MAINTAINING HEALTH IN ANGLICAN CLERGY

WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

A SUPERVISED RESEARCH PROJECT

by

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SYNOPSIS

The research report seeks to identify factors which contribute to the maintenance of health in Anglican clergy within the Diocese of Melbourne. To identify these factors, eight clergy - four women and four men - were interviewed and sent a questionnaire. Out of this process, issues were identified which the report discusses and analyses alongside the relevant literature. Before this is done, the motivation behind the report is outlined. This includes personal and spouse health issues, the changing nature of ministry over thirty-five years and my experience with various support networks. The report then seeks to define, in a comprehensive way, what is meant by health. In this section, six components are identified - physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual and environmental.

There is also an effort to define why health is important in ministry - which includes effectiveness, modelling and contributing to the health of the community of faith. In the main part of the report, four issues for the maintenance of health identified in the interviews and questionnaires are proposed, then discussed and critiqued. These issues are - spiritual life, support networks, satisfaction and dealing with expectations. The major emphasis is on the need for pro-active self-care.

The report concludes with a synthesis, conclusions and recommendations. As is stated in the Focus of the Research Report which follows, "It is hoped that this report will contribute to the ongoing debate about the health of Anglican Clergy currently going on in the church."

CONTENTS

1. FOCUS OF RESEARCH REPORT

The purpose of this Research Report is to demonstrate that there are some specific and discernible factors which, when actively and purposefully pursued, can assist in the maintenance of health for clergy.   These will be discerned from relevant literature and from the lives of those working in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne.   These factors include:-

- being pro-active about self-care;

- establishing a variety of support networks;

- nurturing a vital spiritual life;

- maintaining satisfaction in ministry; and

- dealing with the stress of high expectations.

It is hoped that this paper will contribute to the ongoing debate about the health of Anglican clergy currently going on in the church.   This was highlighted for us in a recent report 'Stress and the Clergy : Strategies for a More Caring and Empowering Church'.   In its summary, the report concluded:

> "that a significant number of clergy are likely to be affected by stress, although a small percentage are debilitated to the extent of being unable to work;"   and,
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> "Beyond stress reduction, the opportunity for developing the clergy as a committed, motivated and functionally effective work force is of primary significance." [1]

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[1] Lake, Michael, Senior Consultant, Davidson Trahaire. *Stress and the Clergy : Strategies for a More Caring and Empowering Church*, A Report to the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne. (Melbourne, 1999), 2.

2.   PROCEDURE FOR RESEARCH REPORT

In undertaking this project, I have sought to:

➢ Outline my motivation for researching the issue of clergy health.

➢ Define health, list its characteristics, and explore its importance for ministry and congregational life.

➢ Ascertain from 8 clergy - 4 men, 4 women - those factors which have contributed to the maintenance of healthy functioning in ministry. These people were:
  - within the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne;
  - working in both urban and rural parishes;
  - ordained for at least 10 years;
  - people who have maintained good health or have suffered debilitating ill health but been able to continue to be effective in ministry.

➢ Conduct a wide ranging interview with each participant. *Appendix A* contains a profile of the participants and *Appendix B* summarises the findings of the interview.

➢ Arrange for the participants, subsequent to the interview, to complete a Questionnaire. *Appendix C* - summarises the findings of the Questionnaire.

➢ Out of the research available and the material gained from those working in the field, isolate 4 factors which are significant in maintaining health; then critically analyse each factor, utilising the material both from the research and the participants.

➢ Finally, draw some conclusions and make some recommendations.

3. MOTIVATION FOR THIS RESEARCH REPORT

Health tends not to be an issue until you experience the impact of ill health yourself or in the life of others - especially those near to you. My interest in what maintains health in clergypersons, especially Anglicans, has been motivated by a number of important factors:

3:1 PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Health for me in the first fifteen years of ministry was not a live issue. I was healthy and coping reasonably well. Then, as if out of nowhere, I was struck with physical and emotional exhaustion. Initially I was perplexed as to why it had happened. But as I sat in my pain with the assistance of a counsellor, I discovered some of the factors that had brought me to this point. One of them was my drivenness - which was fuelled by a low self esteem. It made me feel that I was indispensable, a saviour, and that God couldn't really do His job without me. It's clear that I did learn a great deal from this painful episode in my life. But this learning was to be tested a few years later. On a routine visit to the local doctor in 1986, it was discovered that I had bowel cancer. An operation removed the malignancy. Physically I recovered fairly quickly. But emotionally I struggled for a number of years. Depression set in and the blackness affected my whole life. I struggled to work, pray, play, relate and have any enjoyment of life. At times I felt desperate, even suicidal. But it wouldn't be the last painful episode from which I would emerge wiser. In 1989, an eruption broke out in our congregation fuelled by some of the leaders. It was bitter and personal and went on for about twelve months. I was left extremely shaken and emotionally fragile. I struggled with anxiety for many months. It would be a long while before I could really trust people again. These episodes in my life above all others started me on an earnest search to discover how I could maintain my own health. My searching has been greatly assisted by the support of my wife, several counsellors, friends and colleagues. But this wasn't to be the last crisis to my health. In 1997, an unresolvable conflict arose within our congregation with which I was involved. This resulted in me exhibiting extreme stress symptoms that persisted for some months. They were only allayed by a lengthy break and taking some pro-active steps on my return.

As I review thirty-five years of ministry, it's clear that although there have been episodes where I have struggled with health issues, overall I have been able to maintain health relatively well. However, any insights coming out of this study will assist me greatly in being better able to maintain health in the years ahead.

3:2   MY WIFE'S EXPERIENCE

In 1990, my wife Joy was diagnosed with severe burnout due to her parish involvement and personal factors.   As she reflected on her experience, she discovered signs moving her towards burnout had been coming for a long time.   In fact its roots went back to childhood, where some unhelpful belief systems had been nurtured.   Among these were the beliefs that suffering could be avoided, that goodness was rewarded with only good things happening, and that competence and achievement were vital.   This childhood belief system was not only transferred but also reinforced by some of her Christian beliefs.

