

Pastoral Skills Training Family Life Course
 Lesson 8: Self-Care and Burnout
 Instructor Guide

Lesson Information	
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.
Class Time: Presentation	Approximately 1 hour
Class Time: Discussion	Approximately 1 hour
Lesson Materials	
Webinar Presentation	Page 2
Webinar Discussion	Page 8
PowerPoint Slides for Webinar Presentation	08-slides.ppt
Supporting Lesson Materials	
Student Guide	Student advance sheet containing the objectives of the lesson and the materials required for participation
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

	<p><i>When Helping Starts to Hurt</i> (Olsen and Grosch)</p> <p>08-When-Helping-Starts-to-Hurt.pdf</p>
	<p>Case Study</p> <p>08-case-study.pdf</p>

Webinar Presentation		
Title	Description	Slide Number
Objectives	<p>At the end of this presentation, you should be able to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the signs of counselor burnout and other potential problems. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the elements of a professional self-assessment. ○ Identify the steps to help prevent counselor burnout. 	Slide 2
What Is Burnout?	<p>Question: <i>What is burnout and what causes it?</i></p>	Slide 3
	<p>When a continual pattern ensues of expending energies without paying attention to personal limits, burnout occurs.</p> <p>Burnout is reaching epidemic proportions in the helping professions. It is an insidious and complex problem caused not by any one factor but by a combination of environmental and work circumstances, emptiness, lack of drive, and an exaggerated need to shore up the self at the expense of real communion with friends and family.</p>	
Burnout Vulnerability	<p>While all mental health professionals need to be aware of the potential for burnout, the following are particularly vulnerable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	Slide 4

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those who feel they are overworked, either as a result of too many people in need, or else too many responsibilities, whether they are specifically people-care responsibilities or simply administrative, pastoral, or staff requirements. • Those who feel they are being misused. Possibly feeling strongly motivated to work with people but who are prevented from doing so by too many administrative “paper work” tasks. • 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. 	
Looking for Burnout Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any theory of burnout prevention must take seriously the kind of person who becomes a pastor or counselor. Additionally, in the military chaplaincy, the theory must take into consideration the unique complexities of providing pastoral care in the military, helping pastors define their calling within the unique values of the Army. In addition to resolving the theological issues, part of this, undoubtedly, requires helping to simply find balance in life. • Sometimes this can be as easy as simply developing better time management, or recapturing the pursuit of relaxation activities outside of work (tennis, running, or some other hobby). However, 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. 	Slide 5
Daily Burnout Prevention	<p>Some steps can be taken on a daily basis to prevent burnout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a variety of activities in your daily schedule. • Get sufficient rest. • Faithfully incorporate personal spiritual development practices into your daily schedule. 	Slide 6

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay connected with supportive friends. • Maintain healthy boundaries. Know what is important to you and your boss, and know when to say no. • Take care of your body: get proper nourishment and exercise. 	
Strategy for Preventing Burnout	<p>The following are long-term steps that contribute to burnout prevention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic self-awareness • Investigation of the impact of your family of origin (Who are the ghosts whispering in your ear from your past? What are they telling you about what is important, and how much is “good enough”?) • Utilizing supportive friendships • Finding balance in your life 	Slide 7
Self-Assessment	<p>If burnout is to be prevented, professionals must learn to distinguish between normal tiredness or tension and the early signs of burnout. Ongoing self-assessment will help them recognize both the early stages of burnout and signs of their susceptibility to it. A continual assessment will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess how much enjoyment and satisfaction you get from your work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scale of 1-10: How happy are you in your job? ○ Notice: Do you dread going to work? ○ Notice: Do you fantasize about finding a new position or career? ○ Notice: Do you feel appreciated? • Assess the balance in your activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How much time do you spend in physical exercise each week? ○ How far are you from your ideal weight? ○ How is your relationship with your husband/wife? ○ How did you spend your last day off? 	Slide 8

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What was the last thing you did just for fun? ○ How did you spend your last vacation/leave? ● Honestly assess your personal relationship and family life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How is your relationship with your parents/children? ○ Are you (more or less) sexually satisfied? ○ How close do you feel with your spouse? ● Honestly assess your supportive friendships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who can you really talk to? Who do you really listen to among your peers? ○ Who (if anyone) counts on you? ○ Are the two above balanced? 	
Family of Origin	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How did your family handle conflict? How do you handle it now with your boss/subordinates/fellow staff members? ● What were the family values around work? ● How did your family handle failure or struggles? ● What secret messages did you get from your family? 	Slide 9
Love of Self	<p>Understanding your own need to be loved can help in assessing and preventing burn-out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 all too many professional helpers, the real motivation of their work is getting love, not giving it. ● In order to achieve balance and find satisfaction in love and work, we 	Slide 10

