


Pastoral Skills Training Family Life Course

Lesson 8: Self-Care and Burnout

Student Guide

Lesson Objectives	
Identify the signs of pastoral burnout and other potential problems. <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Identify the elements of a pastoral self-assessment.○ Identify the steps to help prevent counselor burnout.	
Session 1: Presentation Webinar	
Student Readings	
<i>Clergy Burnout: A Self Psychology and Systems Perspective</i> (Olsen and Grosch)	08-Clergy-Burnout.pdf
<i>Countertransference and Burnout in Pastoral Counseling</i> (Wicks)	08-Countertransference-Burnout-Counseling.pdf
<i>Burnout Self-Inventory</i> (Freudenberger)	08-Burnout-self-inventory.doc
<i>When Helping Starts to Hurt</i> (Olsen and Grosch)	08-When-Helping-Starts-to-Hurt.pdf
Case Study	08-case-study.pdf
Session 2: Discussion Webinar	
A discussion of the assigned case study	

Self-Care and Burnout
Lesson 8



Pastoral Skills Training
Family Life Course
Phase 1
USACHCS

Self-care and Burnout

Objectives

- Identify the signs of counselor burnout and other potential problems.
- Identify the elements of a professional self-assessment.
- Identify the steps to help prevent counselor burnout.



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Self-care and Burnout

What Is Burnout?

- A continual pattern of expending energies without paying attention to personal limits
- A serious and widespread problem in all helping professions



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 **Self-care and Burnout** 

Burnout Vulnerability

- ▼ Those who work exclusively with very wounded and/or demanding persons.
- ▼ Those who work in circumstances of personal danger or perceived danger to their future, their family, or their career.
- ▼ Those who feel they are overworked.
- ▼ Those who feel they are being misused.
- ▼ Those who have a deep desire to protect people or help them find peace, but find they are not being successful.
- ▼ Those who have very high personal standards and thus are more sensitive to failure.



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Looking for Burnout Solutions

- ▼ Any theory of burnout prevention must take seriously the kind of person who becomes a pastor or counselor—and the unique complexities of providing pastoral care in the military. In addition to resolving the theological issues, part of this, undoubtedly, requires helping to simply find balance in life.
- ▼ If "relaxing" is seen as the only solution, then the underlying theological and cultural problems may remain, and often the individual becomes just as compulsive about leisure time activities as they have been about their work.



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 **Self-care and Burnout** 

Daily Burnout Prevention

- ▼ Some steps can be taken on a daily basis to prevent burnout. Realistic self-assessment
 - ▼ Include a variety of activities in your daily schedule.
 - ▼ Get sufficient rest.
 - ▼ Faithfully incorporate personal spiritual development practices into your daily schedule.
 - ▼ Stay connected with supportive friends.
 - ▼ Be assertive...know when to say no.
 - ▼ Get proper nourishment and exercise.



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 **Self-care and Burnout** 

Strategy for Preventing Burnout

- ▼ The following are long-term steps that contribute to burnout prevention.
 - ▼ Realistic self-assessment
 - ▼ Investigation of the impact of your family of origin
 - ▼ Utilizing supportive friends
 - ▼ Finding balance in your life



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Self-Assessment

- ▼ A continual assessment will include the following:
 - ▼ Assess how much enjoyment and satisfaction you get from your work
 - ▼ Assess the balance in your activities
 - ▼ Honestly assesses your personal relationship and family life
 - ▼ Honestly assesses your supportive friendships



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Family of Origin

- ▼ Perhaps as part of the self-assessment, or when the self-assessment fails to produce results, looking at your family of origin may be beneficial:
 - ▼ How did your family handle conflict?
 - ▼ What were the family values around work?
 - ▼ How did your family handle failure or struggles?
 - ▼ What secret messages did you get from your family?



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Love of Self

- ▼ The subject of narcissism is frequently misunderstood. The very idea of self-love strikes us as selfish and so we tend to overlook or disparage our need to be admired and our right to be proud.
- ▼ For many professional helpers, the real motivation is getting love, not giving it.
- ▼ In order to achieve balance and find satisfaction in love and work, we must accept our own need to be appreciated and admired, and then learn how to express it.



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Supportive Friendships

- ▼ Supportive friends are an important part of maintaining long-term health for pastors.
 - ▼ Friends can provide us with a caring, non-demanding listener.
 - ▼ Good friends are marked by an ability to keep confidences.
 - ▼ Helpful friends help us gain clarity in understanding our own reactions to certain constituents who may scare us, annoy us, attract us.
 - ▼ Supportive friendships are usually balanced. Friends take turns being listened to and listening in effective ways.
 - ▼ Bottom line: Pastors who care for people effectively for a long time are almost never "Lone Rangers."



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 **Self-care and Burnout** 

Balancing Love and Work and Play

- ▼ Life balance includes taking care of primary relationships, as well as finding time for one's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.
 - ▼ Physical exercise is preventive as long as it doesn't become a compulsion.
 - ▼ Staying healthy also means nurturing one's spiritual self.
 - ▼ Beware of the need to always hurry from one thing to the next.



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 Self-care and Burnout 

Discussion Questions

- ▼ How does burnout affect one's personal and professional life?
- ▼ What signs of potential burnout have you experienced in the past?
- ▼ Which of the steps for preventing burnout discussed here do you see as the easiest to implement? The most difficult?

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 Self-care and Burnout 

QUESTIONS?

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