



**Christ
Presbyterian
Church**



Diaconate Manual

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: Introduction and Purpose Statement**

3/2/2006

Deacons, historically, have handled many aspects of church life. In the early church the elders called for "...men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to the task of caring for the physical needs of the congregation, while they devoted themselves to the ministry of the word and to prayer." (Acts 6). Post-Reformation churches often charged the Diaconate with more administrative tasks than ministerial, such as care of the property and assets of the church, making them in a way, functional trustees.

This time, this place, this culture presents its own unique problems and struggles in the journey of faith. In the work of meeting these challenges, the Session of Christ Presbyterian Church has delegated to its Diaconate the task of creatively providing for the needs of our church family. This manual is an attempt to clarify who we are and what we do in this time and place, and to provide materials to equip and encourage those who pick up this task.

The purposes for this Manual are:

- A. To clearly define the role and responsibilities taken on by those who seek to serve the body of Christ in the position of Deacon at Christ Presbyterian Church, and to serve as a guide for those who currently hold this office.
- B. To consolidate the materials used in our skills training sessions to serve as a reference for officers, for use in training future candidate classes at CPC, and for training at sister churches.
- C. To be a resource for any shepherding ministry, in general congregational care, client work, or the general encouragement and spiritual health and welfare of the body of Christ.

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."

(I Peter 4:10-11)

It should be noted that this manual was created using the Diaconate Manual from Redeemer Presbyterian of New York. Many sections were copied directly from their manual while others have been modified to meet the needs of Christ Presbyterian. Additionally, Resources for Deacons, by Tim Keller, was used extensively as support material for this manual.

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Section 1:

DIACONATE

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 1.1 General Description**

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PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Diaconate exists to express Christ's command to all believers to do justice and love mercy in practical ways. We offer help to those in crisis or challenging situations by assessing their needs and working together to find solutions. We may provide social, emotional, physical and/or financial assistance as well as serve as a bridge to deeper Christian community.

The Diaconate's ministry is meeting felt needs through deeds. The primary work of the Diaconate is mercy; the primary mindset of a Deacon must be that of a servant and one who understands deeply his own sin and the healing balm of the grace of God and can offer the same to another. We move out into the body as servants of the church, ministering to the needs of the church family as well as those beyond it. We listen to and pray with members of the body and those outside the body. We encourage the discouraged and rejoice with the happy.

We should always be ready to lend a hand in service to our community; to step in as an usher, to give visiting parents directions to the nursery, or to aid or comfort another sitting near us under conviction by the words they have heard that day. In particular, we serve by supporting those who find themselves in emergency or crisis situations as a result of unforeseen circumstance. (*"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ...So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith." Galatians 6:2, 10*)

We also stand ready to support the community of Olive Branch at large by helping those who come to our church with immediate physical needs. As the church has grown, so have these opportunities to practice mercy. We should heartily desire to serve the church and the community around us in such a way that people are 1) attracted to Christ, 2) established in faith, 3) healed of their afflictions, and 4) equipped to minister. (*"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God." 1 Cor. 5:17-20*)

We do this by marshaling all the resources of people, talents, and money entrusted to us. Since CPC is a church for Olive Branch, we faithfully proclaim the Word and carry out its commands. (*"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." James 1:22*)

CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS

- A. As Christians, we are commanded to love our neighbors. (Luke 10:27; James 2:5-13)
- B. If there are any poor among the body, we are to respond generously with grace, mercy and truth to meet their needs. (Deuteronomy 15:7-11; James 2:12-16; Acts 2:44, 45)
- C. Because of God's great mercy to us, we offer mercy to our brothers and sisters. (Matthew 5:7; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 Timothy 1:12-14)
- D. We are to correct, rebuke and encourage with great patience and careful instruction. (Luke 17:3-4; Matthew 18:15-20; 2 Timothy 4:2)

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Section: 1.2 Diaconate Structure

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DIACONATE BOARD

Overview

The Diaconate Board consists of the Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and the elected Deacons. The Board meets monthly.

Job Descriptions

- A. *Diaconate Chair* – Is elected by the Diaconate Board and oversees and leads the Diaconate.
 - 1. Oversees ministry; develops and maintains vision
 - 2. Leads meetings
 - 3. Aids in problem-solving
 - 4. Quality control
 - 5. Interacts with Session on key issues
 - 6. Sets agenda for all Diaconate meetings

- B. *Secretary* – Is elected by the Diaconate Board and maintains the minutes for each Board meeting.
 - 1. Distributes the minutes to the Board members following the monthly meeting.
 - 2. Maintains the master copy of the Deacon's Manual.

- C. *Treasurer* – Is elected by the Diaconate Board and is entrusted to the funds for the current expenses of the church.
 - 1. Distributes monthly financial statements to the Board members.
 - 2. Oversees and directs the activities of the church accountant.

MONTHLY MEETINGS – DIACONATE

Regular meetings of the Diaconate convene monthly at the church. The purpose of these meetings is to keep all members abreast of issues and changes within the Diaconate and the church overall, as well as to provide support and continued training to make each officer more effective in congregational care.

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SUNDAY SERVICE OPERATIONS**General:**

As officers of the church, we should be ready to assist pastors, elders, church staff or ministry areas, or congregants at any time.

Be willing to step in and help with ushering duties when needed. Remember that we are servants, an extension of the pastors and elders, and are always on-duty.

Deacon on Duty (DOD) and Man on Duty (MOD):

The Deacon on Duty (DOD) will follow the checklist for the DOD. He will ensure all the items on the checklist are completed according to the timeline specified. The Man on Duty (MOD) will assist the DOD in the performance of his duties. The schedule for the DOD and MOD will be posted in the weekly church bulletin.

Offering Collection:

The offering will be collected and counted by the DOD (or assigned Deacon) and one other member of the Diaconate. The steps listed in the Offering Collection Checklist will be followed to ensure the offering is accurately and consistently handled.

FACILITY USE POLICY**Introduction**

The Session of Christ Presbyterian Church has delegated to the Diaconate the oversight of the church's facilities. The Diaconate recognizes that, as all assets of the church are ultimately owned by Almighty God, it is merely a steward of the resources that God has graciously given His Church.

Just as Christ affirmed the holiness of the temple by cleansing it and affirming Isaiah's vision from the Lord that the temple is "a house of prayer for all nations",¹ the Diaconate will make every effort to ensure that facilities of Christ Presbyterian church are, first and foremost, dedicated to the worship of God, and that His gifts are used in a manner that brings glory to Him.

Definition of Activities

The use of building facilities generally fall into one of the following two categories:

- *Church-sponsored meetings*: these are meetings held in association with a group sponsored by CPC. They include worship services, Sunday School, community groups, day-care, prayer groups, committee meetings, Diaconate meetings, Session meetings, bible studies, etc.
- *Non-church sponsored requests*: these include facility requests by church members or the Olive Branch community that are not made at the request of a church-sponsored group. These include: civic organizations, such as boy scouts, and home school associations; and non-civic organizations, such as birthday parties, weddings, or anniversary celebrations.

¹ Isaiah 56:7; Mark 11:17.

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Facility Use Request Procedures

- Regular scheduled services are maintained on the church calendar and are set by church staff and elders.
- Church sponsored meetings are placed on the church calendar by the staff as requested by appropriate committee chairpersons.
- All non-church sponsored requests must complete the following additional steps:
 - A Facilities Use Request Form must be filled out and given to the Diaconate for consideration (30 days advance notice is requested).
 - A Waiver of Liability Form must also be turned in along with the Facilities Use Request Form for requests for non-church sponsored functions.
 - The Diaconate will consider the request at its regular monthly Diaconate meeting. If possible, urgent requests will be expedited.
 - After consideration, the Diaconate will, in writing, grant approval or denial to the requested use of the facility. Denials will contain explanation as to why approval was not granted. The back of the request form may be used to explain denials.
 - Requests for church facilities will require the completion of a Waiver of Liability Form and may require a use fee that will be used to pay for the church cleaning service after the activity, as well as additional incidentals, if appropriate; e.g. additional utility costs.
- In all cases, the Diaconate reserves the right to accept or reject requests regarding the usage of the church's facilities.

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Decision Criteria

Each of the following 5 mandatory conditions must be met before the Deaconate will grant the request for use of the building or facilities:

- 1) The request must be made by, or sponsored by, a CPC member in good standing.
- 2) The activity or event must support the mission of the church. (to be determined by a majority vote)
- 3) The requesting party's representative must sign the Waiver of Liability Form.
- 4) The requested activity or event must not interfere, in terms of time or space, with any other pre-approved event.
- 5) The Diaconate must be able to reasonably accommodate any special needs required by the event or activity. (to be determined by a majority vote)

Contingent upon the foregoing 5 mandatory conditions being met, the Deaconate will then deliberate before making a final decision on the request by a majority vote.

Items for discussion during the 10 minute deliberation period may include such topics as monetary issues, intent of requestor, any other issues that may be relevant to the request at hand.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 1.4 Mercy Ministry Guidelines****3/2/2006****PRIORITY OF ASSISTANCE**

Galatians 6:10 teaches us to do good to all men, especially to the household of faith. This points to a prioritization of helping – especially to the household of faith. In order to use wise stewardship in dispensing help, the following priorities have been established.

1. Church members
 - a. Retired members (the elderly);
 - b. Single-parent families;
 - c. Sick and handicapped;
 - d. Others.
2. Christian non-member who attends our church.
3. Other Christians.
4. Non-Christian friends and relatives of church members.
5. Non-Christians living in the neighborhood/community of the church.
6. Other non-Christians.

COMPLETING INITIAL INTAKE and BEGINNING WORK WITH A CLIENT

A need can be brought to the attention of the Diaconate through various means: People come into the church office to ask for help. Requests come up during after-service fellowship or at other times on Sunday or through notification by a church leader. Other churches sometimes refer people, or another agency or church member/attende.

To begin the process, the church administrator will contact a member of the Diaconate Mercy Team. The Mercy Team Member will either meet or call the person and will complete the first two sections of the Intake Form (“Identifying Information” and “Current Situation/Request”). The Mercy Team Member will check the files to confirm if the potential client is a first-time or repeat client. If situation is not clear, the Mercy Team Lead Deacon may ask the Mercy Team Member to follow up with the potential client to gather more information.

A decision is then made as to whether the Diaconate will take the person(s) on as a client.* For immediate needs (such as aid to transients or emergencies), the Mercy Team Member who made initial contact can contact another Mercy Team Member and take appropriate action as needed. For longer or more involved care, the Mercy Team Lead Deacon assigns two members of the Mercy Team (one must be an active deacon) to work with the person/family. The assigning of the Team Members generally should not take more than 48 hours after the first contact with the Church. Sometimes extenuating circumstances require longer to assign. The intake form is emailed or faxed immediately to the assigned team members (unless the assigned Team Member made the initial contact also).

The assigned Mercy Team Members contact the new client and set up a face-to-face meeting to complete the intake process and further assess the situation. At this meeting, be mindful that the focus should be on relating to the person/couple in a compassionate and helpful manner, not on the intake form.

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The intake form is a tool to help the Deacon assess the situation as thoroughly as possible at the beginning stage of helping. Becoming familiar with the form is useful so that reading from it is unnecessary. Use judgment in choosing the sections of the form to focus on – if a section is not applicable, then don't ask. However, be careful not to assume – there may be more to learn about the situation than what first presents itself. Always preface the use of this form with a statement about it being standard with all Diaconate clients and confidential. Explain that the answers to the questions will be useful to us in helping them in their situation.

This is the first face-to-face contact with a new client, so listening well is *crucial*. Be aware of body language, making sure warmth, empathy, and respect are expressed. This is not a time to confront and tell a person what they should do.

For additional information, see Section 2.3, Partner Dynamics and Section 2.4, Initial Assessment Phase.

**We will assist and assign in accordance with Priority of Assistance section of this part of the Diaconate Manual. Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis, especially as it relates to Christ Church plants and staff who attend other churches.*

DIACONATE ASSET POLICY

Financial support will be considered only for potential/current clients when they are down to \$1,000 in 401(K)/IRA and \$1,000 savings/checking. Before approvals will be considered and possibly granted, this criteria needs to be met.

APPROVAL HIERARCHY LEVELS

\$250 or less*	Approval of a Deacon
\$251 – \$1,000*	Approval of Mercy Team partners
\$1,001 and above	Approval of entire Diaconate

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GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING HELP

1. Always share the gospel with non-believers who are seeking assistance. Encourage believers who are seeking help.
2. It is appropriate to deny assistance when the situation is against stated policy, when the Deacons corporately feel this should be so, or when instructed by the Session.
3. In cases of emergency, every effort should be given to either meeting the emergency or giving a speedy referral or judgment. It is better to say “no” quickly than to keep people hanging, waiting for help that won’t come.
4. Food should be readily given upon request. It is our current policy to use the services of the Olive Branch Food Bank or provide a food card for a local grocery store. When someone walks in and asks for food, a Mercy Team Member is contacted. The procedure outlined above is then performed to determine the best course of action.
5. Food may be taken to the person’s house (always send two people) or distributed at the church or food bank, depending on the circumstances.
6. The Mercy Team may seek WIC assistance in providing meals to a church family in need.
7. When financial assistance is given, it is given as a gift and never as a loan. It is an excessive burden to put poor people in debt. When they cannot repay, they will avoid the church and the Mercy Team will tend to judge them as dishonest.
8. People wishing to repay assistance are asked simply to put it in the general offering or designate it to the Deacon Fund.
9. Individuals wishing to help other individuals through the Deacon’s, anonymously or otherwise, may do so with the strictest confidence. However, no funds can be legally designated (unless previously budgeted) and the donor must abide by the decision of the Deacons. The Deacons may, of course, decide to help anyone who might be in need, and welcome others to contribute, or bring to their attention, those who might need help.
10. The Deacon’s Fund should not pay school tuition bills. Other committees or agencies of the church can be created to meet this need.
11. Phone bills will not be paid unless for extreme situations..
12. Money should not be given to single individuals without requiring some labor: either at the church property or for work needing to be done that will help someone else in need.
13. Cash will not be given if at all possible. Funds will be dispersed by check to landlords, food stores, agencies, etc.
14. Individuals attending the church who take advantage of its members by asking for gifts or loans in a careless or reckless manner (asking lots of folks for the same problem, not paying the loan back) will be identified by the Deacons and be counseled. The Session will be advised. Members should advise the Deacons of such individuals.

DIACONATE MANUAL**CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

A critical factor contributing to the success of Diaconate client care work is the *building of a trust relationship* between the client and the Deacons working with that client. Such a trust relationship can only be nurtured if the client understands that the Deacons take steps designed to protect the confidentiality of the relationship and of any facts learned through the development of that relationship.

People, even those greatly in need of help, are likely to be discouraged from seeking/receiving help if they fear that intimate details about their lives were being revealed other than to the limited extent necessary within a “need-to-know” circle of those who are working with them. This may include elders overseeing the operations of the Diaconate and/or individuals to whom the client has executed a release (on a Diaconate approved form) permitting the exchange of information. They may also be discouraged if they fear that, even within that need-to-know circle, more information is being provided than the recipient of that information needs to know. For these reasons, every Deacon should consider what practical steps he could take to protect the client’s identity and should make every reasonable effort to implement those steps. For example, clients are not to be referred to by name in any facsimile transmission (“fax”) or e-mail communication whatsoever or in any discussion with anyone who is not in the need-to-know circle. Additionally, any discussions within the need-to-know circle should be strictly limited to the information that the recipient of that information needs to know in order to provide, or oversee, care to the client. Care also needs to be taken outside the need-to-know circle in mentioning facts that may be rather unique to a particular client and could, therefore, serve as an identifying factor. And, of course, discussions about the client should be avoided in public places or in other places where anyone not in the need-to-know circle is present. It is also especially important to exercise care in leaving client information, whether in “hard copy” or in a computer file, where it can be seen by anyone not in the need-to-know circle.

It should be noted that all applicable confidentiality safeguards intended for the protection of clients extend to those who seek contact with any Deacon for spiritual support. Thus, information received at prayer duty must be used with discretion.

Additionally, all such safeguards apply to responses to persons leaving messages for assistance. The Deacon returning such calls should never identify the Diaconate to the person answering the telephone but, instead, should identify him by stating only his name and that he is calling from Christ Presbyterian. The Diaconate can, of course, be mentioned when speaking to the person who called the helpline.

NOTE: THE ONLY EXCEPTIONS TO THE GENERAL CONFIDENTIALITY RESTRICTION, WHICH APPLY ONLY AFTER THE SITUATION HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE HEAD DEACON, IS THAT LIMITED INFORMATION MAY BE DISCLOSED ON A “NEED-TO-KNOW” BASIS TO THE EXTENT THAT DISCLOSURE OF SUCH CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IS NECESSARY FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF SERVICES BY THE DEACON; OR WHERE THE LIFE OR SAFETY OF ANY PERSON IS PERCEIVED TO BE AT RISK; OR WHERE A CHILD MAY BE SUBJECT TO ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT; OR IT IS BELIEVED THAT A LAW IS LIKELY TO BE BROKEN; OR, IN THE CASE OF A CHURCH MEMBER, THE SITUATION APPEARS TO REQUIRE CHURCH DISCIPLINARY INVOLVEMENT; OR PURSUANT TO A SUBPOENA, COURT ORDER OR APPLICABLE LAW.

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Certain Additional Confidentiality Guidelines

In general, and subject to the above "NOTE," do not discuss specifics of any client relationship, including the identity of the client, with anyone outside the need-to-know circle and until we have received a written release from the client on our approved form(s). The following constitute some specific examples of situations that could arise but are, by no means, to be considered to be an all-inclusive listing:

➤ Spouses/Roommates/Close Friends/Fellowship Group Members of Deacons

Clients are not to be discussed with spouses/roommates/close friends/fellowship group members or anyone else outside the need-to-know circle. Any prayer requests should be in the most general of terms (e.g., praying for a client to find a job/affordable housing/family reconciliation; praying for the Deacon to have wisdom and discernment in dealing with a client who is a single mother of a sickly child, etc.). In addition, care should be exercised to avoid leaving client information in any place where someone outside the need-to-know circle is likely to view (or overhear) the information (e.g., buy a lockable file cabinet for your room and keep it locked when you are not there). Care should also be exercised in the leaving of messages. A Deacon should not leave messages for his client with any person or on any answering machine that discloses the fact that the person being called is a Diaconate client. Similarly, the Deacon should inform his client if he has an answering machine that is used, or can be overheard, by a spouse or roommate so that the client can be discrete in the leaving of his message.

➤ Other Deacons

It is natural to want to draw on the experience and comfort of other Deacons and it is quite acceptable, and in difficult cases even to be encouraged, to seek the perspective of those who may have encountered a similar situation. Clients should not, however, be discussed except in the most general terms in order to avoid disclosing any identifying information.

➤ Community Group Leaders

First, before any information can be discussed with the client's community group leader, the client must have executed appropriate release (on the approved form). Second, even with signed releases in hand, only the most pertinent information should be discussed with that group leader if the Deacon believes that the leader could be of help. Any exchange of information with the client's community group leader will, of necessity, bring that leader into the need-to-know circle and all disclosure restrictions and confidentiality guidelines should be imposed on that leader.

➤ Pastors or Other Session Members

There may be times when input from a Pastor, Elder or other Pastoral Staff Member is needed. Even in these situations, care should be exercised to avoid identifying information unless necessary. An exception to Client confidentiality would be disclosure to a Pastor, Elder or other Pastoral Staff Member of situations involving a client (who is a church *member*) that appear to require disciplinary action. Initially, you should lovingly try to encourage that client member to seek out guidance from a Pastor, Elder or other Pastoral Staff Member; otherwise, you must make such disclosure as discreetly as possible after letting the client know that you will be doing so.

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➤ Counselors/Mental Health or Medical Professionals

First, the client must have executed appropriate releases (on approved forms) agreeing to the exchange of information between the counselor and the assigned Deacons. Second, the information exchanged should be limited to that which is necessary for the recipient of the information to know in order to be helpful to a client. Third, a copy of the executed release must have been faxed to the named counselor or mental health or medical professional *before* any transfer or exchange of information can take place.

