



## **Wellness: Caring for Self in Transition Resource Section**

### **Purpose**

To assist participants in an examination of their self care in five areas -- spiritual, physical, mental, emotional and relational – and the impact of transition on them. This module underscores the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle even (and especially) during the challenging time of transition. It also encourages participants to talk about their spiritual lives with colleagues. Participants should leave this module with some ideas for strengthening their own spiritual disciplines and concrete resources for pursuing a deepened spiritual life.

### **Theological Understanding**

The Gospel is filled with accounts of Jesus withdrawing from the crowds (and even the disciples) in order to pray. It is clear that Jesus paid attention to his relationship to the Father and that that relationship was the grounding of his whole ministry. If we are called to be Christ-like, then we too are called to root ourselves in our own relationship with God.

### **Special Instructions**

While this module may be used with clergy-only or mixed clergy/lay groups, it should only be used if there is considerable trust in the group. Participants must feel free to share what is really true about their self-care, relationship with God, and attempts to keep that relationship strong and healthy. This module's effectiveness is largely dependent upon the group's trust level. You may want to vary the level of self-reflection and reflection with others depending upon the level of trust in the group.

Encourage reflection by playing some calming music and/or lighting a candle while participants reflect on the handout questions. Celtic or Taize music might be a good choice. Before each reflection, provide time for silence. Give participants journals in which to write their responses, concerns.

Prior to your session get information about local and regional retreat centers, spiritual directors, therapists, fitness centers, etc. (see PowerPoint 15). You may want to create your own handout for this.

### **Related Modules**

Family and Friends: Leading an Integrated Life

## **Bibliography**

Bascobert Kelm, Jacqueline. Appreciative Living: The Principles of Appreciative Inquiry in Personal Life. Wake Forest, NC, Venet Publishers, 2005 – principles of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), latest thinking and research, and process for applying these principles.

Bedrosian, Maggie McAuliffe. Life is More than Your To-Do List: Blending Business Success with Personal Satisfaction. Everett, WA, BCI Press, 1995 – how to build a rich, healthy life in a stress-oriented society.

Blanchard, Alan. Clergy Wellness and the Stewardship of Abundance. New York, NY, Church Pension Fund, 2006 – the story of how the Church Pension Fund allocated over \$1.2 billion to expanding pension for its 16,000 members focusing on lessons learned about church wellness.

Bridges, William. The Way of Transition: Embracing Life's Most Difficult Moments. Cambridge, MA, Perseus Books Group, 2001 – a personal account of the author's journey and insights into unexpected life transitions.

Craddock, William S. Jr., ed. All Shall Be Well: An Approach to Wellness. New York, NY, Morehouse Publishing, 2009 – a series of essays by faculty and graduates of CREDO focused around CREDO's model of identify, discernment, practice, and transformation.

Denton, Jean M. Good is the Flesh: Body, Soul and Christian Faith. Harrisburg, PA, Morehouse, 2005 – essays, poems and writing on the spirituality of the body, mind and spirit.

Farrington, Debra K. The Seasons of a Restless Heart: A Spiritual Companion for Living in Transition. San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass-WILEY Imprint, 2005 – a look at life transitions through the story of the Israelites journeys to the Promised Land.

Hands, Donald R. and Fehr, Wayne L. Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy: A New Psychology of Intimacy with God, Self and Others. Herndon, VA, The Alban Institute, 1993 – a combination of clinical psychology and spiritual direction create a model of spirituality that integrates theology, psychology, and an understanding of human frailties.

Heifetz, Ronald A. and Linsky, Marty. Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2002 – Part 3 of this book, "Body and Soul," offers thoughtful reflections on the need for relationship, purpose, and meaning to be a successful leader.

Roizen, Michael F. and Oz, Mehmet. You: The Owners Manual: An Insider's Guide to the Body that Will Make You Healthier and Younger. Evanston, IL, Discovery Health, 2005 – step-by-step guide to keep your body feeling better; includes practical advice.

Swenson, Richard A., M.D. Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives. Colorado Springs, CO, NavPress, 2004 – Swenson, a clinician, focuses on the need for margins in the four areas of emotional energy, physical energy, time and finances.

\_\_\_\_\_. A Minute of Margin: Restoring Balance to Busy Lives. Colorado Springs, CO, 2003 – 180 two-page meditations with prescriptions for finding margins in our lives.

### **Other Resources**

The Headington Institute ([www.headington-institute.org](http://www.headington-institute.org)) has tips in self-care, stress assessment tools, a “Self-Care and Life Balance Inventory,” a burnout Inventory, and information on stress-busters. Their Peace by Piece booklets, available as a free download from their website, would make good handouts (see especially the first one).

The web site of Dr. Martin Seligman, the founder of positive psychology, has a number of questionnaires to identify strengths, work-life satisfaction, happiness, etc.; the surveys are free, but are available only on-line and registration is required ([www.authentic happiness.sas.penn.edu](http://www.authentic happiness.sas.penn.edu)).

Learn about CREDO’s program for wellness in the church ([www.episcopalcredo.org](http://www.episcopalcredo.org)).

There are a number of websites with health information, including those of the Mayo Clinic ([www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)), the Discovery Channel ([www.health.discovery.com](http://www.health.discovery.com)), and the National Institutes of Health (<http://health.nih.gov>). All have searchable databases, questionnaires, and information about publications and programs for better health.

