

SELF CARE AND DEVELOPMENT

GOAL:

To learn how to reflect on one's own health and growth and allow other people to be part of that process.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- a)
 - i) identify attributes of a healthy living and growing person.
 - ii) outline a variety of processes of self assessment.
 - iii) identify aspects of personal and occupational environment which affect health and growth
 - iv) describe the marks of a helpful support network.
- b)
 - i) complete a self inventory.
 - ii) give examples of factors/relationships that promote or impede health and growth.
 - iii) identify people who can provide them with personal support.
- c)
 - i) set personal goals to include strategies for dealing with attitudes, actions, environmental factors and relationships which affect personal growth and health.
 - ii) set up a personal network.

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What To Do

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| Step One | Understanding Self-care & Development | 2 hours |
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- 1) Read "Self Care" resource material from pages 4-5.
 - a) Look up a dictionary definition of the terms health, growth, life and development.
 - b) Spend a few minutes thinking about the terms health, growth, life and development. Look them up in a dictionary and then write a page (approximately 250-300 words) explaining, in your words, what defines a healthy growing person.

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| Step Two | The Whole Person | 3 hours |
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- 2) Read pages 6-17. "The Whole Person Model", & "Understanding Motivation".
 - a) Using the time chart on page 18, reflect on which areas of your life receive most energy and attention. Apply this exercise over at least a one week period.
 - b) Following the Whole Person Wheel concept, design your own WPW using a large piece of paper (A3 preferably). Illustrate how you see your WPW in terms of where the time and energy is spent, expanding the segments of those areas of your life which receive the most time and energy and diminishing those segments which currently do not receive as much time and attention. In addition to indicating the approximate time accorded each area of the self, describe the different activities which you include in each area and indicate how much time each activity requires on average per week.

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| Step Three | Environmental Factors | 4 hours |
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- 3) Read pages 18-20. "Where does the time go?", & "Environment".
 - a) Returning to your time chart of page 18, identify the areas which demand the most energy and time.
 - b) Think about which people give you energy and which ones drain your energy. Also consider what it is about these people that evokes such a response. Similarly think about the different factors in your personal and occupational environments which aid or impede you.
 - c)
 - i) Taking a large piece of paper draw a tree with many branches. On the different branches, write down the most empowering and helpful aspects of your personal and occupational environment in one colour, and then do likewise for the empowering relationships in your environments (in a different colour). After you have completed this, draw a vine that wraps around the tree (in a different colour yet again) and on the various leaves write down the factors and aspects that you have identified as obstacles in another colour with the final colour used to denote the relational aspects you most struggle with.
 - ii) In approximately 250 words explain what the benefits of this self-assessment have been for you personally.

- iii) Find two other forms of self-assessment tools (e.g. Myers Briggs) and in approximately 250 words, describe the benefits of each tool. (n.b. Share this with your mentor before submitting it to the Board).

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| Step Four | Support Structure | 4 hours |
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- 4) Read pages 21-22. "The Supportive Structure".
- a) Using either essay form, or Creative presentation (through use of pie chart graphics, collage or some other medium), illustrate the following:
- i) What constitutes a helpful support network?
 - ii) Identify the type of people who can provide you with personal support and describe the particular qualities they possess which you are seeking.
 - iii) Identify the specific people you will ideally have for a personal support network and describe the qualities and skills they will bring to such a network.

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| Step Five | Goal Setting & Strategy | 4 hours |
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- 5) Read pages 23-30. "Development", "Using Time Efficiently", "Looking Ahead", "Goal Setting", "Planning Ahead", & "Relaxation".
- a) Practice goal setting with the chart provided on page 27.
- b) Using the outline provided on pages 28-29, establish and outline 3 goals (which are designed to address your personal health and growth) for the next 3 months and illustrate your strategy following the criteria provided. To be presented either using the pages provided [28-29] or through other creative means, art, music, audio or video tape, etc. In either instance it must be clear to the board what your goals and reasons are. Share with mentor before submitting it to the Board.

Resource Material

*"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.
We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous,
talented and fabulous?
Actually, who are you not to be?
You are a child of God.
Your playing small doesn't serve the world.
There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that
other people won't feel insecure around you.
We were born to make manifest the glory of God
that is within us; it's in Everyone!
And as we let our light shine,
we unconsciously give other
people permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear,
our presence automatically liberates others!"*

(Source unknown, sometimes incorrectly attribute to Nelson Mandela.)

"For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." 2 Corinthians 6:16

WHY SELF-CARE?

I began work on this module over 9 months ago. It was due to be completed some 3 months ago and despite my best intentions, it wasn't ready. Why? I am a brother in a Roman Catholic religious order and one might presume that this would mean I have plenty of time to reflectively wander the gardens thinking of what to include in a module on self-care and development. No such luck!

In the months leading up to the deadline of this module, chaos struck my life. A member of my community was dying of cancer and his increasing decline in physical health required time and energy from myself and others in my community. This meant allowing increasing amounts of time to be with Michael as well as time to reflect, pray and sort out the emotional impact that comes with accompanying someone in their journey towards death. In addition to this, another member of my community burnt out and decided to take time out from our community. As he was a 'key player' in several of the ministries our community offers, an increased and unavoidable workload fell onto the remaining members of the community. These two experiences added considerable pressure and stress, physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually to my life which already included a full-time study load and some part-time counselling. I am not telling you this to impress upon you what a worthy martyr I am, but to emphasise the vital importance of self-care in ministry.

I had taken on a commitment in saying yes to preparing this module and commitments are things I take very seriously and am very reluctant to break. I was faced with a dilemma in the midst of chaos. With assignments overdue and exams looming, a loved one dying and another burnt out, I knew that something had to give - and it felt like it would be me. Fortunately I came to a decision to start seeing a counsellor at this time. Seeing this counsellor was to be a

powerful experience of God in my life. Not because he (the counsellor) was able to wave a 'Moses-type-staff' to part the waves of chaos away from me, but because he assisted me in exploring, at a deeper level, the journey of self-discovery. Initially he helped me to effect some 'prioritising' tools in my life. I knew something/s had to give before I did but I was so bound in the sense of duty and commitment that I couldn't see anything which appeared less important than the others.

My counsellor helped me to see and accept that the world was not going to stop, fall over or condemn me because I had to postpone or cancel a few commitments. I came to a decision, in those early counselling sessions, to take a 3 month break from the counselling that I was doing for an agency and also to delay any work on this module. I also decided that I needed to be more assertive in maintaining my days off, even if this meant lower grades than I was accustomed to getting in my assignments. Ultimately I chose to believe that I had to put myself first at this time and to make my health and well-being paramount.

It wasn't easy arriving at that decision. The thought of having to say to people, "Sorry, I have to pull out of that commitment" or "Sorry, I won't have that project completed in time..." was challenging for me. I had to contend with the sense of failure and regret that I traditionally associated with a 'breach' of commitment. However, having decided what had to be reprioritised, I consequently felt lifted of a psychological burden which left me feeling relief, empowerment and a greater sense of hope and energy. I still had busy and emotionally demanding months ahead but I felt more able to constructively cope with it. I discovered that people were understanding and supportive of me in my decision to postpone things and that people actually appreciated my ability to look after myself. It would have been the ultimate irony to have burnt myself out trying to complete a module exhorting the importance of self care!