In summary, specific details about a Diaconate client should only be discussed with those who are in the need-to-know circle. In discussing any client, even in the most general of terms, Deacons should practice discretion in what they say, to whom they are saying it, and the setting, which should be very private, in which these discussions take place. Every Deacon should shred or tear into small pieces all client related hard copies and delete all e-mail files as soon as the Deacon closes the case and makes sure that a copy of such materials is in the Diaconate's central file. Clients may be told that we exercise care to maintain confidentiality but this should not ever be worded in a manner that could be interpreted as a *guarantee* of confidentiality.

“COUNSELING ONLY” CLIENTS

Sometimes, an individual, couple, or family approaches the Diaconate for financial assistance with professional counseling. Two Deacons will be assigned to meet with the individual or family/couple. However, sometimes only one will be assigned, since “counseling only” clients do not usually have multiple needs. A meeting with the client is required prior to a new set of counseling session authorizations. At the initial meeting, complete the yellow "Diaconate Intake Form," explain our policy towards counseling-only clients (see below) and reach an agreement on a co-pay.

After this meeting, report to the Lead Mercy Deacon for authorization to subsidize the person/family's counseling fees. When the allotted counseling sessions are almost exhausted, follow up with the counselor to determine if counseling needs to continue and if so, how many more sessions are needed. Secondly, contact the client to discuss their progress and financial situation. Adjust the co-pay up or down depending on the client's financial situation.

Christ Presbyterian Diaconate – Assistance with Professional Counseling

The following is the Diaconate's policy in regards to “Counseling Only” clients:

The Christ Presbyterian Diaconate exists to assist the members and regular attendees of Christ Presbyterian Church with crisis financial needs as well as other needs.

If you are interested in receiving assistance from the Christ Presbyterian Diaconate, please call one of the deacons. A Deacon will contact you and set up an appointment to meet with you. Your ability to pay and our ability to help you in accordance with the Diaconate guidelines will be discussed at this meeting. These discussions will be confidential, but you will need to disclose your financial situation openly and honestly.

If you do receive financial assistance from the Diaconate, a specified number of counseling sessions will be approved. After those sessions are completed, you will need to meet again with your assigned Deacon to review the situation and decide on future steps. Counseling progress will be reviewed with you, your counselor and the Diaconal representative. All discussions will be confidential.

Please note that the Diaconate is not simply a counseling scholarship fund. We come alongside those that we help and provide accountability, prayer and counsel.

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SUBMITTING A CHECK REQUEST

All Check Request Forms must be properly completed and faxed, mailed, or hand delivered to the church bookkeeper at the church office.

RECORD-KEEPING

For each client you are assigned, please keep accurate records of all interactions and events. You should keep a written record of each phone conversation and face-to-face meeting and always date each entry. There are three main purposes for documentation:

- Protection of the church in the event of a suit;
- Protection of the client in the event that we are unable to provide appropriate intervention;
- Organization and assessment of progress.

Clear communication is the key to good record-keeping. Paperwork may not be an indication of good care, but quality record-keeping and good care go hand in hand. Records become a legal document; legibility, completeness and clarity are the key components. Keep in mind that others may see these records.

Record keeping is also a way to provide adequate help when the original Deacons are out of town or no longer working with the client. Finally, recording keeping is very helpful in keeping track of the history of a client, gaining perspective on the progress made and staying organized.

Guidelines for Good Record Keeping

- A. Organize and standardize records such as intake form, progress notes, medical records (if any), other pertinent papers such as bills, bank statements, budget, record of spending, counseling/psychiatric evaluations, legal documents, etc.
- B. Be concise: even though in the eyes of the Law, work undocumented is work not done, we need not be burdened by paperwork. Record only what is necessary such as behavior, goals set, progress on goals, interventions, responses, and the ongoing plan of action.
- C. Self-Monitor: read notes at a later date to see if they are clear and if follow up has occurred.
- D. Document in a timely manner: enter notes in the record as soon as possible following a meeting or phone call, being sure to date and initial/sign the entry.
- E. Never fudge on records: by altering a record after the fact, one's veracity may be called into question at a later date.
- F. Be aware of risks: thorough documentation can help protect against suits involving charges of sexual impropriety, inappropriate treatment, violations of confidentiality, suicide/homicide, and child custody.
- G. Have a standard procedure for evaluating suicide/homicide risk.
- H. Use clear behavioral descriptions: write progress notes like a scientist – but without jargon – and focus on describing overt observational behavior.
- I. Keep records secure for confidentiality purposes.

DIACONATE MANUAL

RELATING TO A CLIENT AFTER CLOSURE

Issues to Consider:

- A. What were the circumstances of the closure?
 - 1. Was the closure mutual?
 - 2. Was the closure uncomfortable? (e.g.: the Diaconate could no longer help financially? Or client was not willing to abide by our accountability?)
- B. Were you able to have a face-to-face exit interview?
- C. What was the nature of your relationship while they were open?
 - 1. Client's level of emotional openness?
 - 2. Self-disclosure on your part?
 - 3. Were boundaries adhered to?
 - 4. Did you become friends with them? (e.g.: mutual support and getting together for social interaction outside of normal Diaconate meetings?)
- D. How trusting were they of you, the Diaconate and the confidentiality we maintain?
- E. Were they embarrassed by their need for Diaconate assistance?

Suggestions for Relating After Case Is Closed

- A. Acknowledge the person in church with at least a warm, "Hello, (name), good to see you," or something like that.
- B. Depending on how close you became to the client, as a general rule, let the ex-client initiate contact beyond a greeting.
- C. Be sensitive to their reaction to you when you see them. If they look down and avoid eye contact – this can mean that they feel shame or embarrassment. Follow their lead – if they don't seem to want to talk, honor that and don't force conversation.
- D. If they seem to want to continue in conversation, ask how they are doing?
- E. Don't ignore them.
- F. If the closure was a particularly messy one, they may ignore you. In which case, follow their lead – obviously you can't force them to relate to you. If you make eye contact, greet them compassionately with a, "Hello, how are you doing?"

DIACONATE MANUAL

DEACON'S FUND GUIDELINES

The Deacon's Fund is a sum of money set apart to help people in need. It will be used exclusively to aid people who have financial and physical needs, and who (therefore) need both the spiritual and economic help of the church.

Compilation of Funds

The Deacon's Fund will receive money by special offerings at the services where communion is given. Designated gifts to the Deacons' Fund will also be received. Special offerings outside of the communion services may be taken in times of additional need or when the fund is running low.

Dispersement of Funds

Dispersement of funds will be in accordance with guidelines established in this section of this manual.

Money should never be sent by mail, but shall always be delivered in person by deacons. The deacons shall always explain the motivation behind help, that they give because Christ has given to them. If the person being helped is a non-Christian, it is required that the gospel be presented to them at some time during the period of ministry.

DIACONATE MANUAL**SERVICE BANK GUIDELINES**

The Service Bank is an effort to identify and mobilize the gifts and skills of our congregation to make them available in an organized way to these practical human needs.

Workers

The Deaconate is responsible for organizing and training the volunteers who make up the Service Bank. They are also responsible for promoting and advertising the bank, processing requests for service, and following up with the requesters to ensure service was rendered. Periodically, the deaconate will disperse a Service Bank form to the congregation. Those who are willing to serve in the bank will fill out the form and return it the Deaconate. New members should receive this form upon joining the church. A Services File and a Resources File will be kept in the church office by the deacon in charge of mercy ministry. The Services File shall list each service the bank offers and the list of individuals willing to perform the service. The Resources File is a file in which the name of each individual who offers services to the bank is kept. The file is used to record the service each person has rendered.

Determining Needs

Need Cards shall be placed in pews and be referred to by the ministry weekly. A need card has spaces to indicate the kind of service needed as well as the name of the person who needs it. Need cards can be filled out for oneself or for someone else. The may be put in the offering plate or given to the a deacon, elder or pastor.

Service Bank Operation

- The Deaconate receives a need card or request for service.
- A Mercy Team Deacon decides what service is necessary to meet the need.
- He looks in the Service File and determines who in the congregation may be willing to meet the need. He lists the names of providers on the back of the need card.
- He then checks the Resources File for the record sheet of each individual listed on the need card. If he sees that one of these persons has rendered service recently, he scratches that name off the need card.
- He then calls the names in remaining on the need card to find someone who is willing to do the work. He then asks the resource to tell him when the work is complete.
- The Deacon records the work performed by the resource after he is notified that the job is complete.
- The Deacon should express appreciation to the worker for his service.

Priorities

The Deacons will set priorities for the Service Bank. Elderly and needy members of the church should receive the swiftest and most extensive help. Aid must be given only to those who truly lack the resources to meet their own needs themselves.

Section 2:

MERCY MINISTRY TRAINING TOPICS AND REFERENCE

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.1 The Theological Foundation**

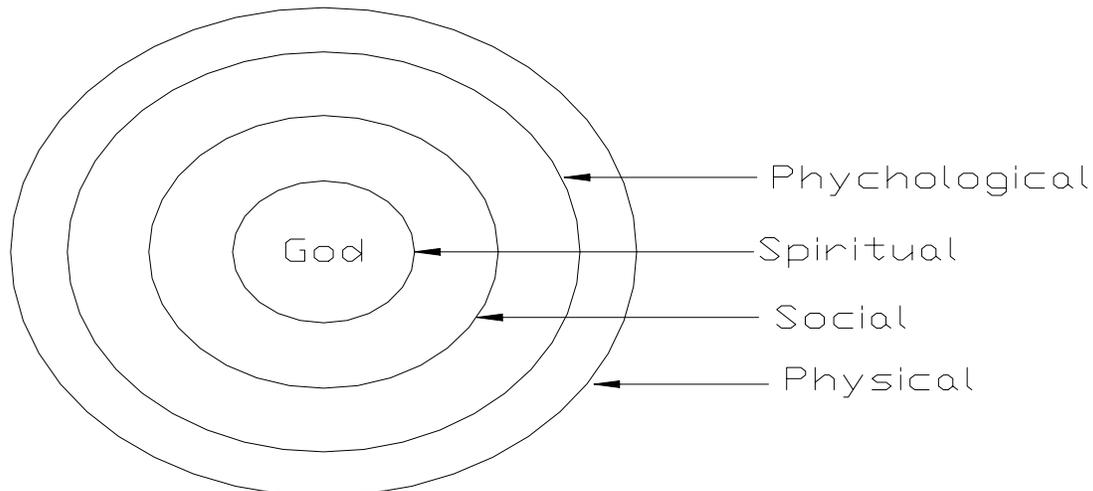
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A THEOLOGY FOR MERCY AND GRACE

The four “levels” of need – the results of the fall (Gen. 3):

1. Spiritual Alienation (Gen. 3:8)

- We are cut off from God.
- Adam & Eve are scared when God comes near.

**2. Psychological Alienation (Gen. 3:10)**

- Adam and Eve experienced guilt and shame for the first time in their nakedness.

3. Social Alienation (Gen. 3:7)

- Before sin, Adam and Eve were naked and unashamed, after the fall they hid from each other and from God.
- They blamed each other for the problem.
- Blame continues in conflicting views on the breakdown of society in political circles:
 - Left (“Liberal”): Oppression, class distinctions, etc.
 - Right (“Conservative”): Family breakdown, selfishness, personal irresponsibility, moral breakdowns, etc.
- *Both views are right!*

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.1 The Theological Foundation**

3/2/2006

4. Physical Alienation (Gen. 3:17-19)

- At odds with the planet – “Through painful toil you will eat.”
- We physically and mentally age (break down) because of all the other alienations.
- Everything breaks down because of the results of sin!

5. Why Should We Do Mercy Ministry?

- Jesus came to minister in both word AND deed: He did not separate or prioritize the two. (Sometimes he healed first, sometimes he required faith first. Faith in the recipient was NOT always a prerequisite for his Deed ministry).
- We need to be renewed and to help others to be so (Romans 12:2 “Therefore do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds...”)
- **Acts 4:31-32:** “When they had prayed the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word with boldness. Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.”
- **Isaiah 1:10-17:** A life poured out with deeds of mercy is the inevitable outcome of pure faith.
- **Matt. 25:31-46:** Parable of the sheep and the goats: God will judge whether you are a Christian because of deeds of mercy. If the gospel is REALLY understood (we are sinners saved by grace), it changes your whole outlook and position. (CAUTION: we are NOT saved by mercy ministry, but it is the inevitable outcome of being saved.)
- **James 2:14-26:** The world can only see deed ministry – the only way to show that we are not intolerant is our mercy ministry (Acts 6:7 – “a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.”)

HUMAN NEEDS / “FELT NEEDS”

What are “felt needs”? Human physical needs (hunger, homelessness, poverty, medical care, etc.) that even the spiritually undiscerning person can recognize.

Definition of Mercy Ministry: The meeting of felt human needs through deeds and word in the power and love of the kingdom.

All human beings are created dependent beings. We are not self-sufficient, but are created to be dependent spiritually, sociologically, physically, psychologically. When we determine to be our own masters, we become cursed and experience emptiness, frustration and misery in all areas of life. A need is a dependency distorted and aggravated by alienation from God.

Our nation is going to have more and more “mercy” needs. Why?

- Population is getting older
- Family breakups / single-parent families
- Increasing prison population
- Immigrants
- Welfare Reform

DIACONATE MANUAL**PRINCIPLES OF MERCY MINISTRY****A. Distinguish between simple poverty and deeper poverty. There is a difference between being “broke” and “poor.”**

Three causes of poverty:

- **Oppression (Injustice).** Example: A government which does not allow a particular group of people to be educated, therefore this group is able to work only in labor or menial job situations earning very little money.
- **Calamity.** Example: Fire destroys a family’s home and hospital bills use all their savings.
- **Personal Sin.** Example: A family is split by divorce – the father has decided he doesn't want to be a part of the family; he leaves his wife with three children and goes to another state where he does not have to pay child support.

The person who is “broke” is usually so because of one of these issues or because of one event. The person who is “poor” is entangled in a continuous inter-meshing of all three.

The truly poor may develop a whole different worldview (sense of hopeless dependency, entitlement, etc.). It takes far greater time, money, and skill to help them.

B. Never separate word and deed.

Jesus came to minister in both word AND deed: He did not separate or prioritize the two. (Sometimes he healed first [John 9], sometimes he required faith first. Faith in the recipient was NOT always a prerequisite for his Deed ministry).

Word and Deed must be combined in love (1 John 3:16-17). They must always be connected.

C. Begin with few strings, but add conditions with time.

Grace is undeserved. It comes to us freely, even though we do not ask for it. But once it enters our lives, God’s grace demands changes and holds us accountable. Why? Grace intercepts self-destructive behavior. It is therefore neither permissive (“What you do doesn’t matter”) nor legalistic (“Shape up or I will stop loving you”). It says, “Your sin cannot stop my concern and love for you,” and, “I will not let your sin destroy you.”

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.1 The Theological Foundation**

3/2/2006

APPLICATION**A. If aid is continually asked for, request entrance into the whole life.**

- “We certainly are not trying to be nosy, but we really want to help you for the long run, so we need to be let into your whole life.”
- REMEMBER: God is concerned with our whole being: spiritual, physical, psychological.
- Keep in mind the three causes of poverty: oppression (injustice), calamity, and personal sin.

B. If aid is abused, let mercy limit mercy.

- Don't try to take revenge.
- Don't be defensive.
- Explain your actions; “We are not withdrawing our mercy, we are only changing its form to suit what you really need now.”

C. Investigate the need.

- The basic causes: injustice, calamity, sin
- The exact extent of the need: evaluate total income and assets, total expenses, liabilities, debts
- The spiritual condition of the person/family

D. Identify dependencies under the financial need.

- Physical Dependence – Physical disability that makes it impossible to generate sufficient income for needs
- Planning Dependence – Lack of budgetary control, unrealistic priorities for spending, other lacks of discipline or discernment
- Emotional Dependence – Personal problems that make it impossible to bring in sufficient income
- Skill Dependence – Lack of marketable skills
- Relational Dependence – Without connections and support
- Social Dependence – A lack of legal, political power/oppression/racism
- Simple Financial Dependence – Without other dependencies, a lack of a job/income

E. Outline a ministry plan.

- Break down the problems into parts (like “dependence” categories above)
- Set a goal for each area
- Determine the form of help (financial, prayer, counseling, etc.)

DIACONATE MANUAL**THE BIBLICAL HISTORY OF DIACONAL MINISTRY**

BY DR. TIMOTHY KELLER

Creation

Adam is told to have dominion over all creation, both the physical and spiritual realms, and to bring it under the order and rule of God (Genesis 1:28). God's servants are, therefore, to be concerned to subdue physical disorder as well as spiritual disorder caused by sin. Both are fundamental to covenant service.

Fall

Sin defaces all of nature. Man is alienated from God (Gen. 3:8) causing guilt and hostility to the knowledge of the Lord. Man is alienated from himself (Gen. 3:10), causing loss of identity and loss of meaning, as well as anxiety and emptiness. Man is alienated from other men (Gen. 3:7), causing war, crime, family breakdown, oppression, and injustice. Finally, man is alienated from nature (Gen. 3:17-19), causing hunger, sickness, aging, and physical death. God's first redemptive action, the clothing of Adam and Eve, points to the salvation purchased by Christ's sacrifice, but it also meets a deep psychological need (for privacy) and a fundamental physical need (for shelter). In this first deed of ministry, God reveals that His redemption will heal all the effects of sin. We must follow Him in our own patterns of ministry.

Patriarchal Period

Abraham's seed (through Joseph) first becomes a blessing to the nations through a hunger relief program (Gen. 41:53-57). Job, who lived in this period, is aware that God's judgment falls on those who forget the poor (Job 29:15-16, 31:16-23).

Early Israel

God gave Israel many laws of social responsibility. Kinsmen and neighbors were obligated to give to the poor man until his need was gone (Deuteronomy 15:8-10). Tithes went to the poor (Deut. 14:28-29). The poor were not to be given simply a "handout," but tools, grain (Deut. 15:12-15) and land (Lev. 25) so that they could become productive and self-sufficient.

Later Israel

The prophets condemned Israel's insensitivity to the poor as covenant breaking. They taught that materialism and ignoring the poor are sins as repugnant as idolatry and adultery (Amos 2:6-7). Mercy to the poor is an evidence of true heart commitment to God (Is. 1:10-17, 58:6-6, Amos 4:1-6, 5:21-24). The great accumulation of wealth, "adding of house to house and field to field till no space is left" (Is. 5:8-9) even though it by legal means may be sinful if the rich are proud and callous toward the poor (Is. 3:16-26, Amos 6:4-7). The seventy-year exile itself was a punishment for the unobserved Sabbath and Jubilee years (II Chron. 36:20-21). In the Jubilee year the well-to-do were to cancel debts, but the wealthy refused to do this.

DIACONATE MANUAL**The Ministry of Christ**

Jesus proves to the Baptist that He is the Christ by pointing out that He heals bodies and preaches to the poor (Matt. 11:1-6), even as the prophets said He would (Is. 11:1-4, 61:1-2, cf. Luke 1:52-53). Jesus teaches that anyone who has truly been touched by the grace of a merciful God will be vigorous in helping the needy (Luke 6:35-36, Matt. 5:43-48). God will judge whether we have justifying faith or not by looking at our service to the poor, the refugee, the sick, the prisoner (Matt. 25:44-46). Jesus, in His incarnation, “moved in” with the poor (Luke 2:24, II Cor. 8:9). He lived with, ate with, and associated with the lowest class of society. He called this “mercy” (Matt. 9:13). The Bible demands that we emulate Him in it (II Cor. 8:8-15).

The Early Church

The church reflects the social righteousness of the old covenant community, but with the greater vigor and power of the new age. Christians are to open their hands to the needy as far as there is need (I John 3:16-17, cf. Deut. 15:7-8). Within the church, wealth is to be shared very generously between rich and poor (II Cor. 8:13-15, cf. Lev. 25). Following the prophets, the apostles teach that true faith will inevitably show itself through deeds of mercy (James 2:1-23). Materialism is still a grievous sin (James 5:1-6, I Timothy 6:17-19). Not only do all believers have these responsibilities, but a special class of officers – Deacons/esses – are established to coordinate the church’s ministry of mercy. This shows that the ministry of mercy is a required, mandated work of the church just as is the ministry of the word and discipline (cf. Rom. 15:23-29). Paul tells the Ephesian elders in his farewell address that he has taught them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). It is highly significant, then, that in his very last words, Paul exhorts them to give to the weak and poor (v. 35). Not only did Paul consider mercy to the poor as part of the “whole counsel of God,”...but he deemed it so crucial as to make it the very last piece of teaching he gave them.