Oblivious of these unhealthy belief systems, she launched into ministry with me.   Initially all went well.   Her unrealistic expectations were actually reinforced.   But she was soon to run into great difficulties.   Three babies in quick succession found her not really coping with the family she had long wanted.   Then family and parish pressure led to the breakdown of our marriage.   We worked hard to rebuild our marriage.   But just as it came together in 1983, she had a physical breakdown.   She developed severe chest and back pains, could hardly walk and was extremely tired almost all the time.   She recovered slowly over several months.   For the next few years our marriage, family life and church life went smoothly.   Then quite unexpectedly I was diagnosed with bowel cancer.   Surgery followed and I finished up with a colostomy.   This put serious strains on our marriage.   But also on Joy's faith journey.   She had believed I could be healed solely through prayer, and that had not happened, and she couldn't understand why she had suffered so much.   She became angry with God.   Her faith structures began to fail.   While struggling with these issues, in 1989 the congregation was severely disrupted by a disgruntled member of staff.   Its cyclonic effects were experienced for a year.   At the end of this time, the congregation was badly damaged and about a third of the congregation had left.   Joy was deeply hurt by these events and by some personal attacks on her.   By the end of 1990, she experienced many symptoms of burnout - a loss of a sense of self, enthusiasm, energy and hope.   She experienced herself as dead emotionally except for extreme and unrelenting anger.   This uncontrollable feeling pushed her into depression that she struggled with for many years.   In the midst of this blackness, Joy continually urged me to resign from ministry.   That I felt unable to do.   But it put great stress on our marriage, for Joy considered I thought more of the church than her mental health.

It would be seven years before Joy felt herself again.   She has come out of this very painful episode with a renewed sense of self, a more authentic faith and a renewed belief system.

Although she knows there will be challenges and problems in the future, she is better equipped and stronger to meet whatever comes.

Our experiences have given me much to reflect on as I seek to discover more of what contributes to health for both clergy and their spouses.

3:3   COLLEAGUE EXPERIENCE

John Mark Ministries, established to support clergy struggling with or leaving ministry across the denominations, has estimated that as many as fifty percent of clergy are leaving the system.   It appears that in the Anglican system, the number is nowhere near as high.   A Diocesan official estimates only 2 or 3 drop out annually because of ill health, but many more are affected by high levels of stress.   It has affected me, especially through colleagues who have been close to me deciding to opt out.   As I reflected on these incidents, the causes of these departures have included:

- Wife unable to cope;
- Church upheavals;
- Physical breakdown;
- Emotional difficulties;
- Marriage and family tensions;
- Feeling of being unsuitable for ministry;
- Crisis of faith.

Alongside those who choose to leave, there are many more that struggle on disillusioned, despondent and de-motivated.   These two groups of colleagues have motivated me to discover more about those factors which assist clergy maintain their physical, spiritual and emotional well-being.   It is my hope that the outcomes of this project may assist some of those who are struggling, to not only remain in the system but to be more effective ministers.

3:4   NETWORK EXPERIENCE

In an effort to maintain my overall health, I have initiated and participated in several clergy support networks.   These have generally lasted for 2-3 years.   Some of these included

spouses. Networks are people sharing information, ideas, encouragement and resources. They form and thrive when people interact with similar goals and needs or values.

The formal get-together of the networks consist of personal sharing, prayer for one another, biblical input, and the discussion of an agreed area of ministry. In discussing areas of ministry, the network decides on the topics, provides some of the resources, and decides what further input needs to be procured for a meaningful discussion. Some of the areas covered in the networks I was a part of were: Leadership Style; Developing Leaders; Group Philosophy; Prayer Life; Spiritual Warfare; Implementing Change; Developing a Philosophy of Ministry; Marriage and Family; Accountability; Conflict; and Discerning God's Will for Individuals and Churches.

Although networks primarily offer a horizontal link with colleagues in ministry, they need a facilitator to function well. The role of the facilitator is to convene, guide and resource the members of the group. Group life is further enhanced by the frequency of meeting. Those that I was a part of met monthly or bi-monthly for a good part of a day over a shared meal.

Networks extend way beyond the formal meeting times. As quickly as picking up the telephone, it should be possible to gain needed information or support from other group members. The most important benefit of a network is that it provides creative, positive and ongoing support for those engaged in ministry.

Hence my privileged experience of clergy networks has been another motivating factor in embarking on this research project.

3:5 CHANGING NATURE OF MINISTRY - AN EXPERIENCE OVER 35 YEARS

The changes that have taken place in the life of the Anglican Church in Australia and in its power structure over the last thirty-five years, have affected greatly the stability of the church and the well being of the ordained clergy. The radically changed context in today's church is bringing about a re-think of the place of clergy within the life of the congregation, the sharing of power for the common good, and how care is provided for the clergy. I have focussed on this period because it is now thirty-five years since I began training for the ordained ministry. I was ordained Deacon in 1969. First I will highlight some of the significant changes over this period.

i) Church's Role in Community:

At the beginning of this period, the church was still a force in the community; presently, the church finds itself on the margins of general community life. There are many forces which contributed to this shift, including: the breakdown of the acceptance of Christian morality within society; the emphasis on the rational and scientific; the growth in prominence of other groups in the community offering people choices about how they use their time; and the church's failure to adapt to meet the changed environment.

ii) Sharing of Power:

Thirty-five years ago, the clergy within the Anglican Church had considerable power within the life of the church and the congregational members had very little. Today in the church, the laity have much greater power. However, this has raised considerable tension regarding the exercise of power by the clergy. Those clergy who have continued to exercise power in an authoritative way, have severely alienated many lay people and often undermined their position and role. A critical issue that emerges from this is - how is power to be shared in the church?

iii) Role of Clergy:

Clergy had a clear and definite role within the life of the church at the outset of this period. It was largely one of providing leadership, performing the priestly roles of celebrating communion and other sacraments, and offering forgiveness. As the laity have moved into some of these areas, it has left many clergy wondering what is their unique role within the community of faith. This has undermined the confidence and conviction of many priests, and contributed to the exiting of and the breakdown of many. Currently, clergy continue to be uncertain about their role. It has resulted in many people endeavouring to re-define the role of the clergy for this new context, while others hold on to the old model out of fear and uncertainty.

iv) Clergy Tenure:

During this period, although the church still considers ordination to be for life, it can no longer guarantee ongoing employment. Clergy tenure therefore is uncertain. Its continuance rests to a large extent on people in ordained ministry being able to perform competently and with measurable results. This expectation increases the pressure on clergy and, it would seem for a sizeable proportion, it has created an unhealthy level of anxiety.