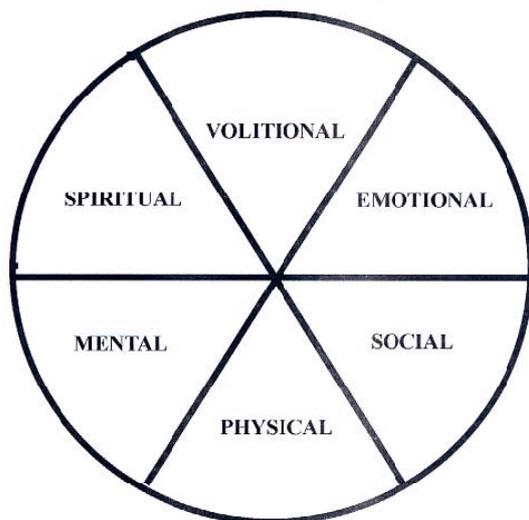
In the pages that follow, you will discover that I place great emphasis on the self. You may struggle with such an emphasis and, if so, that is okay. Our Judeo-Christian heritage has influenced a perspective of self that endorses notions of self-sacrifice along with concepts of duty and obligation. Our various cultures also contribute to these concepts, for Pakeha, the 'tall poppy' syndrome is a strong illustration of this - an emphasis on achieving and succeeding, yet quick to knock people off their perch (lest they get too big-headed). It is easy to fall into the trap of negating our own needs in order to be there for others but it is important to remember that our Christian call is to a wholeness of life (John 10:10) in God and we compromise our integrity as children of God when we escape the self by focussing exclusively on others. If you find yourself struggling with such an emphasis on self, stick with it. A holistically integrated person can offer much more in the way of love and Christian witness than the one who struggles to be a well of Christian love and life to others because they haven't placed enough importance on topping up their own well.

The Whole Person

What constitutes a whole person? Sharon Wegscheider, in her book *Another Chance: Hope and Health for the Alcoholic Family*, provides a helpful illustration of wholeness in the human person. Wegscheider suggests that we can see 6 key aspects or components to the human person and she presents these in the form of a pie chart illustration. To enhance and appreciate the image that Wegscheider is trying to portray, we need to use our imaginations, picturing the 'Whole Person Wheel' as a 3-dimensional construct. We do not function out of 6 separate spheres, all are inter-connected and inter-relate with each other.

The Whole Person Wheel (WPW) can be a helpful tool for us in assessing how balanced our lives are, particularly if we use it over a period of time. At any given moment our own wholeness wheel will not appear totally balanced in terms of equally sized segments. This is not to say that we are unbalanced or lacking, it is only natural that differing degrees of energy are exerted in each of the 6 areas of our being. An imbalance is noted when one sees two or three areas of our being consistently receiving the majority of our energy and time at the expense of other areas. Each of these 6 aspects of the self require attention if we are to journey towards that fulness of life which John's gospel exhorts. Take time now to read the following pages from Wegscheider's book which illustrates the WPW concept.

The Whole Person Wheel



"Another Chance: Hope & health for the alcoholic family"

by Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse.

CHAPTER 2: THE WHOLE-PERSON MODEL.

Whether we choose to work with one client or a whole family, our basic concern as counselors and therapists is the individual person. After all, the family's sole reason for being is the welfare of its individual members.

Early in our counseling careers, my husband, Don, and I sensed our need to have a clear picture of the healthy, fully functioning person if we were to help a client move toward becoming one. We discussed this question often, discovered that our mental pictures were very much alike, and began to develop what we call the "whole-person concept," a model that I find as effective with chemically dependent families as Don does with families in other kinds of stress. We use it both in assessing clients' problems and strengths, and in planning appropriate treatment. It has also proved to be a valuable tool for helping clients to understand themselves.

Very simply, this model shows that, just as crystals of a given compound have a certain number of facets, or flowers of a given species have a certain number of petals, so the human person has certain fundamental dimensions of being - I call them personal potentials. Within this framework, however, there is a great deal of room for individual variation, including the possibility that one or more dimensions may have failed to develop properly or may have been damaged after development.

In the beginning of our evolution as a separate species, mankind was no doubt dependent chiefly on his physical capacities, as most other mammals are. But through tens of thousands of years we have gradually developed other sides to ourselves, until today, in our present stage of evolution, we evidence six distinct personal potentials: physical, emotional, social, mental, spiritual, and volitional. To say that a creature possesses those six capacities is, in effect, to define it as human.

We like to picture the whole person geometrically as a circle - long recognised by students of myths and dreams as a symbol of wholeness. In our model the circle is made up of six separate and equally important segments. When any one is incomplete or damaged, the entire circle loses its integrity.

In order to keep the model simple, and therefore useful, we have limited it to the structure of the person. It does not show that structure in operation. Actually, each personal potential, though distinct, is in dynamic contact with every other, affecting and being affected constantly. If we imagine for a moment that the circle is a wheel, it becomes clear what a strong effect deformity in one segment can have on the functioning of the whole.

In any given real-life situation our feelings and behaviour are the result of several, or even all six, of the potentials interacting in various proportions. Altogether, they offer their possessor a rich variety of possibilities for relating to himself, other persons, his environment, and the universe. Let us take a closer look at each of them.

THE PHYSICAL POTENTIAL

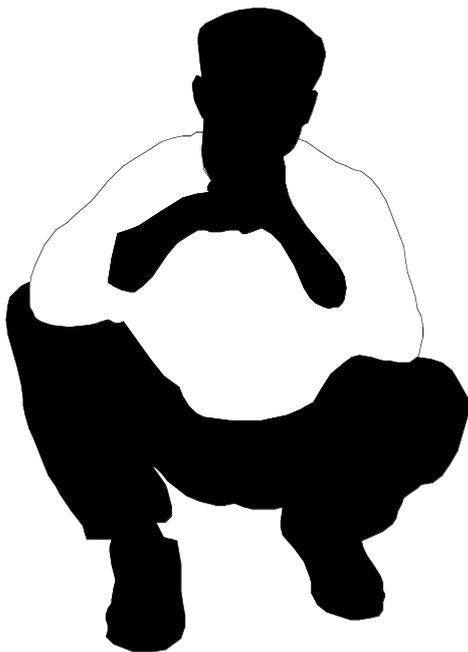
Each of us is born with a body. The one we have is uniquely our own, a set of possibilities that no other human being shares. It provides us with horizons of what we can experience and what we can accomplish physically if we choose.

Some minimal amount of physical potential is necessary for us simply to survive as living creatures, but its value goes far beyond that. It is our first line of contact with the world around us. It holds all of our receptors for perceiving what is out there, and all of our equipment for responding to what we find. It is the foundation of health, strength, grace, beauty, energy, sexuality, sensory awareness, communication, and much more.

All of our other potentials must rely on the physical to bring them the information they need and to translate their functioning into practical expression. But the physical potential is not totally independent either. One can see immediately how volitional power might affect health, or emotional power sensory awareness, or indeed all of the other potentials might affect, say beauty.

A well-developed physical potential can be our key to many of the satisfactions of life. Seeing a loved one's face, hearing beautiful music, making love, creating a work of art, enjoying nature - nearly every pleasurable experience has at least some measure of physical functioning involved. The body can perceive itself as well as the world around it, so it can monitor its own well-being and enjoy its own functioning, as in dancing or sports. It can even find satisfaction in the absence of functioning - in rest.

