

Four Ways One Goal by David Goodacre (Leighton Counselling Services,
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Reviewed by the Revd Neil Broadbent of the Sozein Trust, a member of CFPSS Council.

David Goodacre is an Anglican priest, a psychodynamic counsellor and a graduate of the world's oldest post-graduate pastoral studies course: the Birmingham DPS. He offers readers a complex and exciting insight into the work of spiritual counsellors. The Four Ways of the title refer to four famous Christians: Iulia de Beausobre who became Lady Julia Namier, Dag Hammarskjöld who was Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Revd Dr Martin Luther King Jr, and Angelo Roncalli better known, perhaps, as Pope John Paul XXIII.

This book is a phenomenological study of the spiritual journeys which these four underwent. The eight chapters analyzing the spiritual way are accompanied by a preface, an epilogue, glossary, further reading, notes, a potted biography of the author and an index. The River Tyne is used as an extended metaphor of the spiritual way. Alongside this is Jesus' spiritual journey as laid out in St Mark's gospel. Various models for life-stages are given from Erikson, Fowler and Wilbur. A threefold model for understanding stages along the way is given as 1; address and response, 2; celebration and 3; disciplined engagement.

Striking in their journeys is the deepening of their prayer lives and the degree of suffering they endured. The pivotal chapter five is about the Caesarea Philippi transition from early Christian life to the adult way of the cross. Equilibration between acting personally or politically is sensitively discussed. Goodacre reveals the relevance of spiritual journeying to all who offer psychological aid.

This is a learned work suitable for those who are called to in-depth spiritual companionship. Rich, clear and numerous are the jewels of spiritual understanding elucidated throughout.

It has taken the author all his life to produce this book: it may take much work to appreciate its wisdom; there is so much here to absorb. But the brief and beautiful meditation on spiritual companionship in the epilogue suggests the author is a fine practitioner of this art.