) Status of Women:

Women's status within the church has changed dramatically over this period. At the outset of this period, they had little voice and influence within the life of the church, even though they had a greater representation in terms of membership. Women are now ordained and have gained a greater share of power within our corporate life. This transition has not been without tension for the church and the women involved. But it's clear that overall the increase in women's power within the church has been beneficial to its health, life and witness.

vi) Maintenance v. Mission Mode:

The church in the 1960's was largely in maintenance mode. It could afford to be, because it still attracted large enough congregations to maintain viability and life. However, hidden in the numbers was a relatively large group of people who had only a minimal attachment to its life and ministry. Many of the present Anglican congregations are very much smaller and many struggle constantly for survival. However, although numbers may be smaller within each congregation, there is a significant number who have a great commitment to Christ and His Church. This changing environment means that the church needs to be actively in mission mode. For clergy, this requires different skills than were required in the 1960's. This is difficult for many clergy, especially those trained in the 1960's or earlier.

vii) Training:

In the first three-quarters of this century, training for ordained ministry was largely academic. While there is still an emphasis on the academic, there is now greater emphasis on the pastoral aspects of ministry. However, it seems clear from my research that there is still a need for a greater emphasis in clergy training on leadership style, the sharing of power, working collaboratively within the church, the need for ongoing support and training, and the honing of skills needed in today's church.

Over the last thirty-five years, there have been many significant changes within the Anglican church in Australia. Those outlined above have challenged how power is exercised in the church, to re-define the role of the clergy and to look at creative ways of helping clergy be better resourced, skilled and cared for in this radically new environment of church life. During a time of transition and change, such factors have also put stress on the health and well being of the clergy and it is these factors which we will now examine.

4.   HEALTH :
- ITS DEFINITIONS, CHARACTERISTICS AND IMPORTANCE

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The maintenance of health for clergy is the focus of this paper.   Therefore, it is necessary to define at the outset what we mean by health, its characteristics, and the importance it holds for ministry.

4.2   ITS DEFINITIONS

At first sight, "health" is a word we think we understand.   It identifies a state of blessing or quality of life to which most people aspire.   But when we delve into its meaning, the picture becomes more complicated.   It soon becomes clear that health is a multi-faceted phenomenon.   This fact leads Michael Wilson in 'Health Is For People' to conclude:

> "It's clear therefore that health is complex and no single definition can serve our purpose.   Only manifold descriptions can do justice to its richness."[2]

Recognising that it is difficult to define, let's highlight several ways in which it has been described:

a) THE ABSENCE OF DISEASE OR ILLNESS

For much of the twentieth century, health has been defined as the absence of disease.[3] This focus on disease has been called the illness or medical model of health.   Disease is usually understood as the presence of some pathology or abnormality in a part of the body.   With the advent of modern biomedicine, this way of understanding physical health has become widespread.   According to this definition, people are healthy so long as they show no signs of bodily abnormality.   Such a definition raises problems about whether there are norms to measure health and how variations in human anatomy and physiology are dealt with.

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[2] Wilson, Michael. *Health Is For People,* (United Kingdom : Darton, Longmann & Todd, 1975), 62.
[3] Aggelton, A. *Health.* (London : Routledge, 1990), 1-18.

Illness, on the other hand, can be defined as a set of unpleasant feelings which may or may not accompany disease.[4] Therefore, according to this definition, so long as a person doesn't experience anxiety, pain or distress, they are healthy.

Also, there are clearly a number of problems with this definition, for health is seen as a purely subjective experience and we only know whether a person is healthy or not after they have reported feelings of well-being or illness.

Although this way of viewing health is limited, it still has value, because:

i) People are generally more aware of illness and disease in their lives than health. We tend not to think about health and only become aware of and value it when we are ill.

ii) Concepts derive part of their meaning from an awareness of their opposites. Thus, 'ill health' concepts such as disease, sickness or illness, represent appropriate constituents of an overall understanding of health.

The incompleteness of the medical model of health necessitates some broadening of this narrow view, which ought to include the rather rapidly changing physical and social environments as well as new understandings about the etiology of human functioning.

b) WHOLE PERSON WELL BEING

In 1946, the recently formed World Health Organisation (W.H.O.) provided one of the first comprehensive definitions of health:

> "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."

While this definition is general and idealistic and has been criticised as being unachievable and unmeasurable, it does indicate that health is a positive condition. It also stimulated other people to clarify the meaning of health.

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[4] Ibid, 1-18.

Writers on health commenting on the W.H.O. definition, maintained that you need to consider other components of health such as spiritual, emotional and environmental.[5] Also, that it was important to view people as integrated wholes and therefore to consider the inter-relatedness of all aspects of human health when discussing human well being.

c) POTENTIAL OR CAPACITY

It may be preferable to view health as the potential or capacity to pursue personal goals and to cope with environmental and social demands. This would involve a person being fulfilled and satisfied, and include a person's ability to face illness, crises and traumas. A person is healthy therefore when he/she has the capacity to face and overcome assaults to their overall well being. It views ill health as an opportunity for growth and development, and the attribution of meaning. This involves two key dimensions of health:

i) **Health Balance**: This is the dynamic equilibrium between positive and negative aspects of well being and functioning at an individual and social level.[6]

ii) **Health Potential**: This is the capacity of people to maintain an acceptable level of health balance and re-establish it when it is lost.[7]

d) FUNCTIONALITY

Health can further be defined as the capacity of a person to effectively perform the roles and tasks assigned. A healthy person then is one who can realise goals and aspirations, perform effectively in work, family and social settings. Such a person will contribute to the health of the community. Therefore, it is a resource for everyday living and is a positive concept emphasising social and personal resources as well as physical capacities. When a person is healthy, there is great potential for effectiveness. In fact, the healthier a person is, the more effective they can be. Therefore, health can be viewed as human effectiveness.