Summary

The church is not simply a collection of individuals who are forgiven. It is a “royal nation”, a new society (I Peter 2:9). The world must see in us the wisdom of God, namely, what family life, business practices, race relationships, and interpersonal relationships can be in all their beauty under the kingship of Jesus Christ. We are a pilot plant of the kingdom of God (see Francis Schaeffer, *Pollution and the Death of Man*, Tyndale, 1970, pp. 81-93). The church is to use its gifts and power to heal all the results of sin: spiritual, psychological, social, and physical.

DIACONATE MANUAL**THE DIACONATE AND THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE**

BY DR. TIMOTHY KELLER

The Office of All Believers

Every Christian is a priest (1 Peter 2:9) offering up deeds of mercy and service as a pleasing sacrifice (Heb. 13:15-16). All of us will have the reality of our faith judged by our mercy (Matt. 25:35-36; James 2:12-13). Therefore, the work of benevolence is not primarily a work discharged by special officers on behalf of the church. It is primarily the loving action of the members of the church toward those in and around the community.

The Special Office of the Diaconate

Christians are qualified for ministry by gifts of the Holy Spirit. Some gifts require formal public recognition for their proper functioning. Such gifts constitute an office in God's calling and in the church's recognition.

It is clear from 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Philippians 1:1 that deacons were officers of the apostolic church along with bishops or elders. (The remaining passage where the noun *diakonos* may refer to such an office is Romans 16:1). Although the Apostle gives qualifications for the office in 1 Timothy and sets it beside the office of the bishop in his address to the Philippians, he does not in these passages describe its function. The term *diakonos* in its general use means 'servant.'

Acts 6

What can we learn from Acts 6? First, that diaconal ministry was an organized ministry of the church, distinct from the ministry of the Word, and second, that diaconal ministry can be given to officers who specialize in its coordination and work. How do we know, then, what the essence of diaconal ministry is? In favor of regarding diaconal ministry as focusing on works of mercy is the constant use of the verb to describe such ministry, often in connection with serving food (Mt. 4:11; 8:15; 25:44; 27:55; Mark 1:13, 31; 15:41; Lk. 4:39; 8:3; 10:40; 12:37; 17:8; 22:26, 27; Jn. 12:2; Acts 6:2; Romans 15:25; 2 Tim. 1:18; Philemon 13; Hebrews 6:10).

When the verb is widened to include the ministry of other gifts, this original force may still be felt (1 Pet. 4:10, 11). In a similar way the noun *diakonia* often refers to ministry to physical needs (Lk. 10:40; Acts 11:29; 12:25; 1 Cor. 16:15; 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12, 13.) This is particularly the case when service to the saints is spoken of.

DIACONATE MANUAL**A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE DIACONATE**

EDITED BY DR. TIMOTHY KELLER

(Note: This survey is based on a much longer documented article produced by the Study Committee and available to commissioners.)

The Early Church

It can be seen from the earliest writings, such as the "Didache" (A.D. 120), that each congregation had multiple elders/bishops and deacons, all elected by the people. Deacons were ministers of mercy to the poor and widows. They were clearly patterned after "the Seven" of Acts 6, even to the point that many churches appointed only seven. Early deacons visited to find needs and meet them. They cared for the widows and supervised the "agape" fellowship meals. In addition, Justin Martyr tells us they were helpers with the Eucharist and other worship meals, since they took the gifts to the poor. Deacons were also assistants to the elders and especially the bishops. As time wore on, the deacons' main purpose became to serve the bishops as secretaries and helpers. In brief, the function of "helps," which was always a purpose of the deacon, eventually came to eclipse all others. As the Diaconal office became deformed by the mid-3rd century, deacons became nothing more than liturgical assistants.

The Reformation

Luther envisioned a Diaconate in each town carrying on distribution to the city's poor as its main focus. For various reasons, however, the Lutherans did not carry this out and the Diaconate disappeared from the Lutheran scene.

John Calvin was the clearest in explaining the theological connection between almsgiving and worship. He placed almsgiving in the liturgy after the sermon and as part of the Supper liturgy. He stated categorically: "Thus we ought always to provide that no meeting of the church should take place without the word, prayers, partaking of the supper, and almsgiving." (*Institutes* IV.XVII.44)

The Catholic exegetes taught that deacons were primarily helpers who assisted the priest in this work of teaching and worship. Calvin, however, was quite careful to say in his exegesis of I Tim. (3:8ff) that the deacon is a representative of the church, not of the pastor. Therefore, the Diaconate has an integrity all its own. They are not mere "domestic servants." For example, the Diaconate should not ordinarily be a stepping stone or trial arena for junior elders. They do not merely carry out orders, but are a holy office in which they look for needs and make decisions. Deacons are subordinate to elders, but they are not the immediate subordinates of the elders, in a chain of command. Calvin allows that deacons are "Levites" and do give assistance to the elders and pastors, but he insists on the primacy of mercy and on the distinctiveness of the office (*Institutes* IV.XIX.32)

Calvin established two orders of deacons. First there were those who administered alms for the poor ("procurators"). They were to receive, dispense, and hold funds, possessions, rents and pensions for the poor. The second order ("hospitallers") consisted of deacons who actually ministered to the sick and to the poor. Their chief work was the administration of a "hospital" in which there were not only those too sick to work, but also the aged, widows and orphans, and "other poor creatures."

DIACONATE MANUAL**Later Developments**

Scotland. *The First Book of Discipline* established deacons as the chief financial officers of the church. They supported the pastor, the schools, and the poor within their parishes. Their functions are administrative and financial. Deacons were to care for the poor in their parishes. On the one hand, the *Second Book of Discipline* mentions the Diaconal ministry as being directed to the saints, yet later it speaks of aiding the poor and the strangers within a parish (See Chapters VIII and IX). This indicates that the church's whole neighborhood was envisioned as a ministry area for the deacons.

Deacons were not admitted to church councils and were completely under the Authority of the Session. Mercy was one of their duties along with general administration.

The Netherlands. The Dutch churches spoke more emphatically that mercy was the prime purpose of the Diaconate. At the Synod of Dort (1574) deacons were charged to cooperate with the civil magistrate and others who were seeking to help the poor in their communities. Article 25 of the Church Order of Dort (1618-19) tells deacons to distribute alms not only among the members of the church, but also to the poor among "inhabitants and strangers." The deacons of the 17th-century Reformed churches in many cases formed the central social service agency of the city, supporting orphanages, homes for the elderly, schools, several clothing manufacturing shops and bakeries for distribution to the poor.

Deacons in the Dutch churches definitely wielded more authority and oversight over the congregation than deacons in the Presbyterian churches. They sat on the church Council or Consistory with the elders. Thus, deacons took part in the nomination procedure of both elders and had a regulative voice together with the elders in electing a pastor. No pastor could leave a field without consent of the Consistory, which included deacons.

England. Many of the Puritans saw Presbyterianism as the truest Scriptural church order. In *The Second Parte of a Register*, deacons are described as those whose office "consisteth only in the oversight of the poor." Deacons were to be elected in every church. The Westminster Assembly, though it discussed the elder and powers of presbytery for months, spent only one day on the Diaconate, and provided only the briefest of statements. "The Scripture doth hold out deacons as distinct officers in the church, whose office is perpetual. To whose office it belongs not to preach the word or administer the sacraments, but to take special care in distributing the necessities of the poor." (*The Form of Presbyterial Church Government*)

The American Reformed Churches

Presbyterian. The first American General Assembly pronouncement regarding the duties of deacons was that of the 1833 Assembly which stated that the deacons of a congregation primarily were to care for the poor of their own church. Secondly, the "temporalities of the church" (general care, maintenance of property, etc.) could be committed to them. A 1752 Assembly statement allowing for trustees who could handle "temporalities" instead of deacons balanced this latter pronouncement. In this, the Americans followed not the Dutch churches (which made mercy the exclusive purpose of the Diaconate), but the Scottish Book of Discipline, which gave deacons all financial affairs of the church. Giving deacons the trusteeship, however, was definitely an addition to the statement of the Westminster Assembly. Under the influence of Thornwell in the Southern Presbyterian Church, trustees were discouraged and the "trusteeship" duties of deacons became mandatory.

As for the scope of the Diaconate, we have seen that the earlier American understanding was for deacons to care for the poor of their congregation only, not of the neighborhood in general (e.g. Samuel Miller's "Essay" on the Office of Ruling Elder). This was not the unanimous position of the Old School Presbyterians, however (e.g. Thomas Smyth of South Carolina). By the 1871 General Assembly, however, deacons were charged to give charity to non-Christians "as will aid in...opening the door for more direct spiritual ministrations."

As for the authority of the Diaconate, American Presbyterians forbade deacons to sit on any church courts. The 1715 Assembly stated that deacons had "no juridical power". However, in the area of work among the poor, deacons had

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.2 Historical Perspective to Mercy Ministries**

2/25/2004

surprising policy-making power. The 1867 Old School General Assembly answered in the negative the question “Has a Church session any original or direct control over the management and distribution of the fund collected and in the hands of the Deacons for the benefit of the poor of the Church?” Instead, they pronounced that the Session “may advise respecting use of the funds.” In addition, it was left up to local congregations whether Deacons could officiate the Sacraments.

In the final analysis, it cannot be said that the Diaconate has flourished in American Presbyterianism at all. All the General Assembly pronouncements and guidance on the subject from 1706-1873 fill only a page and a half. Very little unity of mind existed on the function and scope of the office. At no point during the 19th century did the majority of Presbyterian churches have deacons.

Reformed. The Dutch Reformed churches in American maintained from their fatherland a clearer concept of the deacon as a Primarily a minister of mercy. Unlike the Presbyterian Forms of Church government, their Church Order Article on the Ministry of Deacons does not include the duties of Trusteeship at all. And though in some Reformed churches deacons assume the duties of trustees, the prevailing force of all Church pronouncements was to define diaconal ministry as mercy ministry.

As stated above, the Dutch Reformed churches have been much more inclined to encourage the ministry of deacons in their communities as well as their congregation. R.B. Kuiper of the Christian Reformed Church wrote: “Does it not follow that deacons should never extend aid to needy persons outside the fold of the church? The answer must be negative. Did not the merciful Christ heal the daughter of a Syrophenecian woman and thus permit a Greek to eat the crumbs that fell from the table of God’s covenant people (Mark 7:24-30)?” Except in some cases (counseling only, less complicated situations), deacons work in pairs. Several aspects are important to be aware of and to have clearly discussed between partners as work with a client begins.

DIACONATE MANUAL**GIFTEDNESS**

The beauty of the body is that we all are uniquely gifted and created in God's image. We are not all the same and each of us brings an important part to the body. We all have strengths and weaknesses and these need to be openly discussed. Each of us also may go through different seasons of time and emotional availability. One may have more emotional energy for a particular situation while another may struggle to give emotionally because of other things going on in his/her life. Clear communication between partners is critical in order to have unity and harmony when working together.

DECISION-MAKING

All decisions should be made together as partners. In situations where partners disagree, take the time to articulate and understand each other's perspectives and reasoning for it (see #7 – Conflict Resolution).

BALANCE AND BOUNDARIES

"The man who fears God will avoid all extremes." Ecc. 7:18. A boundary is that which serves to indicate the limits of anything. For example, limits can be verbally expressed by stating, "I would prefer to meet only once every other week with this client." Or "Right now I can't talk but let's plan to meet and talk before meeting with (the client's name)." Or "I am feeling emotionally spent relating to this person. I'm going to need to let you take the lead in this next meeting." Or "I can't continue this conversation right now because I'm overwhelmed. Can we plan to talk about it tomorrow evening?" (Also see Section 3.10, *Officer Care and Support*)

We need to know who God is and the gravity of His love for us. We also need to know who we are and who we aren't – what we can do and what we can't do. Consistently reminding ourselves of this helps foster a sense of security which causes you to set and keep boundaries. Ultimately, God is sovereign and responsible for change in someone's life.

RECORD-KEEPING

One of the two partners should keep the official record/file. When jointly meeting, one partner should write up the session. For individual sessions or phone conversations, each deacon is responsible for documenting the conversation and getting the note into the record. When the client is closed, the file is finalized and handed into the Diaconate staff.

CHECK REQUESTS/COUNSELING AUTHORIZATIONS

Partners should work out who will do the paperwork for checks and counseling.

COUNSELING

When counseling is involved, decide who is the main contact with the counselor.

DIACONATE MANUAL

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict can arise between partners over varying issues: workload not shared evenly, ongoing work/plan with client, etc. This can be prevented by clear communication and careful role clarification in the beginning and at regular intervals. However, if tension arises, the Matthew 18 principle requires one of the partners to express his or her concerns to the other. If a resolution is not reached, speak to the Diaconate Director or Chair, who are available for counsel and/or mediation if necessary.

UNITED FRONT

Always present a united front to the person. Backing up and supporting each other is critical.

PRAYER

Regular prayer, both individually and together, is crucial to keeping focused and Spirit-led.

DIACONATE MANUAL**ASSESSMENT DEFINITIONS**

“[Assessment may be defined as forming] an exact a definition as possible of the social situation and personality of a given client. Investigation or the gathering of evidence begins the process, the critical examination and comparison of evidence follow, and last comes its interpretation and the definition of the social difficulty.”

– Mary Richmond

The way a clinician/helper thinks; thinking in action; the way one configures the elements in a case so as to know what to do to help; a way to bring order out of the chaos of a melange of disconnected variables; knowing through the case data; drawing inferences from the evidence presented and just plain understanding the case.

FIRST CONTACT – EXPLORATION PHASE OF ASSESSMENT**Introduction**

The beginning phase of work with someone in need and requesting assistance is crucial for setting the tone and expectations of the relationship.

- A. The person in need is probably wondering ‘What will happen at this first meeting?’, ‘What does the word Diaconate mean anyway?’, ‘Will they judge me, think I’m irresponsible because I can’t pay my bills?’, etc.
- B. How this first meeting is conducted is also for the deacon’s benefit as well. It can serve to prevent future misunderstandings about what the deacon’s role is.
- C. The nature of the first meeting often determines whether a prospective client chooses to attend future meetings. First impressions can be lasting ones.

Preparing

- A. Whatever information is initially gathered on the situation/person should be considered a piece of the puzzle. The use of an intake form should be used to capture this information and then be passed on to the assigned mercy deacon.
- B. Exploring – discuss what is known of situation with partner.
 - 1. **Preparatory Empathy** – involves ‘putting oneself in the client’s shoes and trying to view the world through the client’s eyes.’ This will heighten sensitivity to the client’s possible agenda, thoughts, feelings about him/herself and the presenting concern. Try to imagine, on the basis of the limited information gathered, what the client may be thinking, feeling, and doing.
 - 2. **Planning** – Why is this meeting occurring? What is its overall purpose? What do we hope to accomplish through this meeting? What are the desired outcomes?
 - 3. **Self-exploration** – How am I likely to feel about this person? Given what I know about this problem and situation, what personal reactions, attitudes or preconceived judgements might I anticipate from myself?
 - 4. The question to ask consistently throughout the exploration and assessment process is, “*What don't I know that I need to know?*” Jot down questions before the first meeting.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.4 Initial Assessment Phase**

3/2/2006

The Initial Meeting

- A. At the initial meeting, open in prayer, establish rapport and a non-threatening environment.
- B. Objectives for that initial meeting are:
 1. Clarifying the purpose of the meeting. This should be simple and clear. Frequently, the stated purpose of a first meeting is “either far too ambitious or too ambiguously stated.” *The Social Work Interview*, pg. 118.

FOR EXAMPLE: “From the conversation you had with (Helpline person), I understand you are coming to us for help with your rent this month (summarize the request from the Intake form). (Name), for this first meeting, there are several things we need to cover in order to consider your request. First, we want to clarify what the Diaconate is so you better understand who we are; secondly, we want to hear in more detail about your situation and what led up to it and gather more info for our records, and lastly, to decide on a plan of action together. How does that sound?”

2. Clarifying what the Diaconate is and what your role is. Prepare a brief opening statement (see below) of what the Diaconate is and what it can offer. Often, the exact role you will play is unclear at the beginning. Rather than speculating about the role, a tentative description of the Diaconate’s general purpose is sufficient.

Brief Opening Statement of Diaconate’s Role and Confidentiality:

The Diaconate is a group of Deacons who are elected lay officers of Christ Presbyterian Church.

1. WHO ARE WE?

- We are trained lay people.
- We work with individuals and families who are in crisis or experiencing other difficulties.
- These difficulties could be social, emotional, physical, financial, and/or spiritual in nature.
- We are not professionals however, we do want to be of practical assistance to you, according to what your needs are.
- We want you to know what to expect so there is not unnecessary confusion along the way.

2. PROCEDURES AND PROCESS

The Diaconate is a large ministry. Therefore, procedures and processes have been put into place in order to serve those who come to us for help. Financial assistance is available; however, we have approval guidelines that we follow both for your benefit, and for accountability as stewards of the money God has entrusted to us through his people. This practically means that it may take time to make money available to you. Planning ahead is important.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

Lastly, confidentiality is very important to us. We can promise that only my partner, the Diaconate Director, Associate Director, and myself will know your identity. A small group of Diaconate leaders may also know some details of your situation, but never your identity. Our files are locked and only authorized people have access to these files. We want to assure you that everything you share with us will be strictly confidential. We use a standard intake form that we fill out with everyone who comes to the Diaconate.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.4 Initial Assessment Phase**

3/2/2006

3. Reaching for feedback from the client. This is important because the client has to accept the offer and want to work on the issues. Successful help can take place in areas in which the client feels some sense of investment and a freedom to risk for change.
4. Gathering more details about situation (Intake form).
5. Summarizing to the person what the discussion has brought up (e.g. nature of situation, financial needs, and possible resources) and deciding on a preliminary plan of action. Schedule the next meeting.
6. Establishing some initial goals and help with any immediate food or transportation needs. (Also see *Section 3.5, Ongoing Work Phase / Goal Setting / Accountability*).
7. Any further financial assistance needs to be in accordance with the Diaconate Manual depending on the amount. **DO NOT** promise financial assistance at this time. However, be hopeful and assure the person that one of you will be in contact soon with a plan for moving forward.
8. Always close meetings in prayer.
9. Report back to deacon in charge of Mercy Ministry. The intake form should be filed appropriately in the deacon's mercy file.

Principles to Guide Beginning Work with Clients

- A. Be aware of clients who may try to control the initial meeting. Direct the course of the meeting while giving the client room to talk and unburden their heart if they need, but be sure to get all the information needed.
- B. Service should not be burdensome. If burdened, pray about it and talk through it with partner and/or the deacon in charge of Mercy Ministry.
- C. It's important to set appropriate boundaries. Generally, our role is not to become their friend, although friendship may arise out of the helping relationship later.
- D. Set realistic goals with the client's limits and strengths in mind.
- E. Though the Diaconate is a church ministry, professionalism is still warranted.
- F. We can't fix all problems – pick and choose carefully.
- G. “Counseling only” clients should require minimal time – talking about their problems is the counselor's job, ours is overseeing the details re: payment.
- H. Spending two or more hours on phone with a client should not happen. It creates dependency and gives the impression that you have all the answers. It is exhausting for client and deacon partners and also can end up being counterproductive.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Active Listening Skills**

Active Listening Skills are absolutely necessary at this stage of the helping process. Our tendency as helpers is to jump in with answers and solutions prematurely. Until the person can fully articulate his/her situation, we should be holding off on our opinions and suggestions.