It is obvious, however, that pleasure is not the body's only potential. It can also be a source of pain. Which we experience depends in part, of course, on chance and our natural endowment. But no one is born without at least some positive potential, and most of us have far more than we ever tap. Usually, the pleasure or pain our bodies give us is a result of how we use what physical potential we have. When we experience pain, either physical or emotional, from our physical functioning, the chances are either that we have never developed our potential fully or that, once developed, it has been allowed to deteriorate.



Deterioration of all aspects of the physical potential is rarely seen so dramatically as in the victims of alcoholism. As their disease progresses, the accompanying stress brings about a slow erosion of the physical potential, not only of the victim but of the entire family. (This is in addition to the devastating pharmacological effects of the chemical on the victim.) To the observant professional, illness, overweight, and other physical symptoms in any of the members are warning signals that dependency may exist somewhere in the family. Conversely, when treatment is underway, the physical potential can be used as a base for restoring some of the personal satisfactions that have been lacking in these people's lives for so long.

THE EMOTIONAL POTENTIAL

Developing the emotional potential, unlike the physical, calls for no nurturing, no practice. The whole range of emotions springs naturally in each of, giving life zest and flavor. We have only to allow them, whatever they may be, to rise into the full light of consciousness and then use them in positive healthy ways. Simple as that may sound, it turns out to be no easy matter.

Emotion is just another word for feelings - our inner response to both inner and outer events. We all have feelings; any person who acts as if he did not, seems to us little more than a robot. The popular student, the successful salesman, the beloved friend are all likely to be people who are at ease with their emotions, neither hiding them nor being controlled by them.

However they may admire another who responds to them with feeling, many people nevertheless find their own emotions a source of fear. Not knowing how else to handle them, they resort to pretending their feelings do not exist. This ostrich-like solution would not work for long if the game had to be played continuously at a conscious level. But, as every therapist knows so well, the human unconscious learns quickly how to block uncomfortable emotions before they ever appear on the screen of conscious awareness. Thus the game goes on and sometimes even appears to succeed - but the cost of playing is high.

Feelings, honestly felt, give life its pulse and color. They allow that part of ourselves that we experience as human to reach out and relate dynamically to the material world and the humanity of those around us. Being in touch with them is the most reliable barometer of our personal reality at any given moment, opening us to valuable, intuitive insights. Directly expressed, feelings give us credibility, let others know where they stand with us, and generally inspire trust. Responsibly expressed, they make others feel safe, knowing that our emotions will neither be allowed to run wild nor be bottled up until they explode. The emotional potential, thus channelled and harnessed, can provide an ever-flowing wellspring of energy to power the action that will convert our life choices into realities.

All these gifts are lost to the person who refuses to risk facing his feelings. Furthermore, he must invest great amounts of energy in restraining the natural pressure of emotions to make themselves manifest. Part of his fear lies in the pain that experiencing certain feelings can bring; he does not realize that the pain caused by not experiencing them is far worse. Part of it lies in a belief that certain feelings are bad and that he is bad to feel them; he does not realize that all feelings are healthy and that only the way one expresses them can be "bad," or unhealthy. Yet another source of fear lies in his realization of the power of feelings and his doubts about his ability to control them. While this last fear may have some basis in reality, most people can, with help, find healthy ways to express any emotion, no matter how powerful. It is the counselor's job to provide that help.

Faced with a strong emotion, each of us has a number of choices in deciding how to respond. Some are healthy; some are not. Let us suppose for a moment that someone has publicly insulted me. Instantly I feel embarrassed, hurt, angry. My face flushes, my skin feels prickly, my teeth clench, there is a surge of energy in my arms and shoulders. I face the problem of how to respond. Some choices are to:

punch the insulter in the nose, releasing my anger but doing little about my hurt and possibly adding to my embarrassment.

insult him in return, which is merely punching him with words instead of fists.
say and do nothing now, but carry the anger around, nursing it and throwing small bits of it at the insulter whenever I have a chance.
deny all my unpleasant feelings and pretend that nothing has happened.

These are all unhealthy choices. They either make the situation worse by arousing the same unpleasant feelings in the other person, or they fail to give me an outlet for my own feelings and hence allow them to accumulate dangerously, ever ready to explode when a new situation brings the pressure of additional emotion.

But these are not my only alternatives. I also may choose to:

tell the insulter then and there how I feel, but without accusing him of anything or insulting him in return.
wait until a more appropriate time and then tell him how I feel.
refrain from either verbalizing or acting on my feelings, but find some other way to give vent to the energy they have aroused in me.

These are healthy choices. They acknowledge that both he and I have feelings, and they attempt to make us both as comfortable as possible. Which I choose in a given situation will depend upon the circumstances.

As people discover that they need not be helpless victims of their emotions, as they learn to make fewer of the unhealthy choices and more of the healthy ones, they begin to enjoy the rewards their emotional potential can bring.

THE SOCIAL POTENTIAL

None of us really lives alone. We may not share our home or apartment, but we all share a neighbourhood and a nation, an office or factory or classroom, a club or a church congregation. Some of our greatest problems lie in our contacts with other people, and so do some of our greatest joys. To be cut off from all contact with others, as in solitary confinement, is viewed by many people as torture.

We draw on the social potential in even our most superficial relationships - with our work associates, our butcher and our banker, all the various individuals in various roles whom we encounter casually in day-to-day living. If it is functioning well, it can make all those contacts more pleasant and effective. In our society considerable importance is given to developing this level of the social potential, to learning skills that make us attractive to others and enable us to manipulate life situations to our advantage. The emphasis is not so much on the quality of interchange as on what we can get from it.

Unfortunately, that focus does not teach - in fact, it discourages - qualities like honesty, openness, intimacy, compassion, or co-operation. Yet these are the aspects of the social potential that are absolutely essential to forming and deepening the more important relationships in our lives, relationships with spouses and children and parents, with friends and lovers, with all those who truly matter to us. As professionals, we are constantly seeing the result of this inability to form and maintain relationships. It shows up in the chemical dependency, divorce, depression, violence, and a host of other problems, all of which seem to be statistically on the increase.

But the picture is not totally black. In the last twenty years there has been a growing awareness among many people, particularly the young, that we must learn to live together more humanly if we are to survive - and that there is no time to lose. With the wise guidance



of people like Virginia Satir, we are beginning to learn.

As the social potential is neglected, however, as it is in alcoholic families, it also spirals - downward. Then the friendship and support of others who care, needed now more than ever, deteriorate rapidly until they all but disappear. Once lost, the social potential can be recovered only slowly, for of all the human potentials it is the most dependent on the others and must await some degree of recovery in them before it can be regained.

THE MENTAL POTENTIAL

Since Socrates, and probably long before, man has stood in awe of his own mind. It has often been exalted as the single gift that separates us from other animals. Even in societies that pay lip service to equality - whether democratic or communistic - the most lavish rewards are bestowed on those with the greatest mental potential. Knowing how unequally this potential is distributed at birth, we may understandably question whether placing so much external value on mental ability is fair. We cannot, however, disagree with the fact that the mind has immense internal value in helping the individual become a whole person.

Don Wegscheider, in his recent book *If Only My Family Understood Me*, has given a vivid description of the mental potential - or perhaps I should say "potentials", for it embodies several abilities. He calls it the "mental power."