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[5] Ibid, 6.
[6] Marshall, Bernie and Maher, Shelley (Eds). *Health Advancement 101 Study Guide and Reader.* (Geelong : Deakin University, 1986), 5.
[7] Ibid, 6.

To summarise, therefore, a comprehensive notion of health ought to include:

- The absence of disease and illness;
- Whole person well being;
- Potential or capacity;
- Functionality.

e) PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

In the interviews with the clergy chosen for the study, they were asked to define health. It is significant that their responses reflect many of the multi-faceted definitions of health which have been outlined. Included in their understanding of health was:

i) Health as a state of well being, which means we are
- Satisfied with who we are and what we are doing;
- Able to cope with life;
- Able to maintain a balance in life;
- Able to have energy for living and work;
- Able to enjoy life in all its facets.

ii) Health is wholistic - which means it has to do with the whole person.

iii) Health includes having positive and growing relationships with God, others and self.

iv) Health involves the accepting of limitations, disabilities, diseases and frailty; and being able to deal creatively with one's ill health.

v) Health assessment needs to be done in the context of the ageing process and death.

vi) All aspects of health are important for clergy - but emotional and spiritual health were considered to be paramount.

f) COMPONENTS OF HEALTH

Writers on the issue of health have identified six components:

i) **Physical:** This includes areas such as having energy levels appropriate to a range of activities, having overall good muscle tone and body shape and size, being able to respond effectively to stimuli, being resistant to disease and infection, being alert, being free from pain, and being able to recuperate.

ii) **Mental:** This involves an overall outlook on life which enables us to adapt to environmental conditions and function productively in society. Included here are our values and belief systems, attitudes, levels of self-esteem, healthy personality, social competence, self-confidence and coping mechanisms.

iii) **Emotional:** This refers to our capacity to manage our own feelings about ourselves and others. Acknowledging, using and dealing with the whole range of emotions are vital for health.

iv) **Social:** This refers to our interactions with others - immediate and distant, and our ability to adapt to various social situations. Included here are such issues as employability, marital satisfaction, sociability and community involvement.

v) **Spiritual:** This involves a relationship with God; an ability to understand and express our basic purpose in life; to feel that we are part of a greater spectrum of existence; to experience love, joy, pain, sorrow, peace, contentment and wonder over life's experiences; and to care for and respect all living things.

vi) **Environmental:** This involves the ability of the person to relate positively and creatively to the environment, and being able to care for and respect it. It includes the realisation that there are forces in our environment which can contribute to or detract from health.

It's clear that these components are inter-related. Also, different people will place different emphasis on the individual components of health. This will vary from individual to individual and for any one individual it will vary across time.

g) HEALTH FOR WHAT PURPOSE?

Health for some people is an end in itself. They endeavour to be healthy so that they can say or know they are healthy. This can be referred to as "healthism". But for most people, health is a means to a number of ends, including:

i) Being able to meet the demands and situations of everyday life, to do the things that are important to us.

ii) Doing things to promote our health enables us to feel better and have a more fulfilling life.

iii) Having the capacity to resist disease and illness and meet challenging situations that might arise in the future.

Good health, therefore, is a resource for everyday living, not the object of living. It's a positive concept that emphasises social and personal resources as well as an individual's physical capacity. We don't live to be healthy; we live better by being healthy.

h) HEALTH AND ILLNESS - THEIR RELATIONSHIP

We can view health and illness as connected notions. When we do, a linking continuum emerges between these two opposite concepts.

Illness---Wellness

- discomfort, symptoms of illness   - feelings of well-being
- feeling of negativeness, disability   - happiness, fitness, autonomy
- loss of autonomy, helplessness   - empowerment to live the good
    life through acquired life skills

Exploration of the notion of this continuum can enrich our understanding about the meaning of health. By considering why we would place ourselves and others at a certain point on the continuum and what changes would allow us to move further to the wellness end, can enable us to clarify the underlying determinants of illness and health.

However, many writers about health maintain that illness and wellness should be considered as separate concepts. They argue that it's possible to be ill and still be healthy. Indeed, it's possible for a person to have a serious or even life-threatening disease, yet still possess an overall feeling of well-being. Conversely, a person may be medically free of disease but not enjoy such feelings.

IN CONCLUSION:

In my consideration of the definitions of health, I tend to agree with Michael Wilson when he writes:

"Health is a symbolic word (in the sense of bringing together): we cannot understand health by analysing it (breaking it down) but by building its different facets together. Health then is to be found to be a greater whole than the simple sum of its parts."[8]

4:3   CHARACTERISTICS OF HEALTH

A. AS THEY PERTAIN TO THE SIX COMPONENTS OF HEALTH DESCRIBED ABOVE:

This chart contains the characteristics of health and illness. The latter has been included so as to contrast the positive characteristics of health.

Health	Illness
1. PHYSICAL Appropriate energy levels Good muscle tone Good body shape Effective response to stimuli Disease resistant Able to recuperate Being alert Healthy sleep patterns Regularity of exercise Controlled medication	Depleted energy levels Poor muscle tone Being over or under weight Ineffective response to stimuli Disease prone Failing to recuperate Being sluggish Irregular sleep patterns Irregularity and exaggerated exercise Excessive medication

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[8] Wilson, Michael. *Health.* 60.