- A. **Reflective listening** helps us to best meet the needs of the client. It aids the person to thoroughly describe and discover the various aspects, dynamics, thoughts and feelings related to his/her situation.
- B. Three parts of reflective listening are :
 - 1. Identifying the *feeling* content of what the person is saying.
 - 2. Identifying the *thought* content of what the person is saying.
 - 3. *Paraphrase* the thought and feeling content together in a tentative statement.
- C. "Contrary to what you might expect, the greatest cause of problems and conflict in companies, churches and families often isn't disagreement over answers to basic questions – but a lack of agreement about what the real questions are."
– Dr. Gary Sweeten
- D. Reflective listening is most important when interacting with people who want:
 - to have someone understand them
 - help in clarifying a problem
 - involvement and friendship
 - to express deep feelings, such as anger, pain, sadness, confusion, excitement, happiness and joy
- E. In each of these situations, reflective listening offers the client an opportunity to better explore and understand themselves and their situation. It provides an invitation to build trust gradually by giving the client full control of the direction the communication takes. Showing empathy is a way of offering grace to others. The fruits of patience, kindness and gentleness are at work.
- F. Sometimes a client is only requesting money and does not want personal/relational involvement. This should become clear at the initial meeting.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.4 Initial Assessment Phase**

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Use Open-Ended Questions

Who?, What?, When?, Where? and How? These are questions that require a descriptive, not just yes or no, answer. Avoid “why” questions. “Why” questions are too probing at this point. Stay with the facts and information and do not delve into emotions or motivation.

A. Sample questions:

- Tell me about your situation? Has this happened before? If so, how have you dealt with it in the past? How have you provided for yourself in the past? Who has helped you in the past? What has changed in the availability of that resource? Are there other resources?
- Are you making ends meet in all areas of your life? Rent? Food? Medicine?, etc.
- With whom do you live? Where?
- What might the future be like if this situation (financial) were to remain as it is now? Imagine what would be different in the future if the situation were to be completely resolved? What are your plans/direction? What are you doing to prevent this need from recurring?
- Is Christ Presbyterian your home church? Are you a member? Regular attendee? If not, are you willing to become a member? If not, what are your hesitations? Are you in a fellowship group? Do you have a significant support system at Christ Presbyterian or elsewhere? Friends? Relatives? May we/I contact them? Other personal references that we can call?
- Overall, how are you doing? Tell me a bit about yourself.
- Attendance at a full introduction to Christ Presbyterian class may be used as a motivating condition for financial assistance.

Additional Comments on Confidentiality

- A. Written consent mandatory for contacts such as medical and psychiatric personnel; counselors/therapist; Fellowship Group Leaders; family members; friends.
- B. When speaking with a client, remember that their involvement in the Diaconate may be private to other members of his/her household. Be discreet when leaving phone messages, etc.
- C. Review the Confidentiality Policy frequently so as to keep it fresh in your mind (Section 2.4).
- D. The only exceptions to this policy are when:
 1. Safety of any person is at risk
 2. A child is subject to neglect or abuse
 3. A law is likely to be broken
 4. Church disciplinary involvement (RPC members only)

DIACONATE MANUAL

Mental Status Assessment

- **Appearance** – How does he/she look and behave?
- **Speech** – How does he speak?
- **Emotions** – What is his/her predominant mood? What is his predominant affect?
- **Mood** – How does the client feel most of the time?
- **Affect** – How does the client appear to be feeling while he/she is with you?
- **Thought process** – How does the client think?
- **Thought content** – What does he think about?
- **Sensory perceptions** – Are there any indications of illusions or hallucinations?
- **Mental capacities** – Is he/she oriented x3 (i.e. time, place and person)? What is your estimate of his/her intelligence? Can he/she remember and concentrate? How is her/his judgment and insight?
- **Attitude toward the interviewer** – How does the client behave toward you?
- **Important:** Document your observations with the person's own words (use direct quotes).

DIACONATE MANUAL**ASSESSMENT / COUNSEL****Discuss Gathered Information with Partner, Director or Chair**

- A. What is the Presenting Problem? What is the person asking the Diaconate for?
1. The following categories can be helpful in assessment the exact nature of the request.
 - Information
 - Action – typically financial
 - Understanding & Involvement – prayer support, spiritual guidance, advice
 - Friendship
 2. **Felt Needs** are visible and are met by deeds more than words. The definition of mercy ministry is the meeting of felt or human needs through deeds in the power and love of the Kingdom.
- B. Pray, reflect, get counsel from Diaconate Chair, elders or deacon in charge of mercy ministry.
- C. Initial Assessment:
1. What are the causes of the need? The basic causes of poverty are:
 - Injustice
 - Calamity
 - Sin
 2. Financial presenting problems are often masking other sub-problems or dependencies that may have led to the financial situation. There are three basic problems that occur frequently in families which have chronic economic problems. Ministers of mercy should look for them immediately.
 - a. A lack of Financial Independence
 - 1) Definition – This condition exists when a family cannot generate sufficient income for its needs. There are at least three groups within this category:
 - (a) Some persons are physically or mentally incapable of working, or working at a job which pays well. This includes many elderly and handicapped persons.
 - (b) Others are able-bodied, but “emotionally dependent.” That is, they have become accustomed to look to other individuals or organizations for income. They are unmotivated to become financially independent.
 - (c) A third group is able-bodied and emotionally independent (that is, they are uncomfortable with their condition). They have been laid off from their work, or have found their job skills unmarketable or have been saddled with a huge debt.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.4 Initial Assessment Phase****3/2/2006**

2) Ministry

- (a) Group #1 (the handicapped), need (a) permanent economic-physical aid sufficient to their needs and (b) help to accept their dependent position while maintaining self-respect.
- (b) Group #2 (the able-bodied, emotionally dependent) need (a) to be encouraged/confronted in their psychological dependence. (Discouragement, cynicism and laziness can be helped by giving the persons tasks which are not too hard or too easy, and which produce independence.), (b) to have their vocational aptitudes and skills identified, (c) to learn job seeking skills, (d) to eliminate habits or attitudes that obstruct them from keeping jobs, (e) to help the family find employment opportunities.
- (c) Group #3 (the able-bodied, emotionally independent) need all of the help under Group #2, part (1).

- 3) Goal: When a family has been self-supporting, through income from employment, for at least six months, diaconal aid can cease.

b. A Lack of Budgetary Control

- 1) Definition – Some economic problems appear, superficially, to be largely financial dependence, when in fact income is sufficient for needs. Instead, the major problem is a lack in money management. The major indicator of this problem is debt delinquency. If a family has incurred more debts than is able to pay off consistently (according to contract with creditors), then the family has no budgetary control.
- 2) Ministry – These families need all or some of the following aids:
 - (a) Help to develop efficient shopping skills. Are they impulsive? Taken in by advertisers? Subject to pressure of the children's desires? Unable to find items at reasonable costs?
 - (b) Help to develop realistic priorities for spending. We spend our money on what we think is important to us. But we must reconcile our values with our other needs and income realities. Some people spend due to emotional problems. These must be confronted.
 - (c) Help to develop a financial planning and evaluation system. Can the family draw up and stick to a budget?
 - (d) Help to develop a debt reduction plan. Some outstanding debts (medical expenses, college tuition) place short-term strain on a family's budget. Careful management and financial planning could enable all obligations to be met without increasing income.
- 3) Goal: When a family is able to maintain all payments without delinquency for six months, your financial ministry to them can be termed "successful." (Note: See Outline for Financial Counseling in Resources for Deacons by Tim Keller.)

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Section: 2.4 Initial Assessment Phase

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c. A Lack of Family Nurture Skills

1) Definition – Behind many economic problems are family problems which make it difficult for parents to seek or keep jobs and maintain budget control. A family must be able to support the efforts of its members in these basic activities. An indicator of this problem is the number of social or legal delinquencies its members have. Also, the school performance of the family's children can be a sign of family nurture.

2) Ministry

- (a) Help to enable family members to communicate (send) desires and thoughts to other members.
- (b) Help to enable family members to listen to their members.
- (c) Help to enable family members to establish rules and guidelines for family behavior. (For parents, this is the ability to set down standards and be consistent in enforcing them.)
- (d) Help to enable family members to communicate love and concern to one another.

3) Goal: Usually, a family's other problems (budgetary control, financial independence) will improve as family nurture improves. Look for a decrease in children's delinquencies or increases in their grades. (Reference John Guetter, Service to "Families: Problem Solving in Diaconal Outreach.)

3. Follow the acrostic:

A → Assess the situation

C → Connect the person with the resource that can best meet the need (we are not always the best resource!)

T → Trust God with the results

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.5 Discerning a True Story**

3/2/2006

One of our responsibilities as the Diaconate is to manage the money given for mercy needs. Therefore, careful examination and discernment of a person's situation and request is important. We are called to be good stewards of the money entrusted to us.

People who can detect counterfeit money don't study the counterfeits – they study the real thing. Similarly, we can detect counterfeit stories by looking for authenticity in a person's character. The fruit of the heart will tell the story. There are three things to cover in determining legitimacy:

- A. Thorough interview
- B. Assessment/counsel
- C. Prayer

THE INTERVIEW

This should be done in person if possible. Body language, eye contact and general appearance can reveal a lot. Watch for red flags. Be clear about the role of the Diaconate from the start. Ask open-ended, probing questions.

Always pray before meeting with someone; have a partner if possible; be warm, empathic and respectful always. Listen actively!

See sample questions above in *Section 3.2, Initial Assessment Phase*

CHARACTERISTICS TO LOOK FOR

- A. A vague description of problem/situation (however, not always a sign; could be ashamed of their current state) or offering an abundance of details not relevant to presenting problem.
- B. A person who is unwilling to disclose financial status (this could also be embarrassment or shame).
- C. Someone who has an inconsistent story, with nothing to corroborate it.
- D. Partially answering questions; shifting the subject.
- E. Stressing the urgency of the request: "I must have the money tonight or it will be of no use to me."

ASSESSMENT/COUNSEL

Discuss gathered information with Deaconate Chair or deacon in charge of mercy ministry.

- A. Follow through with verifying the story. An honest person will help you to verify it.
- B. Delay response – reflect, pray, seek further counsel.
- C. Pursue other alternatives to giving money.
- D. If you decide to assist financially – devise a clear plan for how much and conditions if appropriate. See section 2.7 of this manual for developing a ministry plan.

When you are in doubt... "It is better to err on the side of compassion than to turn a legitimately needy person away."

DIACONATE MANUAL

PRAY

Ask for God's wisdom and that His Holy Spirit will lead you accurately.

DIACONATE MANUAL

DEFINITION OF A CRISIS

“A unique event or series of circumstances that threatens our sense of well being and interferes with the routine of daily living; a turning point, often traumatic.”

Acute phase is usually 4-6 weeks. The aftereffects can last a lifetime.

FOUR KEY POINTS TO CRISIS

- Unique
- Threatening to health/well-being
- Old ways of coping do not work anymore (increases stress level)
- Greek definition (Krisis) – To make a forced decision
- Chinese use two characters – Danger and Opportunity

TWO KINDS OF CRISES

- Developmental
- Situational / Accidental

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF A CRISIS

- Helplessness and Hopelessness
- Ambivalence
- Anger
- High frustration level
- Low efficiency in daily routine
- Low level of physical activity
- Loss of self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Dependence on others
- Detachment
- Fear
- Guilt
- Unable to cope
- High level of emotional turmoil
- Spiritual Confusion

Each situation/person is unique, so characteristics will vary.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.6 Crisis Management & Spotting Depression/Suicide

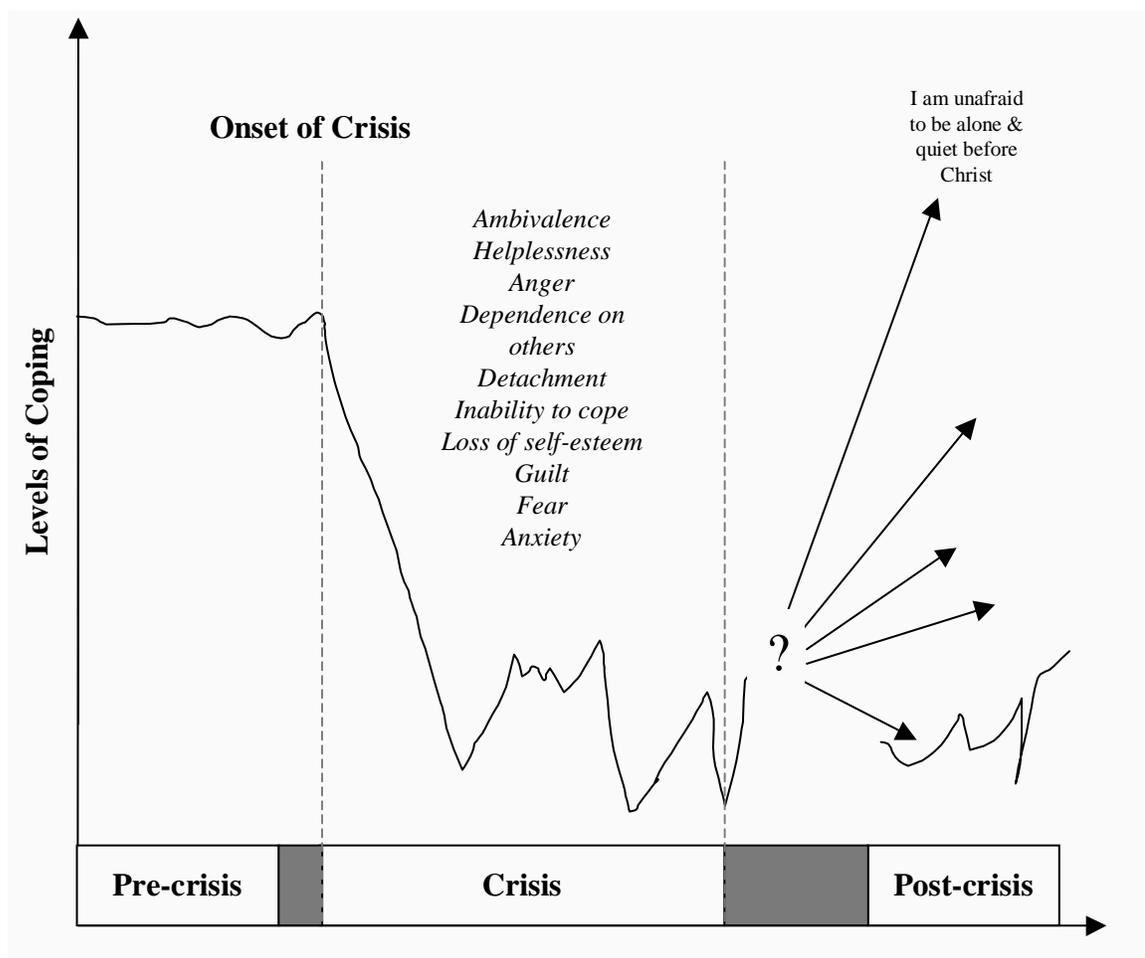
2/25/2004

TWO EMOTIONAL STATES THAT OFTEN ACCOMPANY CRISES

- A. **Ambivalence** – existence of conflicting feelings or thoughts; vacillation between two opposing choices.
- B. **Detachment** – lack of emotional/intellectual involvement (not considering the consequences)

DYNAMICS OF A CRISIS

Crisis: A unique event or series of circumstances that threaten our sense of well-being and interferes with the routine of daily living.



DIACONATE MANUAL

HOW TO INTERVENE

A. Make Personal, Face-to-Face Contact

1. Show concern with your presence
2. Show warmth, empathy, respect, willingness to listen
3. Make eye contact
4. Thank the client for their time

B. Reduce Anxiety

1. Exhibit calmness, acceptance
2. Allow person to talk about the situation at length
3. Gather facts about the present situation
4. Point out strength already shown in trying to cope
5. Share spiritual truths and pray with him/her
6. Instill hope
7. Absorb anger if needed
8. Help person identify feelings

C. Focus on the Issues

1. Help person explore present situation (feelings, thoughts, plans).
2. Help him/her to explore his/her view of what has happened and explain his/her efforts to solve the problem.
3. Focus on specifics.
4. List resources available but DO NOT push your own solution.

D. Encourage Action

1. Help person to set a goal that is reasonable and manageable, make a plan, explore alternatives, and examine consequences (possible outcomes).
2. Encourage her/him to put it into action. Helper may need to take action for the person but only to the extent needed (burden vs. load, Gal. 6). *"Do for others that which they cannot do for themselves, and no more."* (Thomas Rusk)
3. Help him/her to help him/herself.

E. Help person to accept the reality of the situation. Often denial can be strong when trauma has occurred. Be aware of this.

F. Follow up is critical. Follow up after and in the midst of a crisis should be immediate and regular.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.6 Crisis Management & Spotting Depression/Suicide**

2/25/2004

DEPRESSION

If a person has experienced five or more of the following symptoms nearly every day for two weeks or more, they may be suffering from clinical depression. Strongly suggest that he/she sees a counselor or psychiatrist as soon as possible.

- A. Depressed mood: feeling sad, tearful or "empty"
- B. Little interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- C. Change in appetite or weight
- D. Sleeping much more or much less than usual
- E. Restlessness or decreased activity (psychomotor agitation or retardation)
- F. Fatigue or loss of energy
- G. Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- H. Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- I. Thoughts of death or suicide

"Hope of recovery is found in educating people in biblical principles of life. Disease is an effort of nature to free the system from dysfunctional conditions that result from violation of its law. In case of sickness, the cause has to be identified. Unhealthy conditions should be changed, wrong patterns corrected. The entire healing process should be based on the Gospel. No human psychology or drug can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove guilt and anxiety that crush the life forces. All human resources are powerless to comfort the sorrowful heart or to restore the wasted life. The Gospel is our only hope. Joy in the Holy Spirit is a health/life giving principle. The battle against depression is a battle against death."

*Dr. Hannibal Silver
Director, Redeemer Counseling Center*

DIACONATE MANUAL**SUICIDE INTERVENTION****Introduction**

The most frequent suicide attempts occur in women under 30. The most frequent completed suicides occur in men over 45.

Myth #1: A person who is thinking about killing her/himself will never tell anyone.

Fact: Most people who take their own lives have given some sign of their intentions to at least one other person – and often to several other people – within the last few weeks or months. That sign can be verbal and quite direct, whether said in a joking manner or quite seriously.

Myth #2: If you talk about suicide, that will put the idea into a person's head and she/he will kill him/herself.

Fact: Talking about suicide does not cause suicide and not talking about suicide with someone who is thinking of hurting herself can sometimes be a fatal mistake. Most people who are thinking about killing themselves really don't want to do it.

Assessing a Client for Risk of Suicide

If the answer to some of these is "yes," then you should follow up with the client to find out whether or not the client has any suicidal ideation or intentions.

1. Is the client in a group that is statistically at high risk for suicide?
2. Has the client unintentionally gained or lost more than 5% of her body weight in the last month?
3. Has the client reported any marked change in sleeping habits?
4. Does the client appear sad or withdrawn?
5. Does the client sound despondent?
6. Has anyone else reported that the client is despondent or sounding hopeless?
7. Does the client seem extremely angry or hostile?
8. Does the client report a sudden improvement in mood or lifting of a longstanding depression?
9. Has the client recently experienced the loss of a significant person in her life through death, divorce, removal, or abandonment?
10. Has the client reported any recent suicide among friends or family?
11. Has the client reported any history of suicide in the family?
12. If so, does the client's family talk about the suicide, or is it a secret?
13. Is the client approaching the anniversary of a family member's suicide?
14. Is the client about to be the same age or in similar circumstances as the family member who killed him/herself?

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Section: 2.6 Crisis Management & Spotting Depression/Suicide

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15. Has the client reported to you a previous suicide attempt?
16. Has the client made any comments – joking or otherwise – suggesting that death would be preferable to life?
17. Has anyone else reported that the client talked about killing herself?
18. Has anyone found a note, poem, or printed literature involving death or suicide that was written by or belongs to the client?
19. Does the client report giving away possessions?
20. Does the client have a history of impulsiveness, poor judgment, or antisocial behavior?
21. Does the client have a history of recurrent depression, intense anxiety, or panic attacks?
22. Does the client have a history of a serious mental disorder, especially auditory hallucinations commanding her to hurt herself?
23. Does the client have a history of substance abuse?
24. Is the client frequently involved in “death-defying” or high-risk behavior?
25. Does the client frequently pick fights with people who are much larger or more dangerous?
26. Is there a current crisis in the client’s life, such as illness, job loss, divorce, school failure, or suspension?

Questions to Ask the Client

The list begins with general questions designed to establish whether or not a client is having suicidal thoughts. These questions will help to establish the existence of that mindset; however, once mindset is reported, pursue the subsequent information in as much detail as possible.