The mental power has three aspects. One aspect is in the past, in the memory. A person's memory contains many hidden crannies, which may come to light as a new experience triggers a whole string of remembrances. A memory is useful not only for obvious reasons - like being at the right places at the right times and for remembering birthdays and anniversaries. Memories can also be a valuable teacher since memory, coupled with feeling, is experience, and experience is the best teacher of all.

The mental power also focuses on the present through ideas. A person makes connections with past facts and makes new learnings. The idea functions of the brain are still the marvel of electrochemical engineering. A person is able to formulate ideas, lay out plans, investigate alternatives, and organize priorities. That is much more complex than simply maintaining a file of information.

The third aspect of the mental power is in the future, in fantasy and imagination. The imagination, a world unto itself populated with all the creatures of one's dreams, enables a person to consider all alternatives, even the most bizarre. Fantasies enable a person to try on new behaviours. The imagination enables a person to try out new activities and explore possible consequences, to "rehearse" actions. The imagination lends color to logic, freedom to order.

The mental potential thus provides a bridge from past to future, making both real in the present. Our memories speak of the past, but they still live now, today. Our fantasies speak of the future, but those too we experience here and now today. In this way our mind enables both past and future to contribute to the important work of living, all of which must be done in the present.

In the whole person the mind interacts constantly with the other potentials - receiving the messages the body delivers and returning its own messages to the outer world; directing the emotions into safe and satisfying channels while enriching itself with their energy and spice;

moderating social interactions that they may be based in reality and conducted with wisdom; offering the spirit an entrance to the world and thereby extending itself where it otherwise could not go; giving the will a sound platform of fact and reason on which to stand and thus transforming thought into action.

THE SPIRITUAL POTENTIAL

Perhaps I should make clear at the outset what I mean by spiritual. Through the years the word has become so confused with religious that the two are often used as synonymous. I do not see them so. Webster's dictionary can help us begin to make a distinction: "Religious: relating to or manifesting faithful devotion to an acknowledged ultimate reality or deity." Every bona fide religion is strongly spiritual, but not all that is spiritual is religious. The dictionary gives less help in defining spiritual, so I will explain my own usage of the word.

For me, spirituality has its roots deep in our universal human need to understand the meaning of life. Where have we come from? Why are we here? Where does the journey lead? Does it continue after death? And is Someone orchestrating it all?

These questions have been burning in mankind's consciousness since long before he ever recorded his thoughts. They have spawned a thousand religions and cults, inspired poets and philosophers, and contributed to the inquisitive itch that has pushed science deeper and deeper into the physical mysteries of the universe. However an individual may ultimately answer them, the very questioning is spiritual.

In a fully developed person the spiritual potential can find expression in a wide variety of both inner and outer activities: meditation, prayer, discipline, organized religion, development of the higher Self, humanitarian service, commitment to causes fostering justice, health, human dignity, and respect for other parts of our planetary community - to name but a few. The possibilities for joy and satisfaction in such pursuits transcend anything else that the human potentials can offer.

But the spiritual potential does not forever drift among the clouds. It is also a very practical matter, for it is the source of our values. Every thought, experience, or action of our daily lives is shaped by the value system we hold. When that system is illuminated by a lively spiritual awareness, it can give even the most mundane aspects of our lives meaning, beauty, and nobility.

When the spiritual potential is not activated, the person sees little reason to exist. He tries one superficial satisfaction after another in his attempt to find a happiness that continues to elude him, because it is not there. Disillusioned, he develops symptoms that range from a vague restlessness and boredom, through fatigue, irritability, psychosomatic ailments, depression. Eventually, finding no reason for living, he may end it, either suddenly by suicide or gradually by addiction to work, food, or chemicals. The steady increase in all these slow forms of self-destruction warns us that spiritual malaise is reaching epidemic proportions in our time.

Those of us who work with alcoholics and their families are painfully aware of this problem. For them, spiritual anemia can be cause, effect, or both, interplaying with their primary disease to hasten the downward spiral. Much as we may wish to, there is no way a counselor can give them the spiritual richness they have lost or may never had. But we can at least tell them, in words and in our own way of being, that it can be had; that spiritual energy springs from within, and as long as we are alive, at least a tiny spark of it remains buried there

somewhere, waiting to be fanned. The wise men of all spiritual traditions assure us that everyone who sincerely tries to find it will succeed.

THE VOLITIONAL ASPECT

The volitional potential is the capacity for making choices. When it is informed and active, it can be a passport to freedom, our best hope for making our dreams come true. Centered in the will, it mobilizes the data, experience, values, and energy generated by all the other potentials and puts them to work in the service of the whole person.

The healthy will effectively sets goal, ranks priorities, makes decisions, perseveres in the face of difficulty, and sustains effort until its goals are reached - or changed. I realize that the term willpower immediately makes many people feel guilty because of the moralistic meaning it was given in their childhood, but it is hard to deny that a strong will can be our greatest ally in living life as we would have it be.

By strong, I do not mean rigid. A healthy will is flexible, always open to new input from the rest of the personality, ready to adapt and change as the situation changes. This is the quality that those voices from childhood did not allow for. (Refusing to conform without question to their unbending outside definition of what was good for us may well have been the sign of a healthy will.)

It is less risky, of course, to let someone else set the goals and make the decisions, and simply to follow their prescriptions. Many people do. But they do so at the cost of being a whole person, for the will that is not exercised in all its functions is not fully developed. "Prefabricated" choices tend to be dictated by abstract principles, performance standards, or someone else's wishes, rather than the goals of the individual for whom they are recommended. By contrast, the choices which a healthy will makes for itself are person-centered, made for one's own well-being as well as that of others.

Avoiding responsibility for our choices might be called volition by default - acting without deciding. There is also such a thing as volition by acceptance - deciding without acting. This can be a wise choice in certain circumstances. Sometimes, as in terminal illness, loss of a loved one, war, and other adversities, the events of life may leave us truly powerless to act in any way that would bring about an outcome we would want. At such times we might rage against our fate, turn off our feelings so we do not have to endure the sorrow, or simply give up and stop living, figuratively if not literally. But any of these courses would only prolong our pain. The choice we have that can eventually end it is to make the decision for acceptance; to admit the reality of our situation, our helplessness in the face of it, and our determination to make the best of it anyway and find some renewed meaning in life. The wisdom of acceptance has long been appreciated in AA. It is reflected in both the Twelve Steps and the Serenity Prayer: "Grant me the serenity to accept what I cannot change, courage to change what I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

WHOLENESS: THE ROOT OF SELF WORTH

Each of the personal potentials, then, as it is developed, brings its own rewards in both inner satisfaction and effective behaviour. But that is not all. When all six are healthily developed, the individual not only is whole, he feels whole. There is no dark corner of his personality where he feels inadequate, nothing that he feels he must build a protective wall of defenses to hide. Thus, as a synergistic bonus, he enjoys strong feelings of self-worth.

Self-worth is an essential ingredient - perhaps the essential ingredient - in personal well-being

and interpersonal harmony. When a person has a feeling of healthy self-worth, when he has no touchy areas of underdevelopment that he must shield from exposure to the outside world, he can be open. He can receive all messages from others and from his environment without blocking them, and he can respond honestly and spontaneously with messages of his own.