2. MENTAL 　Firm values and belief systems 　Self confidence 　Ability to cope with changes and crises 　Able to think and reason, clearly & logically 　Participation in in-service and 　　professional development 　Lives and works by ethical standards 　Job satisfaction 　Robustness	Fluctuating values and belief systems Self deprecation Inability to cope with changes and crises Thinking illogical and unclear Non-participation in in-service and 　Professional development Fails to live and work by ethical standards Job dissatisfaction Lacks robustness
3. EMOTIONAL 　Recognising and dealing with the whole 　　range of emotions 　Able to deal with frustration, disappointment 　　and hurt 　Able to handle normal levels of stress 　Caring for self as well as others 　Positive attitude to life 　Maintaining a balance in life 　Good self esteem 　Balanced personality 　Creative outlets for emotion 　Integrated sexuality	Unable to recognise and deal with the whole 　range of emotions Unable to deal with frustration, 　disappointment and hurt Unable to handle normal levels of stress Caring for others at the expense of self Negative attitude to life Unbalanced in life Poor self esteem Unstable personality Destructive outlets for emotions, e.g., 　addictions, compulsions. Sexuality not integrated
4. SOCIAL 　Able to handle diverse social situations 　Satisfaction in marriage or singleness 　Satisfaction in family life 　Able to relate constructively to people 　Able to perform a job consistently and 　　effectively 　Participating in group/community situations 　Able to be assertive and draw boundaries 　Able to deal positively with conflict 　Able to work constructively with people	Unable to handle diverse social situations Lack of satisfaction in marriage or singleness Lack of satisfaction in family life Relating to people in a destructive way Poor job consistency and effectiveness Isolation from groups/community situations Lacking assertiveness and being able to 　draw boundaries Handling conflict poorly Unable to develop constructive work 　relationship with people
5. SPIRITUAL 　Consistent spiritual life exercised 　Authenticity in moral/religious beliefs and 　　actions 　Confident in our basic purpose in life 　Able to experience love, joy, pain, sorrow, 　　peace and contentment. 　Able to wonder at life's experiences 　Able to care for and respect all living things 　Secure in the knowledge of being created, 　　saved and called by God. 　Dealing honestly with doubts 　Handling well the public ministry	Spasmodic spiritual life exercised Inconsistency in moral/religious beliefs and 　action Uncertain about basic purpose in life Unable to experience love, joy, pain, sorrow, 　peace and contentment. Unmoved by the wonders of life's experiences Failure to care for and respect all living things Not sure of being created, saved and called 　by God. Suppressing doubts Handling poorly the public ministry

6. ENVIRONMENTAL	
Able to read, handle and relate creatively to the immediate environment. Able to care for and live in harmony with the wider environment Able to create a positive environment in church family, etc.	Unable to read, handle and relate creatively to the immediate environment. Unable to care for and live in harmony with the wider environment. Unable to create a positive environment in church family, etc.

Also, in *Appendix 8:4* I have correlated the Components of Health with factors that maintain health. This gives a general overview of factors that maintain health for clergy as they pertain to the health components.

B. AS THEY PERTAIN TO CLERGY:

James Fenhagen and Celia Hahn write in 'Ministry for A New Time' that:

"Factors identified as significant contributions to health or well being are more than anything else marks of maturity".[9]

Included in these are:

- Consistent quality time with spouse or close friend;
- Absence of major problems or the ability to deal with them;
- Ability to establish clear boundaries between congregational duties and private lives;
- Satisfying social and private life;
- Professional self concept;
- The ability to live comfortably on one's income;
- Regular exercise;
- Good prayer life.

In further analysing the characteristics of healthy clergy, these writers conclude that effective clergy have:

- Solid spiritual roots;
- Positive early life experiences;
- The ability to think analytically on theological and practical issues;
- The skills to relate well with people;

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[9] Fenhagen, James C and Hahn, Celia A. *Ministry for a New Time* (New York : Alban Institute, 1995), 27.

- A secure sense of worth and competency;
- A realistic outlook about church and ministry;
- Provisions for regular spiritual nurture;
- Programs for physical care;
- Solid nurturing relationships with significant others - including spouse, friends, etc;
- The confidence to seek help when they need it;
- Priorities and limits defined;
- Interests outside work - which they pursue with passion.

4.4   IMPORTANCE OF HEALTH

A. EFFECTIVENESS

A significant degree of health in all areas is necessary for effective and ongoing ministry. In describing health and wholeness as a journey, Roy Oswald comments insightfully:

> "I believe that the nature of parish ministry today requires us to move consistently towards greater health and wholeness.   When we get stuck in our personal journey to wholeness, the point of 'stuckness' will throw up road blocks in our ministry....... The healthier we become on this journey towards wholeness, the more effective we become in our ministry to others."[10]

This will mean taking seriously the need to maintain health in all areas of our lives - for any area of ill health will adversely affect all other areas.   Conversely, anything we do to increase health in one area of our lives will have a positive effect on all the others. Through the maintenance of wholistic health, clergy are able to engage creatively in the multiple tasks and demands of ministry.   They have the energy to do what they are called to do, and the resources to do them.   To continue to be effective in ministry, the clergy person will need to learn to meet more effectively the unmet needs that affect ministerial health.   Some of these factors are - time pressure and over-extension, lack of a sense of accomplishment, loneliness, feelings of inadequacy and loss of a sense of meaning.

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[10]   Oswald, Roy M. *Clergy Self-Care. Finding a Balance for Effective Ministry.* (New York : Alban Institute, 1991), ix.

"To participate in such care can in fact be one of the ways ministers equip and prepare themselves for the demands of their calling. To avoid such care will diminish effectiveness and ultimately the duration of one's work."[11]

While recognising that some degree of health is necessary for ministerial effectiveness, it has to be acknowledged as well that some degree of ill health can contribute to effectiveness. Paul expressed this truth in the second letter to the church at Corinth when he wrote, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair; persecuted but not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed." (4:7). Through this incompleteness and frailty, people can see "that this all surpassing power is from God and not from us." (4:6). The minister is called on to be a Wounded Healer - a phrase made popular by Henri Nouwen in the book of the same name. In this book he writes:

"For a deep understanding of his own pain makes it possible for him to convert his weakness into strength and to offer his own experience as a source of healing to those who are often lost in the darkness of their own misunderstood sufferings;"[12] and

"When ministers share their journey of pain, people can be enabled to see that pain is a way to liberation and therefore a sign of hope."[13] Nouwen adds:

"Thus ministry can indeed be a witness to the living truth that the wound which causes us to suffer now will be revealed to us later as the place where God intimated His new creation."[14]

Therefore, the minister's ill health becomes an effective tool of ministry only as he/she has at least begun to deal with it.

Clearly there is a point at which ill health makes ministry ineffective and even destructive. But it can be used powerfully when the minister grapples with it creatively and shares his journey with those in the congregation of faith. To have this effectiveness, ill health needs to be viewed as part of the overall journey towards greater health and wholeness.

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[11] Lutz, Robert and Taylor, Bruce T (Eds). *Surviving in Ministry : Navigating The Pitfalls, Experiencing The Renewals.* (New York : Paulist Press, 1990), 4.
[12] Nouwen, Henri J. *The Wounded Healer* (New York : Doubleday, 1972), 88.
[13] Ibid, 93.
[14] Ibid, 96.

