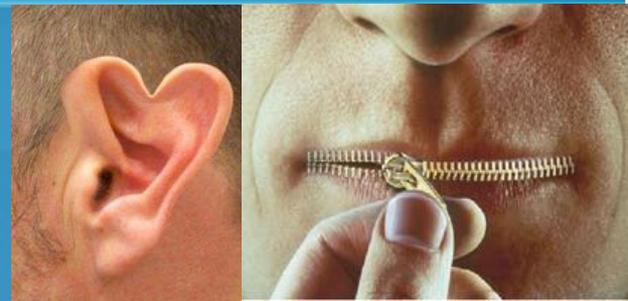
- 31- Guide the assisted, whenever possible, to receive passes and magnetized water, to pray, to read uplifting material, and to the practice of reading the Gospel at Home.
- 32- Avoid exceeding the time of 30 minutes per person, except when needed;
- 33- Receive the attendees, without preference, always in the place designated for this function, that is, the Spiritist Group;
- 34- Keep the door of the assistance room open, allowing easy access and facilitating in the possible need of help;
- 35- Schedule the return of the assisted person, if necessary, or leave to the person the option of doing it;

BEHAVIOR OF THE COUNSELOR



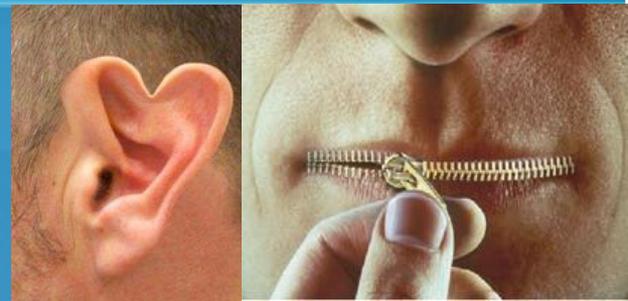
- 36- Seek the help of the meeting Coordinator and other workers of the group when assisting more complex cases;
- 37- Always try to bond the assisted person to Jesus, the Superior Spirits, and the Gospel, in order to avoid creating a personal dependence;
- 38- Orient the assisted person with regards to the different activities of the Spiritist Society and the disciplinary rules that direct the work.
- 39- Pay attention to the information contained in the attendee's file and fill it up correctly;
- 40- Close the work with a prayer of gratitude and to disconnect yourself from the problems brought by the attendees.

THE LISTENING OF THE COUNSELOR



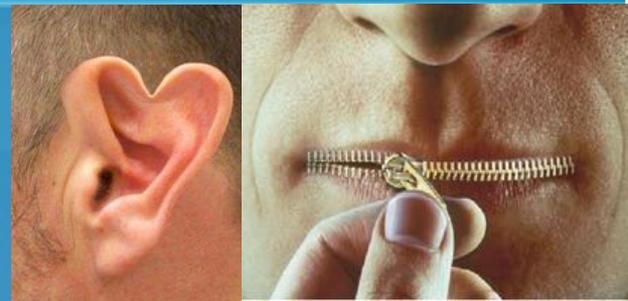
- Psychology, and mainly Psychoanalysis, offer science a more precise word to denominate the act "knowing to hear" others, that is listening. Freud, when tracing the basic rules that guide the psychoanalytic technique, formulated the concept of "floating listening, "that would be in synthesis, to create conditions so that a communication from Unconscious to Unconscious may be established, where the therapist, symbolically becomes "blind" "to see better" (to listen without selecting the material received and without judgment).
- This Freudian teaching being paraphrased represents perfectly well the "knowing to listen," or the "know how to listen" of the counselor. As the counselor disconnect from one's personal experiences, one becomes opened to love one's neighbor, and will better establish a communication from perispirit to perispirit, thus understanding the real needs of those who seek for the Fraternal Counseling at the Spiritist Center.

THE LISTENING OF THE COUNSELOR



- The listening transcends any physiological concept; it is not restricted to the cold communication between two beings. It tries to understand the other, not only through the said words, but also in the expression of the feelings that are quite often hidden in the space between the lines.
- Those who seek for Fraternal Counseling, as a rule, have lost their voices due to their many cries of request for assistance. One's voice becomes lost in the whirlwind of useless explanations; of the advice of the false prophets; in the therapeutic pharmacology (that only treat the matter); in the hopes instigated by the sellers of miracles, among others.

THE LISTENING OF THE COUNSELOR



- The counselor, when listening, has the duty (duty is the correct word, because this task represents an obligation on the part of those who talk to the brothers and sisters in need) to be humble and charitable, to forget about one's own problems, even if they seem to be more difficult than those presented by the attendee, one has to suffocate the pains and discouragements; the counselor should not judge the people who tell their misfortunes; one should never assume an air of superiority or to raise false expectations.
- The counselors are the instruments at the service of the Spiritual friends, therefore do not speak empty or vain words, but rather words that comfort and assist. Finally, let the attendee understand his or her situation before the Christ and that solutions are always within oneself, the inner transformation, associated with faith, will, and perseverance.