This does not mean, of course, that he is at the mercy of whatever winds may blow his way. He maintains some healthy defenses to protect his legitimate needs against unhealthy demands and assaults from without. The difference is that they are used to protect his integrity, not his weakness, and they are called into action only occasionally as the need presents itself, not erected as permanent walls.

And so we see that the strong self-worth, the hallmark of the whole person, does not make him egocentric, as one might mistakenly think. On the contrary, it frees him from preoccupation with himself and enables him to enter into a satisfying relationship with the rest of the universe.

When some of a person's potentials are damaged or under-developed, he cannot find within himself much justification for feelings of self-worth. To protect what fragile dignity he has left, he erects a wall of defenses against the critical attitude and hostile actions that he expects from the outside world - an expectation based a little on actuality and a lot on projecting onto others his own harsh view of himself. It is very hard for such a person to experience honest, intimate relationships with others. Their overtures have trouble reaching the real person behind the defenses, and what messages they get back from him seem indirect and carefully screened.

The situation of the chemically dependent person, and eventually the members of his family as well, is even worse. They feel so vulnerable that honest interchange is almost completely closed off; it is hard to find any openings in the wall at all. Here lies the first challenge to an alcoholism or family counselor: to penetrate that wall of defenses and help the stunted or eroded feeling of self-worth to grow enough so that the wall can be dismantled, block by

block, and communication re-established with the larger world.



Understanding Motivation

Before we can explore ways in which to care for and develop the self, it is important to examine the underlying currents of motivation that govern our patterns of behaviour. For anyone in a caring profession focused on assisting people in their life journey, words like compassion, service, and ministry assume foundational status in a dictionary of Christian definition. These are wonderful words, rich in the images and feelings they can evoke, but if they become common currency terms in our attitudes to work, they may become polluted through assuming the meanings of other terms such as duty, obligation and compulsion. One way of understanding our motivating reasons in ministry is to examine the difference between the concepts of compulsion and compassion and their effects on us.

COMPASSION.

The Gospels illustrate a figure of compassion in the person of Jesus. Compassion has its roots in empathy, the ability to share or appreciate another person's feelings as if they were your own. Observe that this is different to sympathy which implies feeling sorry for someone. Empathy, as a motivator for ministry is healthy in that it helps us to appreciate and begin to understand someone's position in terms of their feelings, whereas sympathy as a motivator to ministry tends to lead more to compulsive or reactive behaviour. Jesus, as a model of compassion, shows us the importance of self-care when he attempts to find a quiet place away from the crowds for himself and the disciples. Despite the many demands on Jesus to minister and lead, he sought to make time to be alone to rest, pray and, doubtless, to recreate (the wedding at Cana...). Certainly we can point to the numerous gospel accounts that show Jesus in action healing and teaching, but it would be naive to assume that simply because the gospel writers focus on the outward, public side of Jesus' life, there isn't a private side! The different friendships Jesus had are hinted at in the gospel accounts, we can be sure that Jesus had his social and relaxing moments as well as his prayerful and reflective ones in addition to his ministry. The single most emphasised commandment for Jesus is the Love commandment. Love as source of motivation is the key. When our ability to empathise with another person is coupled with a genuine love, we have the makings of compassion.

The person who, like Jesus, takes the time to replenish their own well through rest, prayer, reflection and recreative interests is the one who is more able to respond with compassion to others. Such a person is self aware with regard to their limits and boundaries and, furthermore, they are aware and ready to say no if they need to. They are prepared to spend time reflecting on their own feelings and, as a result, are better able to identify and respond to these feelings. Compassion is all about response, and the one who is able and willing to be self-compassionate is more likely to respond to another with healthy, compassionate support. The results of action that flows from compassionate behaviour are numerous. The person being ministered to experiences a greater sense of support and being understood, something that arises out of the minister's ability to empathise. This builds rapport, an ability to establish a meaningful connection between people. Ultimately, the person who responds out of compassion imparts a more realistic expression of love and comfort than someone who feels compelled or driven to react in a 'loving' way.

Finally, it should make sense that the minister who is able to care for themselves is better equipped to help others in learning how to care for themselves.



COMPASSION DISTORTED.

It can be difficult to clearly distinguish between compassionate and compulsive motives. A few terms which can help us to make such distinctions are duty and obligation.

Duty and obligation are concepts that rely heavily on 'shoulds' and 'oughts', i.e. "you should attend the evening service as well as the morning service..." or "I should go pay a visit to Lynette to see how she's getting on". There is a time and place for these things but the point to observe is that our lives, as Christian ministers, will not be nourishing, enjoyable or empowering if we are driven by shoulds. Terms like responsibility and commitment are also related to the family of duty and obligation and while they are concepts to be taken seriously, we also need to be sufficiently aware of our own needs to know when commitments and obligations have to be re-negotiated. This is not to suggest that we see these terms as unimportant or powerless, we ideally accord them a positive intention, but we must learn to acknowledge when our needs have to come first in order to honour the self.

Guilt is a word that can exert much power over us. Guilt is a necessary part of our conscious informing us when we have erred and need to make amends with ourself and others. Unfortunately we have come to let guilt have a far bigger ball park to play in than it actually requires. Guilt in the form of self-beration and put-downs often leads to lowered self-esteem through needless and destructive self criticism. When an over-active guilt pattern teams up with players like duty and obligation, you can be sure who is going to be running the show and lovely words like compassion and Christian service merely become camouflage for a motivation driven by the 'should team'!

When the 'should team' have control of the steering wheel for long enough, other less popular words like burn-out, stress, breakdown, addiction and depression can become reality. Ultimately these are the results of operating out of a compulsed behaviour pattern, reacting to the pressures and demands of ministry and life. When I found myself in a period of chaos earlier this year I reacted by operating out of a 'should' complex. "I should have started the module earlier." "I shouldn't have taken on 4 papers this semester..." and so the list goes on. Self-care and development requires that we be attuned to our whole self so that we can be aware when we are functioning more in reaction to shoulds than to our desires and the call of God. In caring professions it is hard not to fall into feeling compelled to do this and that and often a lack of clear boundaries adds to this. One very real danger that can result from not paying close enough attention to hearing and meeting our needs is the potential for addictive behaviour. Our society tends to think of addiction only in terms of alcohol, drugs and increasingly, gambling. However, addictive behaviour extends to all manner of things and you may be surprised to discover that spiritualities for coping with addictions are the fastest growing spirituality type in the world today. Addictions to substances, food, dieting, work, sex, and relationships are just a few examples. Addictive behaviour develops as the result of suppressed or denied feelings in a person. Being a workaholic for the church is no less an addiction than the person who copes via the bottle, ultimately it is a way of coping with an imbalanced wheel.



BALANCING THE WHEEL

Balancing the wheel is another way to look at how we might go about loving ourself. Loving the self is not contrary to Christianity - it is a foundation point. Our love for others is all the more real and honest when it comes from a self-loving and honouring base. How then are we to regard concepts such as commitment and responsibility? "If I'm not falling apart under stress, then what is the problem", you may say. The problem is that taking care of the self and developing the self requires reflective and proactive initiative. Stress has a way of growing and we tend to adjust our lifestyle and workload to keep up with it, after all, we don't wish to look like we're not pulling our weight, do we?! Sadly, addictive behaviour, burnout and breakdowns are all too real possibilities for people in caring professions. Self care means 'checking in' with the self regularly to ensure all needs are being met and balance maintained.