B. MODELLING

Who we are as persons in ministry speaks much louder than words. What's more - who and what we are as persons is our most effective tool in ministry.

"Being an example is of crucial importance, not only for effective ministry but I suspect for surviving ministry. It encompasses self-discipline and the receiving of comfort and is probably the single most powerful tool the minister has with which to minister."[15]

The very core of ministry has to do with the business of wholeness. In their lives, therefore, ministers need to demonstrate what health is and how it's creatively maintained. We can help people re-define what is meant by health.

"Health is not the opposite of sickness. Health is the ability to deal creatively with the problems of life - to confront them, withstand them, cope with them, grow from them. We are healthy when we are able to cope with the problems and flux of life in responsible ways. Thus, health is a positive force rather than the absence of illness."[16]

Also, how clergy deal with their own health journey is to some extent on display for people to see. If they want to be models of health care, they will need to work hard to maintain health in all areas of their lives. Therefore, for ministers to endeavour to live healthy, balanced lives is a powerful witness to those they minister to and with. "The only way we will be a healthy presence among our people is to keep ourselves healthy."[17]

C. HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

The health of the minister affects directly the health of the faith community. If the minister is unhealthy, especially emotionally or spiritually, it will have a damaging effect on the congregation. Healthy and effective clergy assist greatly in the health and well being of the church.

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[15] Lutz, Robert and Taylor, Bruce T (Eds). *Surviving in Ministry*, 5.
[16] Oswald, Roy M. *Clergy Self-Care*, 205.
[17] Ibid, 4.

It is also true that the overall health or otherwise of the church will contribute to the sense of well being that clergy feel about their ministries.

"History has shown that strong clergy (well, effective, thriving) make for strong laity and strong laity make for strong clergy. The future demands this kind of mutuality."[18]

One area of ill health can be unhealthy dependence by the congregation on the clergy. This can come about through the clergy person's need for control due to insecurity, or the congregation's need to be dependent. It creates a climate in the congregation which is decidedly unhealthy.

When a relatively healthy clergy person is part of an unhealthy congregation, the clergy person will have to work hard to maintain health. If the minister is able to maintain health within this environment, it is possible for the minister to have a transforming influence.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In considering all the definitions of health, I consider health to be the capacity for ministers to be effective and efficient in ministry. It may or may not mean that a person has an absence of disease or illness. In fact, some degree of ill health can contribute to ministerial effectiveness. To maintain this capacity to minister effectively, ministers will need to endeavour to maintain health in the physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual and environmental aspects of life. Health is to be maintained not as an end in itself, but a valuable resource for effectiveness, modelling, and a contribution to the health of the community of faith.

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[18] Fenhagen, James C and Hahn, Celia A. *Ministry for a New Time*, 38.

5. HIGHLIGHTS OF RESPONSES OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS STUDY

5.1 METHODOLOGY

As the qualitative approach to this research project was most appropriate, I decided to involve only eight ordained Anglican clergy. It was necessary, in order to ascertain the maintenance of health, that they have been ordained over ten years. The gender balance was achieved by choosing an equal number of men and women. To get a cross-section of parish settings, people were identified from within the various regions of the Melbourne Diocese.

There was an initial interview conducted with each of the participants. The Philosophy of the interviews and the questions that guided them are in *Appendix 1*. Subsequently, these same people filled out a Questionnaire. This was undertaken to explore further the issues of how these people had endeavoured to maintain health, and some of the issues not adequately covered in the interview. The copy of the Questionnaire "Maintaining Health" is in *Appendix 5*, while the responses to it are outlined in *Appendix 6*.

5.2 HIGHLIGHTS OF PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES

This section contains a summary of the responses of the participants to the interview and the Questionnaire. A fuller treatment of these responses is in *Appendix 2* for the interviews and *Appendix 6* for the Questionnaire. Also, you will find a brief profile of the participants in *Appendix 2*.

Rev A is a male aged in his 50's who is serving in a working class parish in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. He has suffered a number of debilitating physical conditions and extensive emotional stress. This has resulted in him struggling at times with his overall health. At the time I interviewed him, he was frustrated by the parish's lack of support and affirmation. By the time of the Questionnaire, he had decided to leave this parish. Due to lack of support, criticism, emotional and physical tiredness, conflict unable to be resolved and his wife's health, he has been tempted to leave ministry altogether.

The factors that have helped him remain in ministry and generally maintain his health, include - being able to maintain his spiritual life; regular physical exercise; support networks; sense of call; being able to recognise evil; and the satisfaction he receives from his involvement in leading a group of disabled scouts and from some aspects of the parish ministry. In reflecting on the maintenance of health, he concluded that spiritual and emotional health were the most critical issues for clergy.

Rev B is a male aged in his 60's who is part of a relatively large church in a working class suburb of a regional city. Over the years in ministry, he has not experienced much ill health. However, as he has become older, his energy and vitality have significantly lessened. This he has found difficult and frustrating. His ability to be pro-active has been pivotal in him maintaining health. In this, the specific things which have enabled him to remain healthy include the gospel he is called to maintain, his love for people, his spiritual life, supportive relationships, time off, separating work and family, and dealing creatively with expectations. Commenting on the demands of ministry, he said, "The intensity of ministry I often want to run from. I can get worn down by it. Often I get down - but I don't stay there - I can't." And commenting on the satisfaction of ministry, he said, "I don't know what else I would like to do - other than ministry. It's still enormously worthwhile."

Rev C is a single woman in her 40's in a rural parish. She has and still is coping with extensive health problems. She commented candidly, "Healthy is something I'd like to be all the time. But I am not." Her support has come from the parishioners, her doctors, the Bishop, local ministers' group, and a mentor. It has amazed and delighted her that the parish has constantly affirmed her despite her struggle with ill health. Commenting about this, she said, "They don't want to lose me. That's been amazing! I don't need to be on edge wondering if I will be able to continue here." Other factors which have assisted her to maintain health sufficient to keep on ministering are - the maintenance of a spiritual life (although at times difficult); sense of call; dealing creatively with frustrations; dealing with criticism; her dog; involvement in Rotary; a sense of humour; and a keen interest in the world and the church. Despite her ill health, she is able to look outward and face the world with hope. She struggles with conflicting expectations, her lack of power, her inability to bring about change, indifference to Christianity, and financial pressures in the parish. Like all the women in this study, she fought long and hard for ordination to become a reality.

