

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

FOLLOWING THE PATH OF MEISTER ECKHART TO TURN CHALLENGE INTO OPPORTUNITY

LEADER

Dr. Deidre Combs, **Combs and Company**

DESCRIPTION

Conflict can be messy, risky, and scary especially when it arises in our spiritual communities or personal lives. Meanwhile, without disruption our lives do not change nor improve. Although it is rarely welcomed, our challenges can be great blessings in disguise. During our time together, we will explore how to transform discord into not only new possibilities but also into doorways to a deepened spiritual life. Each day we will follow and contemplate the four phases of change along with medieval Christian mystic Meister Eckhart's paths in the spiritual journey. This workshop will include cross-cultural practices that support conflict resolution and adaptation to change. Since the class will meet during Lent, we will also creatively consider how the journey from Palm Sunday through Easter holds jewels of wisdom surrounding the Mystery within our trials.



Dr. Combs has taught practical cross-cultural approaches for resolving conflict for almost twenty years. Her original research harvests ubiquitous techniques from the world's great spiritual traditions for overcoming our difficulties and dealing with vexing people. Combs has previously taught in both masters of divinity and doctorate of ministry programs to share how we can find the gift in discord and lead well through change.

SCHEDULE/LOCATION/LODGING

Wed., March 16, 7:00 p.m. - Sat., March 19, 2016, 1:00 p.m. A schedule can be downloaded **HERE**. This class will be held at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (616 N. Highland Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206 / **Directions**). On-campus housing is available via reservation by calling 412-924-1397 or e-mailing **reception@pts.edu**.

OBJECTIVES

1. Assess our default elemental conflict styles and how to support progress regardless of our personality type;
2. Identify the four phases of change and specific skills to move through them;
3. Explore the stages of conflict transformation held in the Biblical stories of Job and Jesus' death and resurrection and these can support conflict resolution and our personal spiritual journeys; and
4. Uncover leadership strategies for developing positive attitudes and approaches around conflict within our spiritual communities

REGISTRATION

Registration Fee: \$365 Registration fee Includes beverage/snack breaks throughout each day, Thursday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch; all other meals are the participant's responsibility.

This program is being co-sponsored by Pittsburgh Pastoral Institute (PPI). PPI has been approved by NBCC as an approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6727. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credits are clearly identified. PPI is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs.

16 CEUs will be made available to Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Professional Counselors in Pennsylvania for attendance at the entire program. A \$10 fee for the CEUs will be assessed at the first evening of the program.

REQUIRED READING

The complete reading list for this class is below. Please do your best to read these books before your arrival. If you wish to be in the Spiritual Formation Certificate program, you should prepare a one-page reflection paper for each selected book; these will be collected Wednesday evening. If you do not plan to seek the certificate but are taking the class for personal enrichment, the reflection papers are not required but we strongly encourage you to read the texts to get as much as possible from the class time.

Required: *The Way of Conflict: Elemental Wisdom for Resolving Disputes and Transcending Differences* by Deidre Combs, New World Library, 2004.

Plus select **two of the following** that most appeal to you:

2. *Centering in Pottery, Poetry, and the Person* by Mary Caroline Richards, Wesleyan; 2 Revised edition, 1989. (for those interested in how the artistic path can support a conflict transformation mentality)
3. *Meditations with Meister Eckhart* by Matthew Fox, Bear & Company Publishing, 1983. (also contains a brief introduction to four spiritual paths found within Eckhart's work)
4. *The Way of Paradox: Spiritual Life as Taught by Meister Eckhart* by Cyprian Smith, Darton Longman and Todd, 2004. (another interpretation of Eckhart's wisdom)
5. *Thriving through Tough Times: Eight Cross-Cultural Strategies to Navigate Life's Ordeals* by Deidre Combs, Create Space Publishing Platform, 2012 (cross-cultural strategies for overcoming our great challenges or life battles)

PRESENTER



Dr. Deidre Combs' books share perennial wisdom from across the major religions to resolve conflict (*Way of Conflict*, *Worst Enemy*, *Best Teacher* and *Thriving Through Tough Times*). Over the past decade she has provided leadership development instruction to international State Department- and other foundation-sponsored fellows from just about every country around the world. Combs is a management consultant, executive coach, and mediator for clients including IBM, Agenda Ciudadana, and Landmine Survivors Network. She has taught and facilitated dialogues in locations as varied as Mexican and Puerto Rican universities, a church struggling to integrate their governing body's direction and at the Parliament of World Religions. Deidre also serves as a professor at Columbia University and Montana State University in intercultural leadership and conflict resolution. Combs holds a doctorate in ministry from The University of Creation Spirituality/Naropa where she studied with the Rev. Matthew Fox and eventually taught in their doctoral and masters programs. Deidre lives in Bozeman, Mont., with her husband and enjoys traveling to

see their three grown children.

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Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
616 North Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Phone: 412-362-5610



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