The areas you will be encouraged to explore in this module will include time-management, prioritising, contracting, delegating, boundaries, relaxation and time-out, and learning to say no!

Let's now see where your time goes! This next exercise will require the use of your diary and a period of time to assess where your time and energy is spent. Using the chart on page 18, reflect on and illustrate where your time goes on a daily, weekly, and monthly scale. Do this exercise before embarking on the task below.



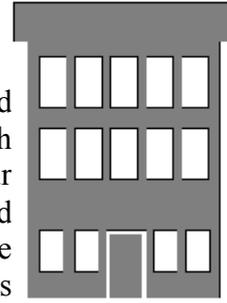
Where Does the Time Go?

| | Mental | Spiritual | Volitional | Physical | Social | Emotional |
|--------------|--------|-----------|------------|----------|--------|-----------|
| Day 1 | | | | | | |
| Day 2 | | | | | | |
| Day 3 | | | | | | |
| Day 4 | | | | | | |
| Day 5 | | | | | | |
| Day 6 | | | | | | |
| Day 7 | | | | | | |

Use this chart to record each activity of your day, including the minor details. You will need to spend some time thinking about which segment each of your activities fits into. A suggestion to get you started, is to write down all your task names (family life, friends, work, exercise, prayer, etc.) and then colour code them according to the six segments of the WPW. Some areas will overlap somewhat but try, as much as possible, to assign each task to one category. If you find volitional a difficult segment to ascribe activities to, simply assign anything such as time spent thinking about a decision to be made, or journalling time if this has assisted you in coming to a decision. Note that this is for recording your actual time spent, not how you planned to spend it! Once you have monitored a week, try drawing up another chart yourself, using a month as the time period and noting the key activities of each day. These would include work and work related tasks, hours of sleep (physical), time with friends/family, social time, time by yourself, prayer/reflection time, development time (courses, reading, workshops, DIYM), exercise and so on. If possible, expand this exercise to include 2 or three months. It is worth noting that the Programme Planning module has excellent material on time management along with techniques and exercises to try.

Environment

PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF ENVIRONMENT



One's environment plays a significant part in the health and wholeness of the individual. Environment contains factors which affect us either adversely or positively. Being aware of how your environment impacts on you is an important part of self-care and development. Nobody's personal or occupational environments are obstacle free. If I look at my occupational and personal environments I can name one rather big obstacle immediately - I live in the place where I carry out much of my ministry. I find the regular interruptions from the phone and visitors, to our centre, to be frustrating at times, particularly when another member of my community is supposed to be looking after those ministries at that time.

Interruptions are at the very heart of what we do. As one friend of mine is apt to quote, 'I used to curse the interruptions to my ministry until I realised that they were my ministry!' . There is some truth in this saying but it is important that we understand our environment well



enough to know how and where to set limits and boundaries. After all, we would fail to be effective ministers if we went through life cancelling appointments, counselling sessions, church services and special events, all because we dropped everything to attend yet another interruption. The one key thing that prevents this from becoming reality is prioritising. Some of these physical factors are things such as the telephone, unsuitable office space, limited access to computer and other necessary resources, lack of privacy for one-to-one chats with people, just to name a few factors. To identify the physical factors

in your environment which impede your ministry and personal well-being, reflect on the following questions.

Review several of the tasks you noted when you did the time chart and consider:

- Which activities did you struggle with or feel a sense of resistance to?
- What do you least enjoy about those tasks?
- Is there anything to do with the physical environment that might be an issue?
- What might make things easier?

These tend to be the more inanimate aspects of our environment (e.g. buildings, etc.). Now we will take a look at the more animate aspects of our environment.

RELATIONSHIP FACTORS IN ENVIRONMENT.

Consider also, the way in which relationships are a part of your environments. Are there people in your environment who draw energy from you rather than give it? Are there times when you inwardly groan as you see that person who challenges you to call on all your prayer and will-power in order to be pleasant and supportive? Ministry entails compassion, but it also requires the compassionate to show their own being the same courtesy. We place value on each aspect of our self and we place value on the activities we involve ourselves in. We rank things in order of their importance as we perceive it, time and deadlines become a

part of the equation and so do the personalities of the other people involved. Unfortunately, a common trap is to let the value accorded self slip and take second place to the other tasks we're involved in. Identifying then, the aspects of your environment that impede you and those which can be utilised to safe-guard and enhance you is important. Spend some time thinking on the following questions before beginning the next task.

Who are the people in your life who give you energy, are a support to you, affirm and nurture you?

Who are those who drain your energies or leave you feeling irritable or down?

What is it about each of these groupings of people that either energises or de-energises you?

Identify the factors implicit to each person which serve to empower or disempower you.



The Supportive Structure

Having identified the supportive factors of your environment and relationships in addition to the limiting aspects in these areas, you will now be in a better position to discern the marks of a helpful support network. Recognising these helpful factors, you may be able to name specific people whom you perceive as being ideal supports to you. Hopefully you can identify other areas of potential support in the form of resources and places, i.e. learning centres or support groups (e.g. women's/men's groups, book club groups, peer minister groups, etc.) which are already in your area. These people and places are what can constitute a helpful support network for you personally.

Such a network will include people with particular gifts and skills who have an understanding of your ministry context and can be a support for you when called upon. The people in your support network will ideally be able to guide you towards helpful resources in the form of courses, literature and other materials, and specialist people for particular needs or topics. The people who make up a support network are not super-ministers who know everything and everyone, but through having several, wisely-chosen people in your network, will have a combined ability to offer broad support.

WHO CAN BE PART OF AN S.N



Choosing people for your support network is the next step and will require some reflection and serious thought. Some of the potential roles within a SN could include the following:

Supervisor - someone with experience in ministry and pastoral work whose role includes assisting you in being an effective minister through self-care, accountability and education. For a more in depth explanation of supervision, refer to the Working Safe module.

Spiritual Director - someone whose role is to assist you in exploring and deepening awareness and understanding in your faith journey. The Personal Spirituality module explores this role.

Counsellor/Psychotherapist - can be seen to overlap with supervision in some instances, but generally a therapist can help you explore specific issues in your life.

Advocate - the person in this role is one who is able to put you in touch with the resources you need. That is, they have a greater understanding of where to look for things in the system, both in church and societal structures. e.g. They will ideally be able to tell you who to approach, and the best way to go about, seeking a grant, etc. This may include an understanding of legal processes and issues as they pertain to you.

Buddy - essentially someone you are able to connect with to share similar experiences and support. This can be a form of peer ministry or it might be with someone of a different age who also does, or has done, a similar ministry to yours.

Gym Instructor, Homeopath, Dietician... all health associated professionals can assist you in caring for your physical well-being.

IN CONCLUSION

It is essential that you feel comfortable with the people in your SN, so your ability to feel at ease with these people will be a factor in your choice. A SN is more than simply a compassionate listening ear as you will be calling on individuals within it for specific advice or assistance. With this in mind, note the main features of your ministry, with emphasis placed on those areas of your ministry which you perceive to be your weakest points. Such features might include finance, music, creative planning, organisational skills, drama, administration, counselling, legal knowledge and so on. What are the areas of your ministry and personal life which you would most appreciate support and encouragement in and who might be the people to assist you in these?