To listen is to shorten the way between the ear and the heart; in the words of Andre Luiz, in the book *Opiniao Espírita* "*Many are those who walk disoriented, due to the lack of tolerance. However, it is important to emphasize that they are not lacking words, what they lack is the silence of a friendly heart, with sufficient love to envelope their soul in the balsam of understanding. It is for this reason that they have no strength to struggle, like a sputtering engine without oil.*"



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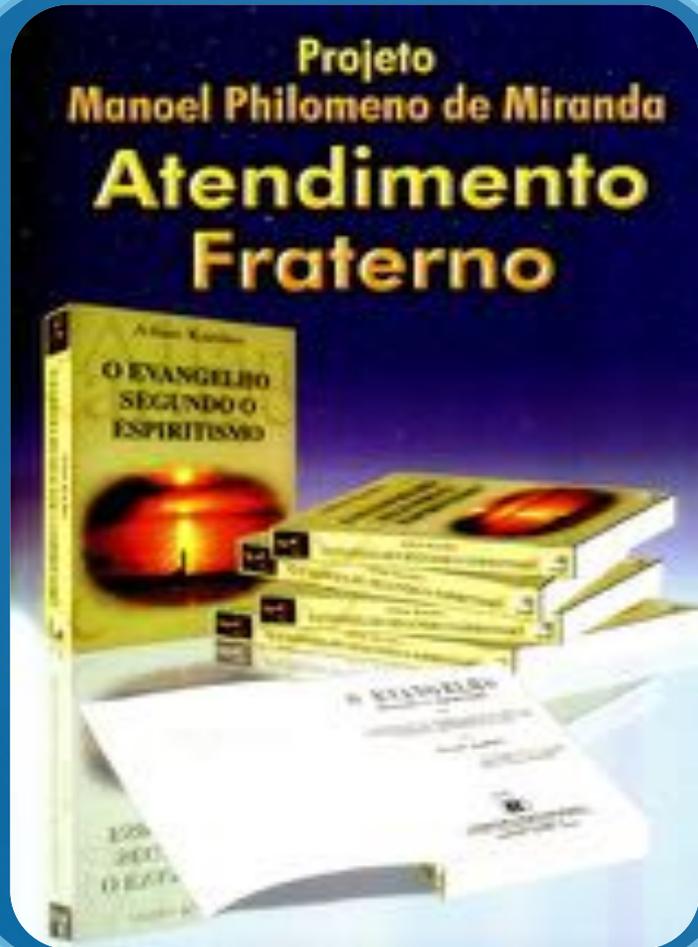
CASE STUDY



United States
Spiritist Council

Cases excerpted from the book :
FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE
Project Manoel Philomeno de Miranda

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Prepared by: Jussara Korngold



- "It is important to bear in mind during the fraternal assistance one of its guidelines: it is not up to us to induce or take any decision that should be the responsibility of the person assisted.
- We have to respect the free will of each individual, which is crucial in the process of evolution.
- We should offer the Spiritist teaching in order to clarify the misconceptions , thus offering alternative reflections that will help in the choice (individual and non-transferable). "



Dynamics

- Divide the class into small groups
- Distribute one case per group
- Each group will discuss the case and present a solution
- Open the discussion to all participants



CASO 3

PRESENTIMENT

João Neves da Rocha

- o **DESCRIPTION:** She was married, her husband became paraplegic and she had five children to raise. She was now facing a serious health problem: she had ovarian cancer and, in the last test a metastasis was detected. She was desperate, foreseeing the possibility of dying leaving her loved ones in economic difficulty. In addition, to aggravate her anxiety, she was living a moment of great sorrow and bitterness, for the next day, she would be undergoing surgery and she had a presentiment that she would not survive the surgery.

CASE 4 - MISTAKEN GUIDANCE

João Neves da Rocha

- o **DESCRIPTION:** Married, working outside the home, had three children and an alcoholic husband who beat her regularly. She attended one spiritual center where she participated in a study group of mediumship to educate her mediumistic faculty. Unable to continue the commitment, for failing to reconcile her household chores and professional ones with the mediumship course, she informed the group director that she had to leave, not knowing whether this action would be temporary or permanent. The answer was that she should develop her mediumship at whatever cost, otherwise she would be a person doomed to unhappiness. As a result, she start having distressing nightmares. She dreamed of her youngest daughter suffering various types of accidents. She requested guidance for her difficulties at home and also wanted to know if what she hear from the group director had any doctrinal support.

CASE 6

INDUCED TO ABORTION

Tânia Hupsel



- **DESCRIPTION:** 13 year old, pregnant, very poor, considering abortion. Low socioeconomic status, and without any knowledge of the Spiritism. Her boyfriend and her family wanted the abortion, and pressured her to agree. Her parents threatened her, saying that if she refused the abortion they would not help her, and would expel her from home.

CASO 7

COMMITMENT IN DANGER

Tânia Hupsel



- o **DESCRIPTION:** I do not know how to start. I am no longer withstanding my situation at home: my husband drinks and is filled with debt. He has already promised several times to stop drinking and he cannot. I'm desperate. My children are experiencing the entire problem, but I'm afraid to leave my husband and to complicate myself spiritually. I've been told it's my karma and I must endure it to the end. What should I do?

CASE 11
IT IS BLOCKED, BUT WANTS HELP
Tânia Hupsel



- **DESCRIPTION:** I am going through very difficult problems, but I wouldn't like to report them. They are very personal. I do not know why I came here, I was never very religious. Will I still receive some kind of help? "



If you have the possibility, come directly to me through the beautiful paths of prayer, but if you are overloaded to the point of not finding the emotional path to prayer, seek the assistance of a brother or sister and through them I will help you" (Jesus)