	<p>must accept our own need to be appreciated and admired, and then learn how to express it.</p>	
<p>Supportive Friendships</p>	<p>Supportive friends are an important part of maintaining long-term health for pastors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends can provide us with a caring, non-demanding listener who neither pathologizes nor minimizes our struggles. • Good friends are marked by an ability to keep confidences: Safety of your information. • Helpful friends help us gain clarity in understanding our own reactions to certain constituents who may scare us, annoy us, attract us. Friends help us to act appropriately in the face of each of these. Helping us to pastor well in the midst of challenging parishioners supports long-term pastoral effectiveness. • Friendships provide a place for understanding and unhooking from certain automatic responses programmed into us by our family of origin or long habits of action. • 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.” 	<p>Slide 11</p>
<p>Balancing Love and Work and Play</p>	<p>Life balance includes taking care of primary relationships, as well as finding time for one’s physical, emotional, and spiritual needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical exercise is a crucial part of healthy pasturing. Like any practice however, avoid becoming compulsive—everything in moderation. • Staying healthy also means nurturing one’s spiritual self. This varies from tradition to faith tradition. But it is present in virtually every religious tradition. Effective pastors are usually women and men of prayer, scripture, meditation, sacred activities, etc. • Slow down. Too much activity, regardless of the activity, is often a sign 	<p>Slide 12</p>

	of trouble. Beware of the need to always hurry from one thing to the next.	
Discussion Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? 	Slide 13
Ask for questions.		
Give reading and case study assignments to prepare for the discussion webinar. Strongly encourage the students to do the reading assignments, as it will contribute significantly to their roles as Chaplains and counselors.		
End webinar.		

Case Study

Setting: *Two chaplains talking together in one of their offices as they eat lunch.*

Chaplain 1: I just can't believe they are using any kind of reasonable duty roster. How do I end up having on-call chaplain duty again? That makes for the fourth time this year. It's ridiculous.

Chaplain 2: On-call is painful here, too. It's like working two jobs, one during the day and a second at night.

C1: No s**t. And my Commander doesn't want to hear anything about it, either. He just says duty is part of the Army Officer experience. And what really bothers me is that the chaplains up at garrison don't even pull it. As if their work is so stressful and demanding they don't have time for real ministry. I'd like to see their fat asses in our staff PT. They wouldn't last five minutes. That'd show them a little of what stress is about.

C2: Yeah, that would bring back some memories ... I can just hear SGM Jones: "Chaplain, I'm not sure what you call that, but it's not a pushup ..."

C1: It's just ridiculous. The whole Chaplain Corps seems to be oriented to serve the LTCs and COLs, or to make sure they don't have to work too hard—what a crock of s**t. And I think what really bothers me is that the division chaplain won't stand up to them. He could. My friend in the 82d said that at Fort Bragg the division chaplains don't even pull duty. They used to, but the division chaplain told the garrison that the combat chaplains were too busy for that. But our division chaplain is too busy sucking up and positioning himself to get promoted to ever stand up for us. Talk about worthless.

[Knock on the door. C1 goes to the door and opens it a crack.]

C1 *[To a Soldier outside the door]*: Hey, how are you doing? *[Pause while Soldier responds.]* Oh yeah, I'll talk to your 1SGT about that. I just haven't seen him in the last couple days. Sorry about that. Listen, I'm in a meeting right now. I'll make sure I talk with your 1SGT this afternoon. Yeah, we can talk in a couple days, but you're going to have to give me some time to talk with your 1SGT. Be patient!

[Closes door and comes back and sits down.]

C1: Have you ever noticed that we spend about 90 percent of our time comforting the whiners? The strong Soldiers just handle things,

don't get into trouble. I love to help those guys. But it seems like it's always the whiners who come to us. And then I go to see the 1SGT, and find out she already took care of it, or did everything possible for some guy, and then I look like a candy a**.

C2: Yeah, well, I've got to get going. We're going out to the shoot-house this afternoon and watching the boys blow some stuff up.

C1: Lucky you. I guess I'm going to talk to this guy's 1SGT to find out there's nothing that can be done, before I head over to the hospital for the night to hold hands and not get any sleep before showing up at the XO's killer PT tomorrow morning. Wonderful.

Case Study Discussion Questions:

- 1) What are some of the danger signs you see in this conversation that tells you that this chaplain might need some help?
- 2) What are some of the issues that this chaplain might be dealing with?
- 3) How might a good friend help?
- 4) What are early signs a supervisor of this chaplain might see that could clue him to the fact that the chaplain needs some help?
What are later signs?
- 5) Have you ever felt/acted like this chaplain? What are steps you took to bring your life into balance?