Returning once again to your WPW, spend some time reflecting on what activities and which people offer energy and nourishment to each of the six areas of your WPW. Specifically, what activities, which people and what situations and environments do you derive the most pleasure and relaxation from. Naming what is stress-free is often a good starting point for this exercise. For example you might write down 'walking in the park', 'enjoying a massage', 'swimming' or 'going tramping' alongside the 'physical' segment. For the 'emotional' segment you might list 'journalling', 'talking with a good friend', or 'creating a poem, picture or piece of music'. As you list your features and people, also endeavour to define what it is about these people and activities that you most appreciate. Once you have completed the above activity, and considering the thoughts raised regarding your ministry, reflect on what it is that defines a helpful support network for you.

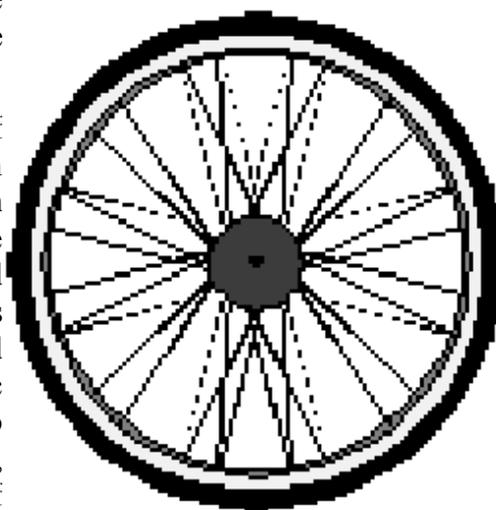


Development

Identifying the different aspects of the self (WPW), what nourishes each part and what impedes or drains energy from each part was our starting point in this module. In recognising these areas of the self, we then moved into exploring and naming the factors and relationships in our personal and occupational environments which similarly empower or adversely affect us.

Establishing a personal support network was the next area explored. Now we come to the stage of explicitly naming goals of personal development for the future. Ideally, these goals will take all areas of the WPW into account so that the whole self benefits from any actions embarked upon in the name of 'ongoing development'. What exactly do we mean by development? Development, when used in reference to the human person, describes the gradual growth or formation of that person. Development assumes measures taken that will enhance and improve that person's quality and appreciation of life along with an increased ability to encounter and engage with different people, situations and objects. Human development seeks health, wholeness and meaning in all aspects of the human person. Using our WPW image, that means attending to the ongoing formation of each and every part of the wheel.

Now that you have identified a variety of environmental factors and relationships which empower or impede you, think about the health and growth areas of your life (WPW) which have been neglected in recent months (or longer) and reflect on possible ways to nourish these aspects of the self. This will involve naming activities and strategies that will attend to and nurture specific segments of the wheel. In doing so you will also benefit from anticipating any potential obstacles, in the form of relational factors (e.g. attitudes of others), interruptions, and environmental factors



(telephone, visitors, etc;) which might feature and therefore inhibit the process of ongoing development. How will you deal with obstacles? What other aspects of your self do you need to strengthen in order to look after yourself? e.g. assertiveness, ability to say 'No' and stand by that, or the willingness to make alternative arrangements. On the following pages you will find material which can assist you in managing time as well as goal setting strategies for development whilst also dealing with potential obstacles.

Using Time Efficiently

Your 'Tree and Vine' exercise will have helped you identify the helpful as well as the hindering factors and relational aspects of your environment. When viewed alongside your WPW and time charts which show where the bulk of your time and energy goes, you can begin to appreciate the areas which call for more attention and balancing. The challenge now lies in how you go about creating the time and space to balance the wheel. Wishing for several extra hours in the day is often the catch-cry muttered by busy people, but this is not possible and there are easier, more realistic and achievable measures which can be applied.

SOME STRATEGIES

A few simple strategies need to be kept in mind and built into our frame of thinking.



Expect the unexpected. Ministry, indeed our lives, rarely go exactly as we expect it to, and if you keep a tight timetable you will likely find that it often breaks down due to reasons beyond your control. It pays to assume that the unexpected will occur at various points in your day and week and being aware of this means allowing space in the schedule to allow for those 'unexpected' crises and interruptions that can't be ignored.



Keep Records. Keeping records of important things may sound like a time consuming task in itself but it does pay off. Meeting notes, memos, appointments, tasks to do and so on will be easier to address if you keep such records up to date in one folder. Plan regular time slots to look at this folder so that you can prioritise and set times to attend to each task. If you don't allow for structured time slots to do this, your folder will probably grow into an unmanageable mess.



Start on new tasks as soon as possible. This is certainly my biggest challenge, particularly regarding all those unattractive looking jobs. Attempt to start your day with the less attractive tasks, the sooner you get onto them and get them out of the way, the better you will feel and the sooner you are able to address other tasks without the extra baggage of guilt that comes from knowing you're putting off those unpleasant tasks. Consider rewarding yourself or making contracts with yourself, e.g. I'll give myself a coffee break outside when I've attended to those first unpleasant tasks. Be careful not to fall into the trap of believing you need the 'right amount of time' to address a particular job. Regardless of how long you perceive the job will take, commit yourself to working on it for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes you can reassess, deciding where your energy lies and whether you wish to continue on for another 10 minutes. This sort of attitude will help you to get past the initial inertia or procrastination tendency by helping you make a start, even if only for an initial period of 5 or 10 minutes. It is not wise to use large chunks of time in this form of contract as you risk being put off again. This is a good technique to apply to any job regardless of its size.



Use a 'Reminder' system. A list which outlines the planned tasks and activities for the day can be helpful, especially if you prioritise the tasks on the list, i.e. A = jobs that have to be done today, B = jobs that you would like to get done today, and C = jobs that would be a bonus to get done today if you end up with more time than planned. You can use numbers to indicate priority within those categories, e.g. A1, A2, B, C1, C2, C3...

However be careful that you don't become a slave to your list as it is intended as a reminder and a guide. Once again it pays to schedule a regular time slot each week to look at the week ahead and ascertain where the biggest tasks lie, what the most important deadlines are and allow for flexible 'catch-up' spaces throughout the week.

(Adapted from, You & Stress: A Guide to Successful Living. by Bob Montgomery and Lynette Evans, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson Australia, 1984. p 166-168.

SAYING NO IS HEALTHY

Saying "No" can be a difficult thing to do for people immersed in a pastoral environment, hence the importance of including a section which explores the why's and how's of this

necessary skill. These following pointers will help you in further developing this skill.

An important starting point is to become increasingly aware of your own abilities and limits. Developing the ability to match your skills and ability with available time is crucial. This means that you need to allow ongoing reflective time to ensure that you remain aware of what you are realistically capable of in ministry.

Know the boundaries. Related to the first point, this requires that you ask the question, "Does this task really fall in my area of ministry, or are there other more appropriate people to call upon?" Of utmost importance is being aware of when you need to make a referral, something which the modules on Pastoral Care and Working Safe both explore.

Affirm and believe the philosophy that you are not indispensable. There are numerous other people who, although individually do not possess your unique mix of gifts and skills, are quite capable of keeping the world going. The world will not falter or crash if you say no to something. Personally, I discovered that my relationships with people improved the more I became more assertive in looking out for myself, because I was being more genuine with what I was offering them in the way of me!