Her satisfaction has come from the raising up of more eucharistic assistants, doing funerals, recognition of 80 year olds as elders, and doing the ordinary everyday things. Of this latter aspect, she commented insightfully, "It is doing the ordinary things day in and day out - and nothing happens. Then something significant happens. You say something, do something, or turn up somewhere - and it's important and significant." Such for her are the God surprises in ministry which enthuse and motivate her to keep going.

Rev D is a single woman, aged in her 40's, who is currently ministering in a middle class parish in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Her overall stance to maintaining health is to be pro-active and pragmatic. This was reflected in her comments, "I generally try to look after myself and give myself a little T.L.C. occasionally." And, "I get that pragmatic approach from my mother. She was never much for sentimentality - she just got on with it!" She struggles with people's trivia and pettiness, administration, and having the confidence in leadership. Those are far outweighed by her sense of satisfaction, which comes from doing the Sunday liturgy well and performing meaningful funerals.

Although she has some ongoing health problems, she is relatively healthy. The maintenance of her health has come through involvement in support networks, her disciplined spiritual life, the value she places on call, and caring for herself physically by walking and time off.

Rev E is currently in a middle class southern suburb of Melbourne parish and is a single woman in her 40's. She has experienced little ill health, for which she is grateful. Commenting on this, she said, "I do thank God for my health. Some of my health is genetic, accident or overactive divine blessing." She does, however, wonder about how she will handle the ageing process. Her capacity to maintain good health comes about through several support networks, taking regular days off and holidays, a keen sense of call, being prepared to confront and draw limits, eating and sleeping well, and a vital spiritual life. Her spiritual life is maintained through good relationships, reading theology, the daily offices, a spiritual director, and preaching.

Administration and conflict she finds stressful. However, there are many more things that bring her satisfaction - including preaching and teaching, presiding at worship, developing relationships, initiating change and taking funerals.

Her stance to life and to her health is to be pro-active. She knows what she needs so she goes to get it.

Rev F ministers in a working class parish in the northern suburbs of Melbourne. She is married, in her 40's. She has known ill health over an extended period during her time in ministry. Reflecting on the chronic depression she battles, she commented, "It's quite powerful to have been through it. It gives you an appreciation of what people face in their lives when there is no instant cure." Also, she was stressed and frustrated over the often painful struggle for the ordination of women, the powerlessness of the church, and the pettiness and ignorance at times of church life.

Her health is maintained through a spiritual life built around contemplation and corporate worship, regular time off, being able to draw limits, supportive relationships, being able to deal with conflict, regular physical exercise, and her strong sense of call. Preaching, helping people through crises, working with children, funerals, and facilitating discernible changes, are all things which bring great satisfaction to her in ministry. In her personal life, she finds music life-giving.

Rev G is in his late 50's and currently ministers in an upper middle class suburb in Melbourne's south. During the time in ministry over thirty years, he has been relatively healthy. His major crises have come through major sickness of his children. These caused him great anguish but he also realised they had "thrown him back on the Lord." The one area of health he has consistently struggled with is stress. About this, he commented, "I don't handle it well - I tend to fight it. I think if I'm a man of God, I should be able to overcome it..." He is often frustrated by administration, the multiplicity of ministry tasks, dealing with church bureaucracy, callers who come looking for money, and dealing with conflict.

His spiritual life, which he acknowledges as central to his ministry, is maintained by daily prayer and bible reading, journalling, conferences, and reading and listening to tapes. Call has also been important to him. Commenting on this, he said, "Nobody in their right mind would take on ministry - and remain there - unless they knew the Lord had called them."

One other thing central to the maintenance of his health is the variety of support he receives through groups, family, individuals, friends and prayer partners. In reflecting on this support from friends he said, "Keeping contact with friends is an important part of keeping a balance

in life that is integral to health." Other things which he mentioned that helped him maintain health were - time off, satisfaction in preaching, leading small groups, counselling and talking to people about Jesus, and having recreational activities such as football, golf and woodwork.

Rev H currently ministers in an upper middle class suburb of eastern Melbourne. He is in his 50's. He has suffered depression for many years and has recently been diagnosed with a physical ailment. As a result of these conditions, he is acutely aware of signs of ill health and is able to adjust his lifestyle accordingly.

A vocational crises some years ago, struggling to deal with conflict, people leaving the congregation and systemic issues in the Anglican church, have caused him great stress. Commenting on this last issue he said, "There is a lot of pressure on the Anglican clergy of the Diocese with the shrinking base. It's causing a great deal of discouragement and stress."

He enjoys most aspects of ministry and is stimulated by the variety of tasks. His health and focus in the midst of ministry is maintained by involvement in various support networks, a sense of call, regular time off, regular recreation, and feeding daily on scripture. This last facet not only feeds him spiritually, but enables him to rise above the immediate problems and see the grand plan of God revealed through scripture.

5.3 CONCLUSION

It is out of these rich responses to the interviews and Questionnaire that I have been able to identify the significant issues that have contributed to health for these clergy. Many of these issues are developed in the material I have researched. The responses by participants in the study, and the extensive research, have enabled me to identify four major factors, which are:

- Support networks
- Spiritual life
- Satisfaction
- Handling Expectations

In all these areas, I have noted the need for pro-active self-care. It is on these issues I now reflect in this paper - in the light of the participants' responses and the research from books and articles.

6. SIGNIFICANT HEALTH FACTORS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In reviewing the data from the participants in the study and the relevant literature on clergy health, it enabled me to highlight the centrality of pro-active self-care (6.2), support networks (6..3), a vital spiritual life (6.4), maintaining satisfaction in ministry (6.5), and dealing with expectations (6.5). How a person in ministry is able to consistently and creatively handle these issues will largely determine how health is maintained. It is to these issues that we now turn.