1. You seem upset. Just how badly are you feeling?
2. When you feel badly, do you ever have any thoughts about hurting yourself?
3. Do you ever wish you were dead?
4. When you wish you were dead, do you ever think about killing yourself?
5. When did you start having these thoughts?
6. What was happening when you started thinking about hurting yourself?
7. How often are you having these thoughts?
8. Are you able to stop these thoughts once you start having them?
9. When you think about killing yourself, do you think a lot about it?

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Section: 2.6 Crisis Management & Spotting Depression/Suicide

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10. Do these thoughts upset you or do they make you feel better?
11. What do you think would happen if you tried to kill yourself?
12. Who do you think would try to prevent your suicide?
13. Have you told anyone that you're thinking of killing yourself?
14. What do you imagine death would be like?
15. When you have thoughts of killing yourself, how do you imagine doing it?
16. When you imagine it, do you complete the suicide? If not, who or what stops you?
17. Do you imagine writing a suicide note? Have you actually written a suicide note?
18. Where do you expect to get the (gun, pills, knife, etc.) with which to kill yourself?
19. When you feel this way, do you talk to anyone about it?
20. Is that person a comfort?
21. Is there anyone who is so important to you that that person could keep you from hurting yourself?

Questions to Ask Once a Client Tells You She/He Is Thinking About Killing Her/Himself

1. When did she/he last have a thought about killing her/himself?
2. How often does she/he think about killing her/himself?
3. How comforting do these thoughts seem to her/him?
4. Has she/he made a previous suicide attempt?
5. Does she/he now have a plan to kill him/herself?
6. Can she/he carry out the plan?

IF YOU ASSESS THAT A CLIENT HAS A SUICIDAL MINDSET, A PLAN AND THE MEANS TO CARRY IT OUT, CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY OR CONVINCE THE PERSON TO GO TO AN EMERGENCY ROOM AND ACCOMPANY HIM/HER. IF THE CLIENT ONLY HAS SUICIDAL THOUGHTS, BUT NO PLAN NOR THE MEANS, DECIDE ON A PLAN TO HAVE HIM/HER SEEN BY A PSYCHIATRIST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND TO ARRANGE FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT UNTIL THE APPOINTMENT.

DIACONATE MANUAL

CHRIST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: SUICIDE INTERVENTION PLAN

1. Identification

- A. *Verbal or written signs* – comments about how death would be a comfort, or comments that indicate the person has been thinking about dying. OR after a period of depression, a sudden calm that accompanies comments that all is going to be fine soon.
- B. *Non-verbal signs* – very sad, depressed facial expressions, slow movements, personal hygiene declines, missing appointments, unable to leave apartment, unable to maintain a usual daily routine.

2. Response

- A. *Pastoral Response* – call the person on the phone and ask how they are doing. Offer that you noticed he/she was looking particularly sad lately and wondered if something is happening in his/her life recently that he/she may want to talk about. Offer to get together with the person. Listen. Ask clarifying questions. Apply the gospel to the situation. Pray with him/her. Read scripture that applies – Romans 8:1-8; Psalm 139; Isaiah 40:28-31; Psalm 16:11; Matthew 11:28-30
- B. *Assessment* – After you have more information and insight into the person's situation, assess in conjunction with the Pastor or counselor whether the person is seriously in danger of attempting suicide.

In your conversations with the person, if the person tells you outright that she/he is thinking about killing her/himself, then there are seven questions to answer to determine how serious the situation is.

1. When did she/he last have a thought about killing her/himself?
2. How often does she/he think about killing her/himself?
3. How comforting do these thoughts seem to her/him?
4. Has she/he made a previous suicide attempt?
5. Does she/he now have a plan to kill her/himself?
6. Does she/he have the means to carry the plan out?
7. How confident is she/he of the Gospel? Of God's presence in her/his life?

3. Intervention

Call the Pastor Immediately.

Active Suicidality (a medical emergency – see box below):

The person cannot say that he/she would NOT kill him/herself. The person wavers in his/her commitment to keep him/herself alive in the near future. "I honestly cannot be sure that I wouldn't try to kill myself."

- call 911 immediately **or**
- convince the person to go with you to an emergency room.

Stay with the person at all times until you reach the emergency room.

Passive Suicidality: the person thinks he/she might be better off dead, but would never do anything to end his/her own life. "I often wish something would happen to end my life, but I would not do it myself."

- decide on a plan to have him/her seen by a psychiatrist.
- arrange for social support until the appointment.

How Serious Is the Person About Suicide?

1. Has **thoughts** of death, whether he/she would go to heaven or hell
2. Has a clear **plan** how he/she would kill him/herself
3. Has the **means** to do it (pills, knife, gun, access to a balcony/roof)

DIACONATE MANUAL**BIBLICAL BASIS**

"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain." Ps. 127:1

"By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures." Prov. 24:3, 4

SO WHAT?**Why be accountable? Why encourage it?**

Paul gives us a great example of accountability. In writing his letters to the various churches he practices and encourages accountability. He may have felt accountable to or responsible for the people in the churches in which he played a major role. But through his writings, we see accountability girded by Christian love. And he asked his brothers to be accountable by encouraging generosity to one another; not just financially, but by opening their homes to one another, constantly sharing the Gospel and always being prepared.

DECIDE ON PLAN OF ACTION WITH SPECIFIC GOALS**Definitions**

- A. *Accountable*: obliged to account for one's actions; responsible; capable of being accounted for; explainable.
- B. *Synonyms*: responsible, answerable, liable, chargeable, beholden; duty-bound.
- C. *Goal*: A boundary is the line or place at which a race, trip, etc is ended; an object or end that one strives to attain; aim.
- D. *Synonyms*: intention, destination, aim, target, purpose, end, design, visions.

Steps to Goal Setting

- A. Both client and partners should agree upon goals.
- B. Goals should be verbally stated or written.
- C. Repeat and follow up on them frequently. Have a set time to review them. Frequency of meeting and phone calls will vary depending on the situation.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.7 Ongoing Work / Goal Setting / Accountability**

3/2/2006

Characteristics of Well-Formulated Goals

- Must be understandable
- Broad enough to allow workability
- Narrow enough so that attainment can be measured
- Include a time dimension
- Achievable

Our goal should be to carry a person's burden until they can carry their own load (Galatians 6:2-4). The transition from burden to load requires establishing clear goals, conditions, expectations, accountability, and follow-through to prevent future crises and promote healthy interdependency.

Administrative Details

- A. If financial assistance is provided, all checks must be made out to the **service provider or third party**; rarely to the individual being helped (there are some exceptions – e.g. rent). Coupons/gift certificates from supermarkets can be distributed for food purchases.
- B. To meet financial needs, a Check Request Form must be submitted to the church accounting office. In the case of an emergency or short turnaround on a bill, the Check Request Form can be called in and then faxed. The original copy must be submitted within two days.
- C. If counseling is needed, request approval from the head of the Diaconate Mercy Team. Once approved, contact the appropriate subcontractor and define the arrangement for counseling (number of paid session, etc.)

Clarification of Expectations & Roles

Communicate initial plan of action in a follow-up meeting. Clarify expectations/role of client and officers. Be sure to let client know that any financial assistance is a gift, not a loan.

Additional Resources

Reference Resources for Deacons by Tim Keller “Developing a Ministry Plan” and Service to Families: Problem-Solving Skills in Deaconal Outreach by John Guetter.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.8 Budget and Money Management

2/25/2004

INTRODUCTION

Much of Diaconate care requires us to help our clients to look at their spending and earning and together develop a realistic budget.

THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF STEWARDSHIP

- A. Stewardship must be grounded in the sovereignty of God as the Creator and sustainer of the universe, and giver of good gifts.
- B. Money, talents, energy, all resources come from God and should be used to glorify him.
- C. A steward is someone in the employ of a rich man, or a King. He looks after their property in the same manner as the King himself would. A good steward will use the King's resources to create profit for the King.
- D. If we use our talents as good stewards, we will profit our King and bring him glory.
- E. The more we trust in God with our material treasures, the more he will entrust us with his spiritual treasures (Luke 16:9-12).

SYMPTOMS OF IMPENDING FINANCIAL CRISIS

- Underlying "get-it-now" philosophy
- Overdue bills
- Investment worries
- A "get-rich-quick" attitude
- Covering up financial mistakes
- Impulse spending/buying
- Basic needs unmet
- Lack of tithing
- Over-commitment to work
- Entangled money
- Irresponsibility
- Parental/family subsidies
- "Spend Thrift" attitude; unable to sustain a budget

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Section: 2.8 Budget and Money Management

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FINANCIAL PLANNING

Assessing Financial Health

- A. Collect all financial information – checkbook, bills, statements for credit cards, savings, investment and retirement accounts, outstanding loans, insurance payments and policies, etc.
 - 1. Designate a place to keep all financial information – a desk or file drawer or special file box. Be consistent in keeping information organized so it can be easily found.
- B. Reconcile checkbook(s).
 - 1. Record all deposits, checks written, cash withdrawals, automatic payments and deposits. It is often possible to call an automated phone line at the credit company to get updated account information.
 - 2. Compare this record of transactions with the bank statement, checking off each one listed on statement.
 - 3. Total any outstanding checks and withdrawals and subtract from sum of last month's balance plus deposits not yet on bank statement. If an even balance cannot be reached, take the bank's balance as the final sum, making sure there are enough funds in account to cover outstanding checks.
- C. Create a list of all monthly income sources and expenditures, with approximate amounts. This list will help create a budget plan.

Budgeting

- A. Principles
 - 1. Be accurate AND realistic. A family of four cannot eat for a month on \$50, nor does it need \$500.
 - 2. List fixed expenses (debt, rent, gas, electric, food, commutation, etc.). Fixed expenses are those that are paid monthly and tend to be about the same amount each month. Budget these items first.
 - 3. List variable expenses. Variable expenses may or may not appear each month and the amounts vary (clothes, allowance, entertainment, etc.). Try to estimate the average amount spent each month on these items and set that as the budget entry. This is usually where budgets can be trimmed down first.
 - 4. If any income is left over, deposit it into a savings account!
 - 5. Track the budget for a few months and adjust amounts accordingly. *Note:* it is better to over-budget than under-budget.
 - 6. Make the budget a useful tool rather than a burden. Over-control can lead to dependence and “serving the budget.” Remember – the point of a budget is stewardship.

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B. Consider Changes in Lifestyle

1. Examine lifestyle habits: does spending reflect true stewardship or the satisfying of every desire and whim? If someone else were spending money this way, how would you react? Are there other issues to address?
2. Live within one's means. Having the latest designer fashions, eating in the best restaurants, and attending every Broadway opening is not possible on a middle or low income. Be creative! Learn to sew. Begin to cook gourmet meals at home, borrow books AND movies from the local library. Plan special events (and gifts) into the monthly budget!

C. Maintaining the Budget

1. Exert discipline when spending. Regardless of the method used, do more than reconcile the checkbook (of course, that is an important step). Keep spending in line with the budget. Here are several suggested methods.
 - Coding – use a letter coding system that corresponds to the budget categories. Place letters in the little box marked "code" in the checkbook AND next to each item on the credit card statement. Every month, add up the spending in each category and compare this to the budget.
 - Computer programs – programs, like Quicken, create spending categories and help to track of spending amounts.
 - Cash Only – each month (or week) withdraw the allotted amount for each category from ATM and place it in an envelope. Only spend money from the envelope. Make no extra trips to the ATM! This works well for particularly tight budgets or heavy debt situations. It forces one to explore bargains and cost-free methods of entertainment.

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DIGGING OUT OF DEBT

Examine Spending Habits

- A. Record current cash expenditures for at least one month (a sample cash expenditure form is in the appendix). This will help to determine the amounts needed in the overall budget.
- B. If possible, review spending patterns for the past few months or year. Determine when money is spent, why, and how much.
- C. Realize that other issues may need to be addressed before client can deal with spending issues.
- D. Note the “budget busters.” These are items that can ruin any budget. Planning in advance can avoid over-stretching the budget:
 - 1. Unexpected medical/dental expenses
 - 2. Small purchases such as cassette tapes, books, magazines, taxis, snacks drain wallets surprisingly fast
 - 3. Daily lunch out
 - 4. Yearly taxes
 - 5. Insurance premiums
 - 6. Bookkeeping errors
 - 7. Gifts
- E. Cut up credit cards into small pieces and throw away. ALWAYS close the account, in writing, with the financial company too avoid the possibility of someone finding the account number and using it for spending fraud.
- F. If you MUST keep credit cards, choose one general card (Visa, AMEX) and close out the other accounts, especially store accounts, which charge much higher interest rates.
- G. Keep the card in a safe place, but not on your person, to avoid impulse buying.
- H. Pay off credit card debt first, even before saving. The interest on credit accounts will be more than interest on savings, making it worth while to pay them first.
- I. Adjust mindset to accommodate regular, substantial payments on the debt (10-20% of income, after taxes and tithe).
- J. It may be advisable to roll debt into one consolidated loan with a lower rate, if possible.
- K. Prioritize spending so that creditors and fixed expenses come before other payments. (Obviously, some unsecured loans, such as mortgages or school loans, which are intended to be paid over time.)
- L. Set a goal of paying off consumer debt in *x* number of years, choose reasonable amount of time. It’s a goal and can be adjusted as debt declines.
- M. Be accountable to someone you trust.

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ADDITIONAL TIPS

- A. Pay bills all at one time of the month, (e.g. the last weekend of each month). Make a habit of recording all checking account transactions on the same day transactions are made by doing it at the same time each day.
- B. Keep a current total on the checkbook.
- C. Withdraw the same amount from the ATM each month or week. This will help to avoid the extra ATM charges, which quickly add up!
- D. Carry small amounts of cash to help avoid impulse buying.
- E. Cut back on variable expenses where possible. Consider ways to reduce fixed spending (for example, move to a less expense apartment or find a roommate to cut housing expenses).
- F. Delay payment 30 days on big-ticket items (assuming there is no interest charged), or take advantage of sales by advance planning
- G. Use credit cards wisely. If a purchase cannot be paid off that month, avoid buying it. Paying 18% interest over several months negates the savings of a sale purchase.
- H. Spend only paper money. Put all change in a jar at the end of each day and when the jar is full, roll up the cash and put it in a savings account. This can put \$50-\$100 a month into savings!
- I. Save excess cash: If there is cash left over at the end of the month, don't spend it – put it in a savings account! Even small amounts saved over time add up. This will create a growing nest egg for future needs or emergencies.
- J. Cancel cable television service (or cut it back to Basic Service), newspaper and magazine subscriptions. Use the public library copies.
- K. Take lunch to work each day, or several times a week.
- L. Lower the thermostat and keep lights and electrical equipment off when not needed.
- M. Stop buying junk food and soda.
- N. Use the public library to borrow books and videos instead of buying books and going to the movies.
- O. Look in the papers and magazines for free events, plays, concerts, etc. for entertainment.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.8 Budget and Money Management**

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AN OUTLINE FOR FINANCIAL COUNSELING**A. Determining Where You Are Now**

- a. List monthly expenses after keeping a daily record of *all* expenditures for *at least* 30 days.
 - i. Fixed: Tithe, housing, taxes, insurance, other installment payments or dues.
 - ii. Flexible: Food (in and out), household operation, medical, transportation, utilities, recreation/entertainment, house maintenance, clothing and cleaning, education (school, lessons, books), furniture, gifts, other expenses.
- b. List income each month. Salary, interest and dividends, gifts.
- c. Compare:
 - i. Does your income exceed your expenses? Simply keep a record of every expenditure to be sure you maintain budget control.
 - ii. Do your expenses exceed income? Then you need a debt management program.

B. Getting Where You Want to Be

- a. Budget Control
 - i. On the basis of your current expenses and income, set a *realistic* budget for each item on the above list.
 - ii. Keep a record of every item of income and expense in a ledger. A good example is on pages 50-53 of Gearge L. Ford, All the Money You Need, (World Books, 1976).
 - iii. A good rule of thumb is the 10-75-15 plan. Your goal should be to give 10% of earning to God's work, use 75% for living expenses, and put 15% of annual earnings into savings and investments.
- b. Debt Management Plan
 - i. Analyze budget problems:
 1. Are financial records and the checkbook being regularly and accurately balanced?
 2. Is there a problem with impulse buying and is it usually done on credit?
 3. Are the housing costs simply too expensive for the family's income?
 4. Can the amount of money spent on food, household, and automobile be reduced?
 5. Is the family over insured?
 6. Can the expenses for entertainment and recreation be reduced? (This is nearly always possible!)

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- ii. Practice a plan to reduce unnecessary buying.
 1. Buy nothing that is not an absolute necessity (a specifically budgeted item) unless you wait for 30 days.
 - a. When you first desire such an item, record it somewhere with the date.
 - b. Do not buy anything until it is on the list for 30 days.
 - c. Do not ever buy more than one thing on the list in a month.
 - d. Do not use credit cards for anything on the list.
 2. Before buying anything, ask yourself the questions on this list:
 - a. Can I get along without it?
 - b. Can a less expensive item be substituted?
 - c. Have I compared prices on the same item elsewhere?
 - d. Do I need to use as much?
 3. Do not go shopping just to browse. Go when you have something specific in mind.
- iii. Develop a debt management plan.
 1. Reduce family living expenses (by decreasing entertainment expenses, impulse buying, housing costs until 75% of the income covers expenses.
 2. Put 15% of income into debt liquidation. (The figure is approximate, of course.) When outstanding debts are liquidated, put this 15% into savings and investments. By “outstanding debts” we do not refer to monthly house payments and other such fixed expenses, *unless* payments on these items are behind.
 3. Give 10% of income to God’s work.

DIACONATE MANUAL

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." Ephesians 4:15

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector." Matthew 18:15-17

2 Samuel 12:1-15 – Nathan uses a word picture and sets David up to determine his own suggested punishment.

PURPOSE AND DEFINITION OF CONFRONTATION

- A. The purpose of confrontation is accountability, action/repentance, restoration and reconciliation. Having the balance of care and confrontation produces growth and tribulation in a person's life.
- B. Confrontation defined: To confront is to point out discrepancies in another person's behavior, words, and/or perceptions/beliefs.

TYPES OF CONFRONTATION

- A. The least threatening form of confrontation is pointing out a discrepancy between two or more things that someone has said about herself.
- B. Slightly more threatening is when a person points out a discrepancy between what a person said and what he/she is doing.
- C. Next in difficulty is a confrontation that requires us to point out a discrepancy between what a person is reporting about his/her behavior and what someone else is reporting. Since this gets into sticky issues such as confidentiality, problem ownership, and inappropriate gossip, it must be handled with care and great wisdom.
- D. Increasing in threat is pointing out a discrepancy between a person's behavior and an external standard, such as scripture, legal mandate, or organizational principle.
- E. Finally, the most difficult type of confrontation occurs when person A points out a discrepancy between what person B says and B's actual behavior in the relationship between A and B. This tends to be very threatening because it not only points out a discrepancy in person B's behavior, it also puts pressure on the relationship itself.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.10 Diagnosing Spiritual Conditions**

3/2/2006

(Borrowed from the *RPC Fellowship Group Handbook*, with permission)

Deacons will encounter a wide variety of people who are at different stages in their Christian (or pre-Christian) walk. The Puritans and others often saw a shepherd as being a “soul physician.” Like any physician, a wise diagnosis is critical to offering the best help. Doctors don’t remove an appendix when the patient has stubbed their toe; they don’t prescribe aspirin for an advanced case of cancer.

The following charts may help to diagnose where a person is spiritually and it may help to guide them to more mature behavior. For more detailed help on each of these stages, see the appropriate chapter in Section Four of the Fellowship Group Handbook. One word of caution, however: good spiritual diagnosis, like good doctoring, is as much an art as a science. Avoid overanalyzing people, particularly if you are not very experienced at it.