Practice the art of delegation. This is closely related to the previous point as it builds on the recognition that others are fully capable of doing the task at hand. Learning how to delegate involves being observant of those around you and knowing who has skills in different areas. Delegation also serves to help others to increase their confidence by being trusted with a task and by having the opportunity to apply themselves to such a task. Delegation can mean fully handing over a task or responsibility, or it could include some form of supervision or support by way of you checking up on the person you have delegated to, showing an interest in them and the task. Use your discretion but challenge yourself to be trusting and not to 'hover' anxiously as this can be more time-consuming and draining than if you had undertaken the task yourself.

Saying no does not simply apply to declining new tasks, it can also be applied to present commitments you already have. For myself, learning to shed commitments was a healthy step in looking after myself. It was an added bonus to discover that people were very understanding and affirming of both my decision and ability to withdraw from certain commitments in order to be self-caring. People generally respect someone who knows their limits.

Looking Ahead

Reflect on your strengths and potential growth areas as revealed to you through the previous exercises, then using the following page as a guide, set some goals which address the areas needing enhancement. Think carefully through each goal, considering any possible implications and plan the strategy for making each goal come to fruition. Making use of the following pages as a recommended format, create a 3 month plan which includes the following features. Be realistic with your goals, don't set too many as you risk disappointment through not achieving some of them.

Remember to include contract and reward features as a way of providing some added incentive for yourself.

FEATURES:

- Goal/Objective to do with self care and/or development.
- What it is intended to address and achieve. (i.e. reason for setting it.)
- Steps to be taken/ Factors to be considered.
- Potential/known obstacles.
- Resources/people that can help me achieve the goal.
- Realistic timeframe. (Be realistic, but don't be pessimistic or sell yourself short!)
- Specific dates for each step and planned completion point/date.
- Reward/contract details.



GETTING STARTED.

Attempt to be as detailed as you can be in setting your goals and strategy for the 3 month period ahead, the more precise you are in your details the more likely you are to appreciate the time requirements entailed. Before you begin this final exercise, read the material on page 18 as it requires an important place in your 3 month plan. Your goals might include setting up a personal support network or something else which requires the involvement and/or assent of other people. In such instances, allow and plan for a more flexible timeframe. Finding the ideal people who are also able and willing sometimes takes more than one go. Don't take this as rejection, it simply means you have approached someone who is aware enough of their own capabilities, limits, and needs.

Goal Setting

DEFINE GOAL:

(What is the intended objective? What do I hope to achieve?)

REQUIREMENTS:

(What is required in the way of resources, environment and other people?)

PREPARATION:

(What steps/tasks need to be performed to enable completion of the objective?)

TIME FRAME:

(A- over what period of time, i.e when will I achieve the goal by?)

(B- how much time will I need to set aside for each step?)

OBSTACLES:

(What are the known and possible obstacles and distractions?)

CLEARING THE PATH:

(What will I have to give up or say no to?)

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED:

(How will I know I've been successful?)

Planning Ahead

Current Commitments: (Include dates and preparation time/s required)

Areas of Imbalance: (Which parts of my WPW need attending and nurturing?)

Priority Area/s: (Which area/s do I most wish/feel the need to address?)

Goals/Objectives: (What are the specific goals I choose to set and intend to achieve?)

Goal One:

Goal Two:

Goal Three:

Reasons: (What do I hope to achieve through this goal? How will it holistically benefit me?)

Goal One:

Goal Two:

Goal Three:

People/Resources I can utilise: (Who/what might assist me in this goal?)

Goal One:

Goal Two:

Goal Three:

Steps to be taken & the accompanying time frame: (What are the various steps and measures I need to effect? When will each step happen?)

Goal One:

Goal Two:

Goal Three:

Rewards/Contract: (How will I affirm and celebrate my success?)

Goal One:

Goal Two:

Goal Three:

Relaxation

It is essential that we have adequate relaxation in our lives if we are to function well in all areas of our being. A suitable balance between work and play, exercise and rest, ministry and non-activity, is required if we are to maintain good health and wellness of being. When we live in a state of imbalance we are subjecting our body (at all levels) to tension that is not healthy or life-giving. If we are not allowing ourselves adequate relaxation, we are adding to imbalance in our being and we are certainly not looking after the gift God has blessed us with..

To achieve optimum health and well-being, we need to learn how to relax and also how to go about making time for relaxation in our lives. There are many books which give advice on this topic and, in some areas you can find courses and workshops which explore different techniques in the art of relaxation. It seems ludicrous to be stating what appears to be the obvious, yet our society emphasises an 'every minute counts' motto which often leaves one with a sense of guilt for taking time for oneself.

When relaxation skills are made part of the daily routines, people begin to benefit in a variety of ways. They find that they are better able to cope with their work, handle stress more effectively and healthily, be more tolerant in their outlook, respond more effectively and calmly to the 'unexpected', and experience improvements in their handling of relationships. Too many people suffer from stress today and its many effects (anxiety states, depression, physical illnesses). Relaxation is one of the most effective, yet often first neglected, ways of countering too much stress in your life.

It is important to learn how to let go of the pressures, expectations and stresses which are part and parcel of our daily baggage. Every day we need to give ourselves time out to unwind. Lying down listening to music or reading a book, doing a spot of gardening, immersing yourself in a favourite hobby, taking a walk in the park or garden, or simply watching the gold fish for 15 minutes, all these things can help us to break the tension and let go. These are small and seemingly insignificant but, if practised regularly and consistently, will help us cope better and will also affect how other people see us. When we are able to relax at regular intervals, we are further enabled in developing a more peaceful interior life and this is something that other people will perceive. When we are stressed and wound up, we give off negative vibes regardless of the smile we endeavour to wear.



In conclusion, self care and development is an ongoing process which requires constant attention and commitment. When you find you have achieved your goals, set new ones and build in regular opportunities to reflect on your WPW so that you can strive to maintain a healthy balance in your personal life and in your ministry. Tending to yourself is ultimately the greatest gift you can offer to others because, in addition to ensuring that you are replenishing your own well, you implicitly give others permission to do the same.

Recommended Reading

Included in this list are a variety of books ranging from practical self-help guides through to novels with theological potential. You may be aware of material not named here that you believe would be of assistance to others in the area of health and growth of the whole person. If so, please include your suggestions with the evaluation sheet.

Bridges, William, *Transitions: Making sense of life's changes*, USA: Wesley Publishing Company Inc., 1980.

Dewar, Francis, *Live for a Change: Discovering and using your gifts*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1989.

Dewar, Francis, *Invitations: God's calling for everyone*, London: SPCK, 1996.

Dewar, Francis, *Called or Collared: An authentic approach to Vocation*, London: SPCK, 1991.

Groff, Kent, *Active Spirituality: A guide for seekers and ministers*, New York: Alban Institute Publications, 1993.

Howatch, Susan, (Various novels which deal with such topics as limits, spiritual direction, etc.)

McDonald, Gordon, *Rebuilding your Spiritual Passion*.

Nouwen, Henri, *The Wounded Healer*

Rocks, (Ed), *Balancing Stress: A physical, mental & spiritual approach*, New York: Coleman Graphics, 1981.

Sanford, John, *Ministry Burnout*, New York: Paulist Press, 1982.

Smedes, Lewis, *Shame and Grace: Healing the shame that we don't deserve*, New York: Harper San Francisco, 1993.

