

THE ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE PROCESS OF TRAINING IN HELPING PROFESSIONS

A DAY CONFERENCE ORGANISED IN COOPERATION OF
PTF UK AND JABOK INSTITUTE, HTF UK, AND KTF UK

APRIL 4TH, 2017

JABOK INSTITUTE, SALMOVSKÁ 8, PRAHA 2.

The aim of the conference is to facilitate a mutual dialog between educators and practitioners about the extent in which the concept spirituality can contribute to meeting objectives which these professions tend to follow. Both the educators in the areas of theology, ethics, religious studies, psychology, sociology, social work and social pedagogy and the practitioners in helping professions will endeavour to find a good way how to grasp this concept using theological language and to look for a way in which it could lead to its effective and meaningful use in professional practice. Introductory papers and discussions can become an inspiration to further discussion about the use of this concept within these professions, and the whole conference a resource for further research.

The starting point of the discussion will be the concept of spirituality as we find it among educators and researchers and among the workers within social professions without an explicit link to Christianity. Effort will be given to further analysis of the concept through the perspective of Christian theology and to further explanation of the secular use of the concept spirituality in theological language. Three alternative contexts will be considered; the context of educators (theory), of those, who work with spirituality (various methods of the use of spirituality in professional practice), and of those, whom we work with (students, future practitioners, clients).

The need to revisit this theme comes from frequent use of the term spirituality among professionals and in documents linked to social professions. However, the use of the concept is seldom followed by some sort of explanation of how, and in which particular way, spirituality fits in within the *telos* of these professions or, indeed, any link to Christian theological discourse. Yet the use of spirituality might be still helpful. As an example; suppose we offer a widely recognised course in professional training in social work, which significantly draws upon theological reflection. Sufficiently deep concept of spirituality might contribute to general understanding of the meaning of such theologically loaded programme even among secularly minded students. Using the concept of spirituality it might be possible to communicate some features of justification of the course, which otherwise could not be to contemporary students and practitioners intelligible. The conference will search for socially and educationally strong meanings of the concept spirituality and its further theological connections.