Oprah’s website ([www.oprah.com](http://www.oprah.com)) has simple steps for healthy living (and more about Dr. Mehmet Oz programs for good nutrition).

## General Outline of Session

1. Opening prayer/meditation (suggested reading Exodus 16:22-30)
2. Check-in
3. Introduction and overview of Wellness (PowerPoint 1 – 5; Talking Points)
4. Spiritual Well-Being - reflection on participants' assessment of spiritual health and disciplines (PowerPoint 6; Talking Points; Handout 1)
5. Tips for improving spiritual health – the serenity prayer (PowerPoint 7; Talking Points)
6. Physical Well-Being – reflection on participants' assessment of physical health and disciplines (PowerPoint 8; Talking Points; Handout 2)
7. Tips for improving physical health (PowerPoint 9; Talking Points)
8. Mental Well-Being – reflection on participants' assessment of mental health and habits (PowerPoint 10; Talking Points; Handout 3)
9. A tip for mental health (PowerPoint 11; Talking Points)
10. Emotional Well-Being – reflection on participants' assessment of emotional health and habits (PowerPoint 12; Talking Points; Handout 4)
11. A tip for emotional health (PowerPoint 13; Talking Points)
12. Relational Well-Being – reflection on participants' assessment of relational health and habits (PowerPoint 14; Talking Points; Handout 5)
13. A tip for relational health (PowerPoint 15; Talking Points)
14. Developing strategies for Well-Being, provide resources to participants about retreat center, spiritual direction, therapy, fitness centers, etc. (PowerPoint 16; Talking Points) – **you may want to create your own handout for this**
15. A tip for leading a centered life (PowerPoint 17; Talking Points)
16. Importance of prayer – for ourselves and each other (PowerPoint 18; Talking Points)
17. Wrap up and closing prayer

# **Wellness: Caring for Self in Transition Handout 1**

## **Spiritual Health**

1. How has my sense of meaning changed since my recent transition?
2. How do I take time regularly to pray? Do I have a certain place where I can be more comfortable in prayer?
3. What are my spiritual needs?
4. How do I go about seeing that those needs are met?
5. How do I take time to enjoy beauty in all forms – music, art, nature, people?
6. How do I take time to express my creativity? When am I most creative?
7. What is the core belief system that organizes my life?
8. Where do I find meaning and purpose in life?
9. What is my rule of life that guides or directs my own spiritual discipline?
10. How and when do I take time to ponder where I am, where I am going, and why?

11. What spiritual supports did I leave behind when I made my latest vocational transition?

12. How have I attempted to replace those supports?

13. How do I attend to my needs for being a part of worship, and not being the worship leader?

14. What is the most spiritually edifying thing that I do?

15. What is the biggest spiritual drain on me?

# **Wellness: Caring for Self in Transition Handout 2**

## **Physical Health**

1. How often do I exercise?
2. How often do I have a routine physical? If recommendations are made, do I follow them?
3. How often do I eat regular, well-balanced meals?
4. How regularly do I get enough rest? Is my sleep peaceful and restful or interrupted?
5. How often do I feel well rested in the morning?
6. How much caffeine do I consume each day? What happens if I don't?
7. How much junk food do I eat?
8. How many fresh fruits and vegetables do I eat each day?
9. How often do I use alcohol or other medications to escape pressure?

10. Do I smoke? If so, what situations trigger this habit?

11. How much time do I allow myself to maintain my physical appearance?

12. What do I consider my ideal weight, and how close am I to that weight now?

13. What is my favorite physical activity? Why?



# **Wellness: Caring for Self in Transition Handout 3**

## **Mental Health**

1. How often do I over-schedule my time? Do I manage it so there are breaks between tasks and appointments?
2. What is my scheduled, regular day off? Do I take this day off? What gets in the way of taking it?
3. How often do I allow myself to have periods of quiet time?
4. How often do I have regular periods of non-productivity?
5. When do I take the time to think about the satisfying areas of my life?  
The unsatisfying ones?

6. What are my personal goals?

7. What limitations do I freely admit?

8. When do I allow myself time to process what has happened after a significant pastoral event or crisis?

9. When do I think most clearly?

10. What do I do to have fun?

# Wellness: Caring for Self in Transition

## Handout 4

### Emotional Health

1. How well am I able to delineate the difference between an emergency and an “uh-oh”?
2. What built-in coping mechanisms do I have for facing stressful situations?  
Am I using them?
3. How do I take the time during the day to let go of those things over which I have no control?
4. How often do I take regular retreats?
5. How do I express my anger?
6. What annoys me? Does this happen easily?
7. When am I most forgetful? When I am more stressed? Name a time when this has happened.
8. What gives me hope?
9. What makes me laugh? Cry?

# **Wellness: Caring for Self in Transition Handout 5**

## **Relational Health**

1. How do I respond to friends and family when they reach out to me?
2. What outlet do I have (like an ongoing support group) for sharing thoughts and feelings?
3. With whom can I be most honest? Why?
4. What person/people in my life make me feel most authentic?
5. When do I have trouble setting healthy boundaries?
6. Do I have at least one good friend within 5 miles of where I live?
7. How often do I spend time with him/her?
8. What is the most isolating thing that I do?
9. What is my real community? Do the people in it know it?