DIAGNOSING NON-CHRISTIANS

<p>NC-A. Conscious Unbeliever</p>	<p>Aware he is not a Christian. Varieties:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Immoral pagan</i> – Living a blatantly immoral/illegal lifestyle. 2. <i>Intellectual pagan</i> – Claiming the faith is untenable or unreasonable. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Imitative pagan</i> – Is fashionably skeptical, but not profound. b. <i>Genuine thinker</i> – Has serious, well-conceived objections. 3. <i>Religious Non-Christian</i> – Belonging to organized religions, cults, or denominations with seriously mistaken doctrine.
<p>NC-B. Non-Churched Nominal Christian</p>	<p>Has knowledge or belief in some basic Christian doctrines, but with no or only a remote church connection.</p>
<p>NC-C. Churched Nominal Christian</p>	<p>Participates in church but is not regenerated. Varieties:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Semi-active moralist</i> – Respectably moral person whose religion is without assurance and is all a matter of duty. 2. <i>Actively self-righteous</i> – Very committed and involved in the church, with assurance of salvation based on good works.
<p>NC-D. Awakened Sinner</p>	<p>Stirred and convicted over his sin but without gospel peace yet.</p>
<p>NC-E. Apostate</p>	<p>Once devoted and active in the church but who has repudiated the faith without regrets.</p>

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DIAGNOSING CHRISTIANS – MATURING DISCIPLES

MD-A. New Believer	Recently converted. 1. <i>Doubtful</i> – Has many fears and hesitancies about his new faith. 2. <i>Eager</i> – Beginning with joy and confidence and a zeal to learn and serve. 3. <i>Overzealous</i> – Has become somewhat proud and judgmental of others, and is overconfident of own abilities.
MD-B. Mature/Growing	Passes through nearly all of the basic conditions named below, but progresses through them because he responds quickly to shepherd's treatment or he knows how to treat himself.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.10 Diagnosing Spiritual Conditions**

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DIAGNOSING CHRISTIANS – DISCIPLES WITH SPIRITUAL PATHOLOGIES

<p>SP-A. Tempted</p>	<p>Struggling with a sin (or sins) which is/are remaining attractive and strong.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Overtaken</i> – Tempted largely in the realm of the thoughts and desires. 2. <i>Taken over</i> – A sin has become addictive behavior.
<p>SP-B. Afflicted</p>	<p>Lives under a burden or trouble that saps spiritual strength. (Generally, we call a person afflicted who has not brought the trouble on himself.) Varieties:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Physically afflicted</i> – Experiencing bodily decay <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The sick b. The elderly c. The disabled 2. <i>Dying</i> 3. <i>Grieving</i> – Major loss, death of loved one, divorce, economic disaster, miscarriage, etc. 4. <i>Lonely</i> 5. <i>Persecuted/Abused</i> 6. <i>Desertion</i> – Spiritually dry through the action of God who removes a sense of his nearness despite the use of the means of grace.
<p>SP-C. Immature</p>	<p>A spiritual baby, who should be growing, but who is not.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Undisciplined</i> – Simply remiss in using the means of grace and in using gifts for ministry 2. <i>Self-satisfied</i> – Pride has choked growth, complacency and he has become perhaps cynical and scornful of many other Christians. 3. <i>Unbalanced</i> – either the intellectual, the emotional, or the volitional aspect of his faith become overemphasized. 4. <i>Devotees of eccentric doctrines</i> – Has become absorbed in a distorted teaching that hurts spiritual growth. 5. <i>Overfed/under-worked</i> – A lack of gift-use, a lack of ministry.
<p>SP-D. Depressed</p>	<p>Is not only experiencing negative feelings, but is also shirking Christian duties and being disobedient. (Note: If a person is a new believer, is tempted, afflicted, or immature, and does not get proper treatment, he will become spiritually depressed. Besides these conditions, the following problems can lead to depression.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Anxious</i> – Through worry or fear handled improperly is depressed.

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <i>Weary</i> – Has become listless and dry through overwork. 3. <i>Angry</i> – Through bitterness or uncontrolled anger handled improperly is depressed. 4. <i>Introspective</i> – Dwells on failures and feelings and lacks assurance. 5. <i>Guilty</i> – A conscience that is wounded and repentance has not been reached. 6. <i>Impatience</i> – Severe unhappiness over lack of growth in life or over God's ordering of the life.
<p>SP-E. Backslidden</p>	<p>Has gone beyond depression to a withdrawal from fellowship with God and with the church.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Tender</i> – Is still easily convicted of his sins, and susceptible to calls for repentance. 2. <i>Hardening</i> – Has become cynical, scornful, and difficult to convict.
<p>SP-F. Physical Imbalances</p>	<p>If we don't keep a balance between rest and exercise, if we don't keep a decent diet, if there is some other physical problem, the unity of the human nature is such that it affects us spiritually as well. <i>What people call "psychological" problems are often either physiological problems or more complex spiritual problems or a combination of the two.</i></p>

SUMMARY DIAGNOSIS PRINCIPLES FOR SPIRITUAL PATHOLOGIES

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall again praise him..." Psalm 42:1-11

The word "disquiet" used by the Psalmist in v.5 and 11 means "to roar, to be in tumult". Because our hearts contain remaining sin in them until we get to eternity, it is inevitable that the inherent viruses of sin will, under many conditions, "break out" into symptoms and forms of spiritual "disquiet" or "tumult". The spiritual sicknesses may be experienced as spiritual dryness, lifelessness, doubt, confusion, guilt, and so on.

How can we diagnose and understand these spiritual pathologies, so we can return the person to spiritual health? It's helpful to remember that the external symptoms of spiritual problems flow from internal, heart problems. Good shepherds, soul doctors, use the external symptoms to discover the real problems. It's not helpful to cover up a spiritual issue by simply making a person "feel better." Instead, use the symptoms of disquiet to help the person make lasting, gospel-centered change.

At the core, we experience spiritual pathologies when the Gospel (in all its fullness) is misunderstood or forgotten. We tend to fall off on one side of the gospel or the other and lead unbalanced lives, we weaken our assurance of salvation, resulting in spiritual pathologies. If the gospel is, *"You are far more sinful than you ever dared imagine, yet in Christ you are far more loved than you ever dared hope,"* we see that there are two basic kinds of spiritual "sicknesses": temptation and accusation.

In temptation, the holiness of God (the first half of the Gospel) is forgotten. This leads to a weak view of sin. In accusation, the grace of God (the second half of the Gospel) is forgotten. This leads to a weak view of mercy. The libertine on the one hand, and the legalist on the other, both experience spiritual difficulties.

As you help people spiritually, you will grow in your discernment of these two imbalances. You may also find this spiritual "one-two punch" at work: for many, a period of spiritual temptation leads to guilt and feelings of accusation. This despair leads the person to "give up" and fall back into temptation. On the cycle continues.

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Note on Affliction: People who experience afflictions and difficulties in life are not in a third category. Their affliction simply becomes the circumstance that will draw out one or the other of these problems. Difficulties will either tempt us or discourage us. When you help people in the midst of trials, remain sensitive to their spiritual reactions to their trial. They will only grow in their difficulty if they are able to become more Christ-like in the midst of the affliction.

See the chapters in the Fellowship Group Manual on Shepherding People in Temptation, Accusation, and Affliction.

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Section: 2.10 Diagnosing Spiritual Conditions

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The following chart lists the symptoms, underlying problems, and basic remedies for these two pathologies:

DIAGNOSING THE TWO CORE SPIRITUAL PATHOLOGIES

	"STATE OF SPIRITUAL TEMPTATION"	"STATE OF SPIRITUAL ACCUSATION"
<i>Source</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Our hearts tempt us (James 1:14) ➤ Satan tempts us (I Thess. 3:5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Our hearts condemn us (I John 3:20) ➤ Satan accuses us (Rev. 12:16)
<i>Error</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Too light a view of one's sin; ➤ Too light a view of God's holiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Too light a view of grace; ➤ Too light a view of God's love
<i>Gospel Half Forgotten</i>	We are too sinful and weak to ever please a righteous and holy God or to solve our own problem.	God accepts believing sinners as if we had done all Jesus had done and paid all Jesus had paid.
<i>Circumstances</i>	Lured into through successes. Superiority complex/pride.	Lured into through failures. Inferiority complex/pride.
<i>Outward Symptoms</i>	<i>Presumption.</i> Taking God's law lightly; self-actualizing tendencies. A resentment of God's claims and sovereignty. Feeling I can't be free if God is totally to be obeyed.	<i>Guilt.</i> Taking God's imputed righteousness lightly. A denial of the necessity of complete, total reliance on grace. Feeling I can't be worthy if salvation is totally gratis.
<i>View of Spiritual Discipline</i>	<i>Slothfulness.</i> Lacking conviction of sin. Lack of use of means of grace out of resentment.	<i>Drivenness.</i> Lacking conviction of imputed righteousness. Lack of use of means of grace out of guilt or discouragement.
<i>Root Sin</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pride (expressed in unbelief of God's goodness. "If I obey Him totally I will be unhappy.") ➤ Idols of <u>power</u> and <u>comfort</u>. ➤ I will be OK if I can beat the competition and get comfortable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pride (expressed in unbelief of God's goodness. "I can't believe He will accept me as is.") ➤ Idols of <u>approval</u> and <u>control</u>. ➤ I will be OK if I am loved and live up to all my standards.
<i>Effect on Conscience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conscience silent or numb. ➤ Conscience hardness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conscience roaring, over-sensitive. ➤ Conscience inflammation.
<i>Spiritual Result</i>	Loss of assurance by violating conscience.	Loss of assurance by denial of grace.
<i>Remedy</i>	Convince those who think they are not under the power of sin that they really are.	Convince those who think are under control of sin that they really aren't.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.10 Diagnosing Spiritual Conditions

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Spiritual Truth Needed

Show them the real sin under the sin to repent of: a denial of God's goodness – a mistrust of his love. Character assassination.

Show them the real sin under the sin to repent of: a denial of God's goodness – a mistrust of his love. Character assassination.

The "One-Two punch!" First tempt, then accuse. Repentance is easy; repentance is too hard. God will forgive easily; God will never forgive. Then tempt more and more *because* accused.

DIACONATE MANUAL

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH WHAT THEY NEED

Upon the basis of diagnosis, the shepherd provides help and treatment in two basic ways:

Getting Help

The shepherd calls on the resources of the congregation to meet all the needs of the person. For example, if it is a lonely elderly person, she may need leaf raking done by a teenager, friendship provided by other women in the church, and so on. If it is a new Jewish believer struggling with attitudes of relatives, he may need to be connected to a long-time Jewish believer. If it is a person with problems that need counseling, get him to one. And so on!

Giving Help

The shepherd may use the resources of the Word and the Spirit to deal with the spiritual condition discovered. There are six basic approaches:

1. *Evangelizing*: for the classes of non-Christians.
2. *Discipling* (concentrated training in the use of the means of grace): especially for new believers, but for all.
3. *Comforting* (encouraging and strengthening): for the tempted, the afflicted, the depressed.
4. *Renewing* (motivating and challenging the lethargic and stagnant): for the immature, cynical, etc.
5. *Admonishing* (warning and urging): for the tempted, the immature, the depressed, the backslidden.
6. *Counseling* (more intense dealing with a particular problem; advice-giving or guidance for decision-making): possible for any of the classes of conditions.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.10 Diagnosing Spiritual Conditions

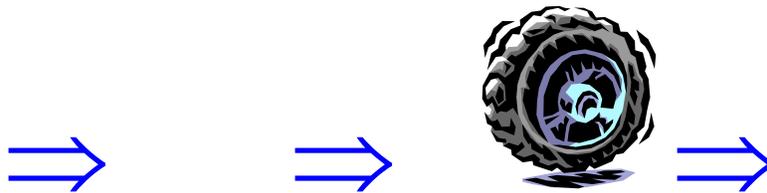
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OCCASIONS (NOT CAUSES) OF SPIRITUAL PATHOLOGIES

Spiritual pathologies and spiritual dryness may have one or all of these causes, but dryness will not become spiritual depression without unbelief. *"Hope in God, for I shall praise Him!"*

Undernourishment

Lack of truth! Comes in four ways. Picture a wheel with spokes going down the road. The parts of the wheel, (the hub, the spokes, the rim, the speed), work together to make the wheel move.



A. Hub of the wheel: A Deep Understanding of the Gospel

1. *Repentance*: Identifying the idols of the heart

This refers not so much to behavioral sins, but setting the heart against those false "righteousness" or idols that are our heart's particular "pseudo-salvations"—ways we think will bring us security, self-esteem, wisdom, and power. It is then withering them under the light of God's love, taking them to the cross until they lose their attractive power over us.

2. *Faith*: Finding your identity in Christ

This refers to filling the mind with, reflecting on, and acting in accord with what you are in Christ: a son. The temple of the Holy Spirit. Accepted in the beloved. A king seated and reigning. It is warming ourselves at the fire of our privileges in Christ instead of stealing self-acceptance from other sources. Jesus died for me.

This is a *cycle*. Repentance makes our enjoyment of Christ deeper, since, as we see more of our sin, we appreciate the magnitude of God's grace more. On the other hand, enjoyment of Christ makes us more able to repent, since it is only as our conscience is infused with our acceptance and our free justification that we will have the security and confidence to even admit and acknowledge our sin.

B. The spokes of the wheel: The Means of Grace

- Hearing the Word
- Prayer / worship
- Fellowship / community
- Ministry / service

C. The rim of the wheel: Obedience

- Christian lifestyle and character

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- D. The speed of the wheel: Rate of Growth in the Christian life
- Different people have natural growth rates and people grow at different speeds during different periods of their Christian life

Suffering / Affliction

- A. Suffering will tempt you (make you angry with God).
- B. Suffering will accuse you (make you depressed. What did I do to deserve this?). This one is the cause of the Psalmist's dryness in Psalm 42:1-11. He's been carried away from friends and land (v. 6), and he is being persecuted (v. 3, 10). A major problem or trial or suffering will usually make it hard to experience the peace of God anyway. But sometimes misunderstanding or mishandling of affliction can lead to real dryness. If we simply "grin and bear" the affliction we may get depressed. It is necessary to see the trial as a way to strengthen some part of your life that needs strengthening.

Purposelessness

We are all meant to have meaning in life by making impact. We need significance, by knowing we are accomplishing something. A lack of gift-use, a lack of ministry can cause spiritual dryness.

Physical Causes

If we don't keep a balance between rest and exercise, if we don't keep a decent diet, if there is some other physical problem, the unity of the human nature is such that it affects us spiritually as well. Spiritual pathologies can also be connected to more severe mental disorders or chemical imbalances. (See *Blame it on the Brain*, Ed Welsh).

Desertion

There is such a thing as God removing some sense of his presence in order to teach us discipline and obedience for his own sake. For example: The tree in the Garden of Eden had no "magic" qualities. It was just a symbol of pure obedience. Desertion is not abandonment; however, God never leaves his children.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.11 Officer Care and Support**

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Caring for ourselves needs to be a priority as we serve on the Diaconate. The monthly meetings are designed to provide emotional support, spiritual accountability, and skills training. In addition, we ought to be watching out for one another (e.g. your partner). Each deacon should keep in touch with his fellow deacons to assure that no one is burning out or losing perspective.

Annual Diaconate Retreat

Every year the Diaconate goes on retreat together for a time of renewal, community building, getting to know each other, and fun! This is a great time to come away, rest and enjoy each other. All members of the Diaconate are expected to attend.

Burnout

Watch for Symptoms of "Burnout"

- Complaining of fatigue, being overworked, exhaustion
- Showing loss of enthusiasm, energy, drive, team spirit
- Showing loss of imagination, creativity, refusal to take risks
- Fighting changes – being inflexible, rigid, unyielding
- Becoming defensive easily – allowing relationships with key people (most importantly, God) to deteriorate
- Growing disorganized – having poor recall, memory loss
- Rationalizing, passing the buck, withdrawing

Preventing and Eliminating Burnout

- A. The key to eliminating burnout is early detection. Watch for the gradual development of any of these symptoms. If some of them are detected, step back from the situation and reevaluate your/their role within it (e.g. decide not to think or talk about the situation for a week, pray for God to reveal any idols that may be contributing to the burnout).
- B. Burnout can be a sign of misappropriating the gifts and energy God has given us. It is a sign that something is out of balance. God never intends us to be burned out in the process of serving Him and His people. If worry, anxiety, stress, fatigue and depression is happening then something is out of balance. A balanced Christian life is one that looks like Christ's; that includes consistent portions of solitude, service, community and contemplation. These anchor us for abundant daily living that pleases God. The dictionary defines balance as "to bring to or keep in equilibrium, to poise, keep steady, to equal; general harmony between the parts of anything."
- C. Wisdom has much to do with balance. Peace comes as a result of wisdom (Ecc. 12:11, James 3:13-18 and John 1:14). Peace is defined as freedom from disturbance, or cessation of war, hostilities, absence of noise or activity. Balance is a protective shield, keeping us from hurt/pain of falling, or the possible injuries that come from losing our balance. Balance requires a healthy sense of limits (boundaries), purpose (gifts), and vision (life off the edge). Isaiah 26:3 reads, "*You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast because he trust in you.*" Focusing our minds on God produces peace.

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D. Solitude

1. Solitude is a state of being that enables us to get our spiritual batteries charged over and over again. In *Feast of Life: Spiritual Food for Balanced Living*, Jo Kadlecck writes:

"When we make intentional time for solitude, that is, when we put ourselves in a 'secluded, lonely, remote habitation,' one absent of 'stir', a strange thing occurs: We set our face to no other distractions but the face of God. We look to Him. As we do, our spiritual character becomes solid: the interior is completely filled up and made strong, firm and substantial. We develop solidarity with God, the Triune Person magnified in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, becoming united with his heart, perspective and purpose. His truth is solidified in us, made firm and hard, and we begin to crave again more solitary times, where we are purposely deprived of the society of others. So infatuated (which means 'to inspire with foolish passion or love') with the face of God through our solitude that we will want to forsake the ways of the world to be alone with him. His presence and his astounding love will capture our hearts and we will find time spent with him delightful and essential. The person who does not nurture time in solitude is much more susceptible to falling."

2. Jesus is our example of prioritizing solitude. He often stole away to be with the Father (Luke 4:42, Luke 5:16, Mark 14:32-42, Martha and Mary in Luke 10:38-42). *"Solitude with God repairs the damage done by the fret and noise and clamor of the world."* (Oswald Chambers). Solitude is productive. Just as in music, a rest is not idleness, it's waiting to come in again!

E. Service – let us not lose sight of why we serve on the Diaconate.

1. Making a place for rest and quiet is a requirement for service. Our service must be an outflow of the inflow. Cultivating "solitary fellowship" with our Lord is what fills us up to then be able to serve.
2. Service is the only other quality that most defines a Christ-like life. Service was the first (Luke 4:18-19) and the last (Mt. 26:17-30, Mk. 14:12-26, Jn. 13:1-17) ways Christ defined his purpose on earth. The in-between time was spent in compassionate service. He could not *not* serve!
3. Service is an attitude, the fruit and action of our solitary fellowship. It most distinguishes the Christ-like life, since it marked His ministry, and therefore, restores the witness of the church. It is getting out of our own worlds, to care for another's needs.
4. But if we just have solitude and service in our lives, we're likely to burn out. We cannot serve in a vacuum; we need the Body of Christ, community.

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“When Jesus saw the crowd harassed and dejected like sheep without a shepherd, he felt with them in the center of his being (Mt. 9:36). When he saw the blind, the paralysed, and the deaf being brought to him from all directions, he trembled from within and experienced their pains in his own heart (Mt. 14:14). When he noticed that the thousands who had followed him for days were tired and hungry, he said, I am moved with compassion (Mk. 8:2). And so it was with the two blind men who called after him (Mt. 9:27), the leper who fell to his knees in front of him (Mk. 1:41), and the widow of Nain who was burying her only son (Lk. 7:13). They moved him, they made him feel with all his intimate sensibilities the depth of their sorrow...In him, all suffering was sense with a perfect sensitivity. The great mystery revealed to us in this is that Jesus, who is the sinless son of God, chose in total freedom to suffer fully our pains and thus to let us discover the true nature of our own passions. In him, we see and experience the persons we truly are. He who is divine lives our broken humanity not as a curse but as a blessing. His divine compassion makes it possible for us to face our sinful selves, because it transforms our broken human condition from a cause of despair into a source of hope.”

Henri Nouwen,
Compassion: A Reflection of the Christian Life

- F. Community means to join together and its Christian distinction is to care extravagantly toward one another. We need the healthy support of community, with Christ as the head and substance, to keep us focused on Him, to restore us to spiritual health and to show the world the love we proclaim.

“The Greek word for church, *ekklesia* – from *ek* = out, and *kaleo* = call – indicates that as a Christian community we are people who together are called out of familiar places to unknown territories, out of our ordinary and proper places to the places where people hurt and where we can experience with them our common human brokenness and our common need for healing.”

Henri Nouwen et al,
Compassion: A Reflection of the Christian Life

What does this say to us on the Diaconate? We need to make sure we are in community such as a Fellowship Group; are seeking out deep, accountable, and honest relationships where we can be known and know one another spiritually, emotionally, intellectually and physically.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.11 Officer Care and Support**

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- G. Finally, contemplation keeps us honest and real. It's easy to hide and stay sheltered in these other three areas (solitude, service and community) but when we really consider our ways, reflect on our motives, we display an integrity of faith.
1. *Definition:* The act of the mind in considering with attention; meditation; study; continued attention of the mind to a particular subject. Contemplation is keeping the idea; holy meditation; attention to sacred things.
 2. It is NOT:
 - Acquiring information: "More information has been generated in the last three decades than in the previous 5,000 years. Over 4,000 books are published every day. One weekday edition of the New York Times includes more information than the average person encountered in his entire lifetime in the 17th-century England." Contemplation is moving beyond information to insight.
 - Showing off our intellectualism.
 3. Why bother?
 - The greatest commandment includes it. (Matt. 22:37)
 - How do we love God with our minds? (Phil. 4:8)
 - How do we above all things get wisdom? (Prov. 4)
 4. How to Contemplate:
 - Listen to others (Daniel 1:4, 17)
 - Don't be deceived, study the real thing (James 1:16, John 8:31-32, Eph. 4:14, 2 Cor. 4:4)
 - Remember; reflect back on what God has done (Josh. 4, Ps. 119)
 - Digest/meditate; to chew on (Ps. 1)
 - Renew (Romans 12:1-3, 1 Peter 4:7)

DIACONATE MANUAL

CLIENT ONE

Meet **RD**: a 49-year-old woman who approached the Diaconate for assistance with 12 cats.

Background

RD lives in Far Rockaway, MS. A "friend" referred her to CPC. She currently lives in a room in a house that is undergoing foreclosure. She does not own the house, and is ambiguous about the nature of who owns it and how she got there. She maintains that the landlord has been trying to get her to leave since last May. She supposedly has friends in Far Rockaway who help her out from time to time.

The house currently has had no hot water for a year, and has had no electricity for 6 months. In spite of this, her appearance is somewhat better than would be expected for a person with no hot water and electricity.

She was hit by a car in 1994 and has nerve damage as a result. This damage limits her energy. She has a lawsuit pending as a result of this accident, and prior medical bills were covered through no-fault insurance.

Employment

RD is currently unemployed, although she stated that she recently applied for a job at Burger King. Previously, she had worked in a crisis pregnancy center. She has no phone.

Family

She has sisters, brothers, and a father who all live in Florida. From time to time, she mentions that one of her sisters is into "devil worship" and refuses to consider going to Florida to live there. She says that in 1987 her husband left her to become a priest.

Education

RD has a B.A. in elementary education. She tried to obtain her Master's degree in 1987.

Religious Affiliation

RD has no affiliation with CPC and seems to come from a strong Catholic background. She frequently mentions another place of worship in Far Rockaway, Our Lady of Hope.

Finances

Her current financial situation is as follows: \$20 for laundry every two weeks, \$68.50 for food every two weeks. She receives \$199 in food stamps monthly.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Request

RD seems to become mentally "unfocused" from time to time during initial meetings. She frequently seems very disjointed in her thought process. She is requesting help with transporting 12 stray cats that she is currently housing. She says she has a friend in Hernando who has a farm that will take them. In order to do this, she says that she needs carriers for the cats. She also mentions that she contacted a Muslim agency that would take the cats if she brought them in carriers.

She states that when the cats need medical attention, she takes them to a vet in Far Rockaway that treats them for free at times, although she states that she is currently \$61 in arrears with this vet.

Initial Meeting

RD approaches the Diaconate during the after service prayer. After conducting an initial assessment, she is given some tokens and food coupons with the promise that the Diaconate will be willing to meet with her the following Sunday, if she returns.

Initial Meeting

RD returns and the detailed information listed above was gathered in the first meeting. RD mentions that she needs to contact a senator's office about getting the heat turned back on in her place. It is unclear why she is suggesting that she do this. She also states that she will be receiving \$68 in public assistance on Wednesday to be able to purchase two cat carriers. We walk away with an understanding that she will do this.

During the course of the week, we send a letter to her requesting that she provide detailed information about the vet and her family, including phone numbers. She calls the Diaconate Hotline back during the week with the information, and specifically asks if there is any way that her "request" can be expedited. She leaves the phone number of a friend in Manhattan to contact. We contact RD's friend and ask her to relay a message to RD stating that if she wishes to meet with us a second time, we are available the upcoming Sunday. RD's friend asks when the "help" will be forthcoming. We mention that we have not agreed or determined how to help RD.

Meeting #2

RD does not show up for this meeting. During the week, we attempt to contact her again through her friend. RD contacts the hotline stating that she had a friend who had an emergency situation to take care of Sunday, and this was the reason for her absence. We agree to set up another meeting the upcoming Sunday.

During the course of the week, we also contact the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals regarding their adoption programs. We also contact the Food and Hunger hotline for information about food programs.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Meeting #3**

We spend the majority of the time trying to get more information about the nature of her situation and requests. We question RD about any prior attempts to get counseling, and she responds by stating that she does approve of the methods that other counselors employ, stating that she will "not be controlled by anyone." We are quick to state that the Diaconate assists individuals on the agreed upon terms of the Diaconate, and not of the individuals. Furthermore, we state that the Diaconate gives consideration to members and regular attendees. Lastly, we emphasize that we never give money directly to an individual. When asked about her plans for becoming involved with CPC, she states that she will probably not attend on a regular basis.

We determine that she has not purchased the carriers as she said she would. Furthermore, she continues to seem very disjointed in her thought pattern, jumping from the topic of her cats, to visiting the senator's office, to theological issues that she has with her neighbors.

We are able to ascertain more information about contacts that she has at Our Lady of Hope, including phone numbers. One phone number that she provides is for Father David Owens. She seems unable to "recall" phone numbers for her physician or attorney. We are still unclear as to the exact nature of her request. When questioned specifically about this, she states that she needs the Diaconate to "be her friend and listen".

Epilogue

Following meeting #3, we establish contact with Father David Owens at Our Lady of Hope. Father Owens knows exactly whom we are talking about and states that his parish has been trying to help her for the past two years. RD is apparently suffering from a mental disability. She could likely qualify for public assistance on the basis of mental disability, but refuses to be examined, apparently out of fear of having to admit that she does in fact suffer from a mental disability. Although the parish has helped her out in the past, they are in a "tough love" position now, waiting for RD to take certain steps to improve her life rather than allowing her to continue to maintain control of her life.

RD apparently knows all the associated churches and charities that will allow her to get free handouts. She seems to have little regard for who is helping her and bounces from charity to charity until someone will provide her with money and food coupons.

After speaking with Father Owens, we made the determination to not assist RD. Rather, we agreed that we would contact Father Owens as RD contacted us. We determined that this was the best course of action given that the religious organization that she was most familiar with had already been helping her for several years. Furthermore, she lived in a far location from Olive Branch, she expressed no desire to attend CPC on a regular basis. Lastly, RD had not demonstrated that she was willing to be accountable to CPC or anyone. After sending final communication, RD has not contacted CPC again.

Note to person role playing RD:

RD seems to "check out" from time to time during the discussion. As a result of mental disability, she sometimes has a difficult time thinking straight and seems to switch topics with no linear progression.

DIACONATE MANUAL

CLIENT TWO

Background

(Knowledge gained from Diaconate Chair)

DN has come to the CPC Diaconate at the repeated urging of a close CPC friend and his fellowship group leader. DN is an aspiring actor/director and has worked a variety of short-term jobs (office temp assignments, waiting tables, working as a waiter for catering companies, etc.). He is now broke and needs a place to stay.

Initial Meeting

The following facts emerge:

- A. All of these have other types of jobs (office temp assignments, waiting tables, working as a waiter for catering companies, etc.) have been "unfulfilling" and distracting to the things that he wants to do (act and direct).
- B. He has not really worked in the last few months – he has been relying on a tiny bit of savings (now depleted) and the help of friends giving him \$5 here, \$10 there, etc.
- C. DN has about \$10 in his pocket and is staying with some friends from his CPC fellowship group. However, they have told him that he can only stay there two more nights.
- D. He has exhausted the rest of the possibilities in his group: he has either already stayed with them or they don't have room/not appropriate (single females, etc.).
- E. He was living with his mother and grandparents in Arkansas but they are verbally abusive and it is an emotionally very stressful environment. Additionally, it is not very accessible to Olive Branch and all of his connections (friends, church, etc.)
- F. He hasn't eaten in more than 24 hours and just yesterday gave away everything he owned to the Salvation Army, knowing that "God would provide."
- G. He got hit by a cab a couple of months ago and is seeing a chiropractor four days/week which is being paid for by some vague insurance-pending lawsuit.
- H. He has a little emotional breakdown during the session and talks about his never really having a father and feeling so rejected, etc. He feels like he really needs counseling about this.

Action

- A. Convince him of the need to work: get him to agree to call 10 catering companies the next day.
- B. Tell him that his fellowship group leader (who spoke with you before the meeting) went to the Salvation Army and got all of his clothes back (including his tux, so that he can cater).
- C. Assess immediate physical needs: food and transportation. Meet those needs.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.12 Mock Client Scenarios

2/25/2004

- D. Tell him that you think you know of someone in YOUR (the Deacon) fellowship group that you think he can stay with for at least a couple of days after he has to leave his present place.
- E. He brings up the issue of counseling: tell him that we (the Diaconate) will consider helping with that, but right now he has to concentrate on getting the immediate things (work & housing) addressed.

Meeting #2

- A. It has been one week since your first meeting.
- B. You have talked on the phone several times since then.
- C. He called the next day (as he agreed) and got 4 catering jobs lined up for that week, with more to come the week after. They pay \$17/hour.
- D. He moved out of where he was staying.
- E. He stayed with your (the Deacon's) fellowship group member but has to leave there tomorrow night.

The following facts emerge:

- A. He got a few dollars as tips at his job this week which has gotten him through in terms of food/subway, etc., but he gets paid by check and he won't get paid until one week from now. Also, he has no bank account.
- B. Has to leave your friend's apartment tomorrow night.
- C. His fellowship group leader has agreed for him to come stay with her again for a few more nights since he is showing signs of responsibility.
- D. He needs shirts and shoes for work: his boss has told him that they have plenty of work lined up for him, but he can't come to work in an old dirty shirt and ripped shoes.

Action:

- A. Encourage him in efforts to find work and follow-through.
- B. He agrees to write down everything he is spending.
- C. He agrees to "pound the pavement" looking for housing.
- E. Agree to meet the next day at Olive Branch thrift store to shop for two new shirts and some shoes.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Confrontational Meeting

It has been 21 days since your second meeting.

The following facts emerge:

- A. He has been working but wants to quit: they're not very nice to him and he wants to act, not cater parties.
- B. He has gotten a few paychecks but doesn't know where the money goes. "Food and transportation, I guess." Down to \$10 again and no paycheck for a few more days.
- C. Hasn't written down expenses.
- D. Hasn't really looked for housing. Called a couple of places, but didn't get a call back. Been too busy with work and going to the doctor.
- E. Showing lack of willingness to work.
- F. He is not following through on agreement to keep track of finances.
- G. Has not followed through on looking for housing.
- H. Diaconate can't support him if he's not willing to do his part, etc.

DIACONATE MANUAL**Section: 2.13 Spotting the Con Artist**

3/2/2006

BY SCOTT CAMPBELL

Several years ago I served as an associate minister in a large downtown church. One of my responsibilities was to dole out the meager social assistance funds, which our church had for people who were in need. A steady stream of persons flowed into my office with enough different stories to fill several good-sized volumes.

One man claimed to be a deposed Minister of Public Information for the government of Sierra Leone. Another brought me detailed plans for an electronics system, claiming he needed \$200 for a patent fee. Still another dropped his trousers in the middle of my office to show me the prosthetic device for which he needed refills. The list could go on and on.

In the midst of all of these dramatic appeals, there were a certain number of genuine claims from persons who, for one reason or another, found themselves in desperate and difficult circumstances. My job was to distinguish between legitimate need (true stories) and professional con jobs (false stories).

This is not to say that the con artists did not have their own legitimate needs as well, but when resources are scarce and it is necessary to allocate funds carefully, it seems a good policy to help those persons first who are truthful and forthright with their stories.

Over the three years of my ministry in that place, I was "taken" more times than I care to remember, but gradually I began to be able to pick out certain identifying characteristics of the con artist's style which helped me to be more certain in my assessments. I offer them here with the awareness that no list is ever going to replace the element of compassionate judgment which must enter into every decision, but offer them with the hope that my experience might be helpful to others also charged to be faithful stewards of God's resources.

TEN TYPICAL ACTIONS OF CON ARTISTS

1. Volunteering irrelevant documents – e.g. hotel receipts, bus ticket stubs, applications, etc—in order to bolster their stories and create an aura of credibility.
2. Offering an abundance of details, not necessarily related to the main thrust of their stories.
3. Name-dropping. Seeming familiarity with high placed persons, or with persons remotely known to you.
4. Forgetting, or being otherwise unable to produce a key fact, the "missing link," necessary to corroborate their story.
5. Placing "blocks" inhibiting the verification of their story – e.g. "This must be dealt with in absolute confidentiality." or "Don't say anything to this person."
6. Partially answering questions. Attempting to produce a sense of guilt in you for doubting their honesty.
7. Stressing the urgency of the request, leaving no time to verify the story. "I must have the money tonight or it will be of no use to me."
8. Always manipulating suggested solutions back to their terms. Usually this means that they must have immediate cash and no other solution will do.
9. Attempting to produce a sense of guilt in you for doubting their honesty.
10. Appealing to your desire to play an important role in a significant story.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.13 Spotting the Con Artist

3/2/2006

Usually, people who are legitimately in need exhibit few, if any, of these characteristics, while the con artist will use most of them. There are, in addition, some precautions ministers can take to keep from falling victim to the trickster.

FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO AVOID BEING TAKEN

1. Follow through. Check the story despite the pressures put on you. The honest person will do everything he or she can do to help you verify his or her story.
2. Delay responding to the request until you have had time to reflect. Is the story plausible? Did you sense the person using any of the above tactics? Could you convince someone else of the legitimacy of the request?
3. Remember the natural tendency of all of us to want to play important parts in interesting stories, and guard against the impairment of your judgment by this factor.
4. Vigorously pursue every alternative to giving money. Offer to arrange directly with lodging facilities for a room, or with restaurants or a grocery store for food. Be aware that con artists often use the excuse that they need to travel somewhere to get around the solutions, and be especially leery of giving money for travel. (Bus and train tickets can easily be converted to cash.)
5. If you decide that giving money is the only possible solution, decide first how much you will allocate to this particular situation and do not allow yourself to be swayed from your intentions.

I am firmly convinced that, despite the mistakes, which will be made, it is better to err on the side of compassion than to turn a legitimately needy person away. But I am equally persuaded that we are responsible, as pastors, to use the same resources we have in the ways which will do the greatest good.

May/June 1986

Scott Campbell is a United Methodist pastor from Longmeadow, MA. A former adjunct faculty member of Harvard Divinity School, he is the 1984 winner of the Ziegler preaching award in the U.M.C. Southern New England Conference.

DIACONATE MANUAL

BY JONATHAN EDWARDS

OBJECTION #1

"If I don't have the right attitude when I'm doing mercy ministry, shouldn't I not do it at all?"

ANSWER: You could make the same objection to any "duty of religion." Do you not go to church on Sunday just because you're "not in the mood"?

OBJECTION #2

"If I am generous and bountiful in my giving, then I will rely on works righteousness and this will do me harm."

ANSWER: You may as well make the same objection against any other duty in one's Christian journey such as keeping the Sabbath, prayer, public worship. Our works come out of a thankful heart for what Christ has freely given us – the gift of salvation through faith. Doing all of these "duties" runs the risk of making one feel righteous.

This objection implies that it is not best to do as God commands and counsels you to do. The Bible is full of commands to be charitable to the poor. God makes no exception of any particular kinds of persons that are especially in danger of making a righteousness of their conduct.

OBJECTION #3

"I have given to the poor in the past but have never found myself better off for it, isn't that what the Bible claims? I've heard ministers preach that giving to the poor was the way to prosper, but I don't think I'm any more prosperous than I was before!"

ANSWER: Perhaps you have looked out for the fulfillment of the promise too soon. The promises are not made to every person who gives anything at all to the poor (however small). The promises refer to persons that practice mercy and liberality as a lifestyle and have had their hearts changed towards their money and the poor.

If you've been generous to the poor and have met with difficulties since, how can you tell how much greater the difficulties would have been if you had not been generous at all? If you expected to meet with no trouble in the world, simply because you gave to the poor, you have grossly misunderstood the concept.

How can you tell what God has in store for you in the future as a result of you being obedient and generous in your giving to the poor? Perhaps God is waiting for a time when you really need and His Glory can be more fully revealed to bestow His blessings.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.14 Objections to Mercy Ministry Answered

3/2/2006

OBJECTION #4

“I don't mind giving to the truly needy, but why should I give to someone who is just in need, but not in extreme need? Isn't it better for them to learn to live with difficulty and hardships in life, like we all do?”

ANSWER: We are commanded to love and treat one another as brothers. We do not help, comfort and relieve difficulties only when someone is in extreme need. Likewise the command to love our neighbors as ourselves teaches us that we are to be just as attentive to others needs as our own. We don't usually let ourselves get to the most extreme state of need before we care for ourselves.

OBJECTION #5

“But this person is an unkind and completely unlikable person. He/she is an angry and ungrateful person. She/he does not deserve help.”

ANSWER: Christ loved us, was kind to us, and was willing to relieve us, though we were very evil and hateful, of an evil disposition, not deserving any good, but deserving only to be hated, and treated with indignation. Therefore, we should be willing to be kind to those who are of an ill disposition and “undeserving”. Christ loved us, and laid himself out to relieve us, though we were his enemies, and had treated him ill. So we, as we love one another as Christ hath loved us, should relieve those who are our enemies, hate us, have an ill spirit toward us and have treated us ill.

We are particularly required to be kind to the unthankful and to the evil; and therefore to follow the example of our heavenly Father, who causes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

OBJECTION #6

“But I can't afford to help them.”

ANSWER: There are some occasions, due to circumstances, that persons may be unable to give. However, most can give some. It comes down to the question of what is meant by having enough for oneself. If someone, who is considered rich, states that they need it all to support their honor and dignity, as is proper for the place and degree in which they stand and if those in the middle say they don't even have enough for themselves, then there will be none to give to the poor.

OBJECTION #7

“I don't know whether this person is truly needy or not. They may have caused their poverty by their own laziness or other sin. Maybe the person is lying and trying to get whatever they can get. I need to know the whole story before I give.”

ANSWER: It is true, when we have the opportunity to become certainly acquainted with their circumstances, it is well to embrace it. However, it is better to give to several that are con artists than to send away empty one that is not.

We are commanded to be kind to strangers who we do not know or their circumstances (Heb. 13:2).

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 2.14 Objections to Mercy Ministry Answered

3/2/2006

OBJECTION #8

“This person hasn’t asked for help.”

ANSWER: It is sometimes a greater kindness to reach out and inquire into someone’s circumstances so as to relieve them of having to ask/beg. We want to be known, as a people, who are so charitable, caring and concerned that the world takes notice.

OBJECTION #9

“He/she definitely brought his/her trouble upon him/herself with irresponsible behavior. It’s his/her own fault.”

ANSWER: What do we mean by fault? If we mean the lack of a natural ability to manage ones affairs in order to advance oneself financially, is this then a fault? Such ability is a gift from God. One must not be penalized for not having been given such a gift. If we mean an oversight or poor judgment, then to never help someone is to deny the Gospel, which calls us to forgive. If we mean intentional, rebellious sin patterns, we are still not excused from helping. If they discontinue their behavior, then the Gospels compels us to forgive and help financially. If they continue in their behavior, we are still obliged to help their family members who are innocent even if they continue to benefit.

OBJECTION #10

“Well, what about others; shouldn’t they be giving too? If others did as much as I do, then the poor would be taken care of. What about the person’s family; shouldn’t they be helping or their friends?”

ANSWER: We are still responsible to care for the poor, even if others do not.

OBJECTION #11

“The government is suppose to provide for the poor.”

ANSWER: There is provision in the OT that requires towns to provide for those in need. However, this should not be at the exclusion of private giving. Both should work together.

Section 3:

OUTSIDE

RESOURCES

DIACONATE MANUAL

The following resources have been compiled for Diaconate use from various sources. Please remember that names, phone numbers, address and descriptions in the listing can change. Any errors, omissions and changes should be forwarded to the Diaconate clerk so that the next revision can reflect the most up to date information.

Christ Presbyterian Mercy Resource Directory

Service Type	Provider	Address/Number	Informational Notes
Shelters	Memphis Union Mission - Men's Emergency Shelter	901-526-8434	Food and clothing for men, women, and children and shelter for men. Entrance to Men's Recovery Program (Calvary Colony) and Transition Program (Wright Transitional House)
	Memphis Union Mission - Intact Family Shelter	901-526-8434	Safe haven for families, 3 bedroom home for up to 90 days (more time is conditional), depends on availability, food supplements, clothing, and shelter are provided, must pass drug test, must have transportation with insurance, male must be employed, must show efforts to move out on own within 30 days, subject to availability
	Memphis Interfaith Hospitality - Intact Family Shelter	901-452-6446	Whole family shelter, 30 days max, housed in local churches, food provided, depends on availability
	Memphis Family Shelter	901-278-2728	Women and children only
	Salvation Army Shelter	901-543-8584	Women and children only, women must have picture ID and children must have birth certificate, 30 days max
	YMCA Shelter	901-725-4277	
	Seek the Old Path Shelter	901-278-1369	
	Alpha Omega Shelter	901-722-5533	Men only, veterans only
	Grace House	901-722-8460	Women only, up to 6 months follow-up
	Serenity House	901-1127	Women only, 6 weeks and halfway house follow-up
Service Type	Provider	Address/Number	Informational Notes
Food	Olive Branch Food Ministry	662-895-2913	Tues, 10-12
	Longview Baptist Church	662-895-1900	Tues & Thurs, 8-4:30
	Southhaven Samaritans Food Bank	662-393-6439	m/w/f
	Memphis Food Bank	901-525-2800	
Clothing/Thrift Stores	Olive Branch Thrift Store	662-895-2913	Thurs-Fri 12-4, Sat 9-1
	Bibles for Missions Thrift Store - Horn Lake	662-280-6792	Mon - Fri 10-5, Sat 10-4
	Neighborhood Christian Center	901-452-6701	
	Desoto Sunrise Thrift Store	1652 Main, Southaven	9-9 Mon - Sat

Christ Presbyterian Mercy Resource Directory

Medical/Dental Care	Christ Community Clinic	2861 Broad Street 901-458-0584, 3298 South 3rd Street 901-345-6201	
	Church Health Center	1200 Peabody Ave., Memphis, TN 38104, 901-272-7170	For people who work but have no health insurance, patients pay according to their income
	Hernando Dental Group	662-429-5239	Deacon must coordinate with dental office for visit
	University of Tennessee	901-525-6220 (adults), 901-525-4395 (children)	
Counseling	Ken Jones	Get number from Church office	
	Alex Galloway	901-345-6201	
	Tonia Long	901-458-6291	
	Mid-State Opportunity	662-895-4153	Employment assistance
	Catholic Social Services	662-893-0255	Help with utilities, financial counseling
	AGAPE	901-323-3600	
Substance Abuse Services	Open Arms Ministry -Bill Bernardini	901-834-3439	
	AGAPE	901-323-3600	
	Memphis Union Mission	901-357-9641	
	Grace House	901-722-8460	Detox, rehab and extended care
	Sophia's House	901-722-4777	Women only
Service Type	Provider	Address/Number	Informational Notes
Family Crisis	House of Grace	662-342-1889	Women and children only, shelter for battered women
	Moriah House	901-522-8819	Women and children only, shelter for battered women, homeless, prostitution, one year holistic ministry
	Desoto County Child/Adult Protective Services	662-429-1489	
	National Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-7233	
	YMCA Abused Women's Services	800-277-5764	
Legal Services	North Mississippi Rural Legal Services	662-234-2918/8731	
	Mississippi Legal Aid	800-559-5074	
	Mississippi Coalition	601-981-9196	
	Mississippi Volunteer Lawyers	800-682-0047	
Government Agencies	Desoto Economic Social Assistance	662-429-4461	
	Desoto Child Support Office	662-429-4461	
	Desoto County Sheriff	662-429-1470	
	Olive Branch Police	662-895-4111	

Section 4:

FORMS

&

CHECKLISTS

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 4.1 Mercy Intake Form

3/2/2006

Date Diaconate Notified: _____ Response Call Date: _____ First Face to Face Meeting Date: _____

Identifying Information

Case # _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ Male? _____ Female? _____ Couple? _____

Address: _____ Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____

_____ Email: _____

Spouse's name: _____ Children's Names and ages: _____

Family Members living with you: _____

How did Diaconate hear of situation?(Circle one) Helpline Pastor Friend Office Call In CG Leader Staff Other

Name of Deacon starting this form: _____

Client assigned to (list name of Deacon and/or Mercy Team

Member): _____

Church Member? ___yes___no If yes, how long? _____ If no, regular attender? ___yes___no If yes, how long? _____

Is CPC their primary place of worship? ___yes___no If no, where do they normally attend? _____

How many times a month do they attend worship service? _____

Does individual belong to a Small Group? ___yes___no If yes, who is the group leader? _____

How did person here of CPC? _____

Has this person been helped by CPC before? ___yes___no Of yes, list Case # or describe extent of help _____

List names and phone numbers of personal/pastoral references and/or Small Group Leader who could be called for further information regarding this individual (ask for verbal permission to contact these references): _____

Do they have access to any form of transportation? ___yes___no

Current Situation/Request

What is the presented problem/need as stated by the individual? _____

How long has this problem/need been going on? _____

Are they currently working with any other churches? ___yes___no If yes, list the other Churches and names of individuals helping them (ask for verbal permission to contact these persons): _____

Other important detail of the situation: _____

What is the individual's specific request of the Diaconate? _____

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WILL BE OBTAINED AT THE FIRST FACE TO FACE MEETING

Case # _____

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 4.1 Mercy Intake Form

3/2/2006

Education/Work History

Current job held: _____ How long at present job? _____

Work History: _____

Highest level of education and degrees held: _____

Other training certificates or programs completed including military experience: _____

Financial Position

Current Monthly salary: _____

Medical Insurance? ___yes___no If yes, name of insurance _____

Medicaid? ___yes___no

Medicare? ___yes___no

Cobra? ___yes___no

Other Financial Income or savings (check all that apply and be sure to list monthly or total amount):

Child Support _____ Amount _____

Unemployment _____ Amount _____

Pension _____ Amount _____

Food stamps _____ Amount _____

SSI/SSDI _____ Amount _____

Public Asst. _____ Amount _____

Savings _____ Amount _____

IRA _____ Amount _____

401K _____ Amount _____

Securities _____ Amount _____

General Monthly Expenses:

Rent/Mortgage _____

Utilities _____

Phone _____

Food _____

Transportation _____

Debt _____

Other _____

TOTAL _____

Housing Situation:

Is this person homeless? ___yes___no

Does the person rent or own? _____

Is it a temporary living situation? ___yes___no

If yes, explain _____

Whom do they live with? _____

What type of housing does this person/family live in?

Apt___House___Room___Projects___Shelter___

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 4.1 Mercy Intake Form

3/2/2006

Spiritual, Social and Emotional/Mental Health

Describe the person's Christian experience journey: _____

Does individual have any family living nearby? ___yes___no If yes, who? _____

Any family member that the person is close to? ___yes___no If yes, who? _____

One or two close friends who know of person's situation? ___yes___no If yes, who? _____

Seeing a counselor? ___yes___no If yes, who? _____

Has the person ever been diagnosed and/or treated for mental illness? ___yes___no If yes, explain: _____

Is this person currently taking any prescription medications? ___yes___no If yes, list medications and conditions being treated for: _____

Has the person ever been hospitalized for depression/suicide? ___yes___no If yes, explain: _____

Dependencies/Subproblems(check all that may apply):

- ◇ Physical: Disability that makes it impossible to generate sufficient income for needs.
- ◇ Planning: Lack of budgetary control, unrealistic priorities for spending, other lack of discipline or discernment.
- ◇ Emotional: Personal problems that make it impossible to bring in sufficient income.
- ◇ Skill: Lack of marketable skills.
- ◇ Relational: Without social connections and support.
- ◇ Social: A lack of legal, political power, oppressed.
- ◇ Financial: Without other dependencies, a lack of job or income.
- ◇ Addictions: Drug or alcohol dependencies.

Christ Presbyterian Church

(CPC)

6860 Craft Road
Olive Branch, MS 38654
662-895-7035

CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF CONFIDENTION INFORMATION AND RELEASE FOR ACTIONS TAKEN BASED ON CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

I, the undersigned, understand that it is in my interest for those who are providing physical, psychological and/or spiritual help to me to be able to coordinate my care. I, therefore, of my own free will, hereby AUTHORIZE both CPC and physician or other medical practitioner or psychiatrist or therapist, named below (the foregoing to be referred to as the "Professional")

(name, address, and telephone/fax number of Professional)

to provide to, and/or exchange with, one another the following:

Verbal or written summary of: diagnosis, evaluations, treatment plan, prognosis and/or any other recommendations by Professional; psychotherapy sessions and/or psychological testing; education evaluations; attendance and punctuality; progress reports. This information may also include any assessment of or treatment for substance abuse.

Additional information requested by CPC:

I understand that signing the Consent and Release Form is a condition to my receiving ongoing care from CPC. However, I also understand that signing this Consent and Release Form does not in any way obligate CPC to provide financial assistance to me.

This authorization shall become effective immediately upon my signing it and shall be valid for a period of one year. I understand that I have the right to revoke this authorization at any time prior to the expiration of such year except with respect to any action taken by anyone prior to receipt of that revocation. I understand that my revocation will not be effective unless it is in writing and delivered to both CPC and to the Professional, defined and named above.

I understand that the nature and content of the information to be released and exchanged is highly confidential and that such information is protected by statutes and regulations and could not be released without my consent. I have carefully reviewed every sentence in the Consent and Release and have been given the opportunity of consulting with anyone of my choosing regarding the meaning and implications of this Consent and Release Form. I hereby sign this Consent and Release voluntarily and of my own free will without any promises having been made to me in exchange therefore.

Permission to Fax and/or email - By signing below, I also authorize CPC and the PROFESSIONAL, defined and named above, to exchange any written information by facsimile transmission ("fax") or email. (Cross out this paragraph if you want the information to be exchanged by mail only.)

Person's Signature

Date of Signing

CPC Staff or Deacon Signature

Date of Signing

PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN

Date of Signing

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 4.4 Check Request Form

3/2/2006

DATE: _____
 NAME: _____
 PAYEE: _____

DESCRIPTION OF EXPENDITURE:

BUDGET ACCOUNT #: _____ AMOUNT: _____
 BUDGET ACCOUNT #: _____ AMOUNT: _____

TEAM CHAIRMAN APPROVAL: _____

PLEASE ATTACH AN INVOICE OR RECEIPT TO THIS REQUEST. CHECKS WILL BE ISSUED BY FRIDAY OF THE NEXT WEEK.

NOTES OR COMMENTS: _____

OFFICE USE ONLY:	
DATE OF CHECK ISSUE:	_____
CHECK NUMBER:	_____
SIGNATURE ON CHECK:	_____

DIACONATE MANUAL*The day before:*

- DOD: call the MOD and make sure each MOD is going to show up on Sunday.

DOD and MOD arrive at the church no later than 8:00

The Deacon on Duty (DOD) is responsible for ensuring that the following actions are performed at their proper time each Sunday. The Man on Duty (MOD) should coordinate with the DOD to assist in whatever tasks are necessary.

Some tasks will be regularly performed by the MOD or the DOD; they are so indicated throughout the document.

Before the service:

- Unlock 2 main doors with hex key, two side doors near sanctuary, kitchen door, and downstairs entrance.
- Do NOT unlock the door near the vending machine.
- Brew the coffee! Do this early. See can for instructions.
- Set thermostats at auto. Temps should be 68 for heat and 71 for cool in winter, 73 for cool in summer.
Exceptions:
- Choir loft: do not change; choir will adjust as necessary
- Walk around the inside and outside of the church with a small garbage bag and pick up trash. (Added 4/21)
- Head downstairs and assist in setting up the Sunday School area. Setup the partitions to break the room into 4 sections; setup chairs and tables as needed. (Removed 10/1/05)

Ensure that the sanctuary is in order:

- Bibles & hymnals are well-distributed. 2 bibles per row; hymnals should be every other chair. (Revised 10/1/05)
- Pulpit is straight
- 2 chairs on stage are straight & symmetrical
- Chairs in sanctuary are straight
- No trash, communion cups, etc. in the sanctuary.
- Communion table is set properly on Communion Sundays (1st Sunday of the month)
- Baptismal font is set up and filled with water on Sundays where a baptism is to be performed. (Added 10/1/05)
- Portable microphone is in the front of the church on Sundays where special events will happen. (Added 10/1/05)
- Turn on lights in all rooms
- Make sure 4 ushers are present; get replacements if they're not (3 will do in an emergency)
- Go through the user routine with the ushers, if necessary. (1 in the sanctuary, 1 in the Narthex, 1 in the back left corner, 1 in the back right corner)
- Move offering plates from the office to the rear of the sanctuary
- Move fellowship pads from the office to the rear of the sanctuary

DIACONATE MANUAL

- Check with pastor before service begins
- During the offering, pour 1 decaf and 1 hi-test into each Sunday School room.**

Immediately after the service:

- DOD: Collect money from the front and count it; see Josh's document.
- Store offering plates for next Sunday

On Communion Sundays, during Sunday School:

- Collect the Deacons' fund offering in each of the adult Sunday School classes
- Collect offering plates to the office. Put the money in the safe.
- Gather fellowship pads from sanctuary & return to office.
- Count the 2nd service cash and place it in the safe. See Josh's document.
- Collect the coffee pots and clean them (added 7/23/02)
- Stow the coffee tray in the Second-grade room (Added 2/9/2004)

When Sunday evening groups are held, also do the following:

- Move the tables out of the way in the Kindergarten room and stack the chairs

After Sunday School:

- Turn off all lights
- Lock 2 sets of main doors
- DOD: Lock all doors.

- MOD checks out with DOD before leaving***

Trash cans are emptied by janitorial staff

- Set the alarm immediately prior to leaving

When Sunday evening activities are held, the MOD and DOD are responsible for the following Sunday evening actions:

DIACONATE MANUAL

Before Sunday evening

MOD and DOD arrive at the church no later than 5:00

- Unlock 2 main doors with hex key

DOD: Unlock aux doors with main key (hex key can also be used by MOD if need be)

- Two side doors near sanctuary
 Kitchen door
 Downstairs entrance (NOT the door near the vending machine)
- Turn on all lights
 Check rooms for trash

After Sunday evening

- Turn off all lights
 Set thermostats at auto. Temps should be 62 for heat and 76 for cool. Exceptions:
• Choir loft: do not change; choir will adjust as necessary
- Lock 2 main doors with hex key

DOD: Lock aux doors with main key

- Two side doors near sanctuary
 Kitchen door
 Downstairs entrance (NOT the door near the vending machine)
- MOD checks out with DOD before leaving
 Empty the trashcan in the kitchen
 Ensure the kitchen is clean! Counters are wiped off; no dishes in sink; coffee pots put up. Added 4/21/03.

Other trash cans are emptied by janitorial staff

- Set the alarm immediately prior to leaving

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 4.6 Offering Collection Checklist

3/2/2006

Procedures for counting money:

- Collect the offering plates from the alter immediately after the service.
- Count the money during Sunday School (two deacons must be present, one designated counter and the monthly assigned deacon.)
- The early service and the late service from the previous Sunday should be counted. (This is only if we have 2 Sunday morning services.)
- Count the cash and each note the denomination of coins and currency on a tape.
- Alphabetise the checks and record the amount on a tape.
- Run a combined tape of cash and checks. This tape total should equal the totals from the cash tape and check tape. This tape should be initialled by both counting deacons.
- Place all the deacon's work in the tithe box in the safe.
- The tithing register will be completed by the accountant (Sissy) who will attach the deacon's initialised tape of cash and checks to a printed copy of the tithing register.
- The accountant will then attach the correlating deposit receipt which is made during the following week to the tithing register.
- The completed hard copy of the tithing register of each week will be kept in the safe.

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 4.7 Facility Use Request Form

2/11/2004

Date of Request: _____

Requesting Party: _____ Phone(s) _____

CPC Member: Yes No Affiliation if not member: _____

CPC Sponsor (if requestor is not a member): _____

Day(s) and Date(s) of Activity or Event: _____

Expected Number of participants: _____ (If greater than 50, a \$50 fee will be required for cleaning services)

Facilities Requested: Fellowship Hall Kitchen Sanctuary Nursery
 Classrooms (Describe): _____
 Other (Piano, sound, etc.)

Time of Activity or Event:

From: _____
(Building Entry/Access to Facilities Needed)

To: _____
(End of Event/Lockup/Cleanup Complete)

This will be a: Single Event, or
 recurring event, taking place weekly monthly quarterly

Please describe the nature of the event: _____

Please explain how this event supports the mission of Christ Presbyterian Church: _____

Will there be any monetary charges for this event? If yes, please explain: _____

Will any goods or services be sold at this event? If yes, please explain: _____

Please describe any special needs or requests, such as unlocking and locking, set up, etc: _____

Please return this completed form along with the Waiver of Liability Form to the church administrator or place them in the Deacons' mailbox in the church office. Please submit this information well in advance of your anticipated event or activity (30 days minimum) to allow time for review and consideration of your request. The Deacons regularly meet once a month. In the event of urgent, sudden or unforeseen needs, please directly contact a Deacon. Please note that in some cases, fees may be required to offset custodial and utility expenses of the event.

Diaconate Approval: _____

Date of Approval: _____

DIACONATE MANUAL

Section: 4.8 Waiver of Liability Form

3/2/2006

Whereas Christ Presbyterian Church, located at 6860 Craft Rd, and herein referred to as "CPC" has graciously allowed the person or organization named as follows,

herein referred to as the "user", to occupy the facilities, grounds, or a portion of either of the above mentioned for the sole purpose of _____.

The user may occupy the facility on the following date or if in the case of a reoccurring use, defined as follows: _____

Whereas Christ Presbyterian Church is a ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, and is also a non-profit house of worship, the user agrees to the following. The user understands that it occupies the facility at the pleasure of CPC and as such may ask to leave at any time for any reason without prior notice. The user agrees that CPC, or its officers or members, will not be liable for any expenses which user incurs and if user is ask to leave, either prior to scheduled date or after entry has been granted. The user agrees that it will not use the facility for any use other than what is expressly approved and outlined above. The user also agrees that it will not modify, disturb or otherwise interfere with church configuration without express written permission. User agrees that it will not advertise in any way its use of CPC without prior approval in writing and CPC retains the right to review any such advertising prior to it being used. User agrees that while at CPC it will observe reasonable safety precautions as it carries out its approved activity. User understands that it may not have exclusive use of the facility during the time used and will observe sensitivity to noise and other annoyances that might interfere with another CPC or another user's activity. User agrees that it will not do anything that would jeopardize CPC's tax-exempt status. User agrees that if ask, it will provide a certificate of Liability Insurance with CPC named as additionally insured. User agrees that if Children are present, either as participants or are there with participants, that user will take steps necessary to ensure the children's safety and supervision at all times by a qualified person. User will ensure that church is left clean, neat, and secure upon ending named activity. User acknowledges that it may be charged a usage fee for building wear, upkeep and utility use or other specified purpose. User agrees to hold CPC harmless for any accident or injury that occurs to anyone participating in the above mentioned activity. User agrees to pay \$_____ for use of the facility as outlined above. Even if charged a nominal fee, this agreement / waiver is not to be construed as a lease.

User Signature

Date of Signing

CPC Staff or Deacon Signature

Date of Signing