6.2 IMPORTANCE OF PRO-ACTIVE SELF-CARE

A. SELF-CARE

A person is a unity and what affects one area of personhood will affect all others. In this paper, I have already identified the various components of self-care - physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, social and environmental. What affects one area will affect all others. To maintain optimal health - the best we can be given our age, genes, liabilities and disabilities and life experiences - we need to take care of ourselves in all areas of our lives.

Self-care is taking intentional and active care of oneself. It means balancing our lives in such a way as to care for ourselves wholistically. In the Bible, a person is viewed as an irreducible whole. When it uses the word body, it denotes the total personality of the person. Therefore, people don't have bodies; they are bodies. Furthermore, wholeness inextricably involves the individual's interpersonal and social context. A person's relationship with God, therefore, is an integral factor when considering a person's total well being.

Self-care is being a steward of the many capacities and resources God has given us. It is taking seriously Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Take heed unto yourself and your doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save yourself and your hearers." (1 Tim 4:16) Ministers care for themselves because:

- they value their God-given personhood,
- it provides a model for the congregation,
- it enables them to have the resources necessary for the task, and
- it helps them be effective in the work of the Kingdom.

There are a number of things that work against clergy self-care. Many clergy have grown up with the notion that you consider others before yourself at all times. Also, the theology of commitment and sacrifice for the sake of the gospel has further added to the pressure against self-care.

> "Biblical imagery depicting those in the Lord's service doesn't seem to allow much room for self-care. We are characterised as shepherds willing to lay down our lives for the sheep, servants seeking first of all the Kingdom of God, followers denying ourselves to take up our cross of suffering, expected to be all things to all people."[19]

And the same writer insightfully counsels:

> "In my experience, what often passes for a self-giving style of ministry are such things as the inability to set limits, a need to please others, and difficulty in maintaining ego boundaries."[20]

To maintain a healthy self-care, ministers need to develop a theology of pastoral care of self, which includes:-

i) Continual re-affirmation of one's call to ministry.

At the heart of this is our understanding that we are called first and foremost to serve God, not to serve people. This will enable us not to respond to all the needs people present. It will also help us guard against the force of the unconscious motives for ministry - impress others, ease guilt, and a need to be needed.

ii) Knowing that we are created by God.

As we are created by God, we need to be stewards of that which He has entrusted to us.

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[19] Lutz, Robert and Taylor, Bruce T (Eds). *Surviving in Ministry*, 2.
[20] Ibid, 4

iii) Knowing that salvation is a finished work.

Christ in His life, death and resurrection has completely accomplished salvation. For ministers, this means they don't have to earn their salvation through work nor do they have to save the world, because Christ has done this already. It seems that when ministers burn out, they often believe that salvation is up to them.

iv) A theology of the body.

Whereas the Greek idea was that the body was weak and the mind and the spirit superior, the Hebrews had a wholistic view of the body. The person doesn't have a body; he/she is a body.

v) An understanding of the kenosis of Christ.

The picture we have in Philippians 2:5-11 is of Christ who purposely and intentionally chooses to empty himself for the sake of the world. In his earthly life, He was always in charge of ministry. In particular, often after prolonged contact with people, he withdrew for physical, emotional and spiritual renewal. He was not pressured by people's needs, but by the desire to do His Father's will. It seems His ministry was God-centred, not people driven.

vi) An appreciation of what it means to be human.

To be human is to fail, sin, have limits in all areas of our personhood, and have ill health. It involves having an emotional life. Ministers are not spared the human condition. The clearest sign of a humanised clergy is their honesty in sharing human struggles and weakness. This will not only bring freedom to ministers but will give permission to those they lead to do the same.

vii) An understanding and experience of the Spirit.

Ministry is sustained and nurtured by the ongoing experience of the life of the Spirit. If this was so for Jesus, how much more so for us. It is the Spirit who gives power and direction for service, and gifts.

viii) An appreciation of what it means to be a Wounded Healer.

Optimal health should never be seen as perfection but as an acceptance of weakness and the embracing of brokenness. Writing about the minister as the wounded healer, Henri Nouwen says:

"He is called to be the wounded healer - the one who must look after his own wounds but at the same time be prepared to heal the wounds of others."[21]

B. PRO-ACTIVE SELF-CARE

Lutz and Taylor remark:

"I am convinced that many, if not all, ministers do not take adequate physical and emotional care of themselves."[22]

And we could add - spiritually, relationally, mentally and environmentally. For some, this is because of an inadequate theology of care in ministry or some form of psychological ill health. But for others, it is because they are waiting for others to take the role of primary caregivers. These people include: the medical profession, the church authorities, family members, congregations or colleagues. While these sorts of people can provide some care, the primary care of ourselves lies with ourselves. Ministers need to be pro-active in the care of themselves.

One of the participants in the study commented, "Being single means that you have to look after yourself ... because no one else is going to ... I have learned that pastoral care is up to me." Another participant was even more direct in her comments: "I am a self-starter. Experience tells me you get what you ask for ... I see some clergy operating on the model which says that someone should give them what they need without them asking for it. But I don't operate that way. I know when to get it - so I go get it. It's up to me."

These comments from two of the participants in the study reflect the attitude of all the people involved. In listening to their stories, each person has been consistently pro-active in self-care. They have recognised the resources needed to maintain health, and pro-actively sought them out. It is clear from this study and relevant reading, that ministers need to intentionally and pro-actively put self-care strategies into place, to creatively engage in ministry and maintain health. It is some of these pro-active strategies I now consider in this paper.

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[21] Nouwen, Henri J. *The Wounded Healer*, 84.
[22] Lutz, Robert and Taylor, Bruce T (Eds). *Surviving in Ministry*, 1.

6.3   SUPPORT NETWORKS

A. IMPORTANCE

The need to develop a support network was highlighted by all the participants in the study.   Each participant in the study has a number of sources of support.   Nobody relies solely on one.   Also, there is a wide variety of support networks among the participants, including fellow clergy, the bishop, diocesan staff meeting, mentor, friends, doctors, parishioners,   spouse and family,   retreat groups,   intercessors,   local ministers fellowship, deanery and spiritual directors.

Divergent views on the value of clergy support groups were expressed by two participants.   Rev H, commenting on his clergy group, said: "It doesn't take us long to recognise that we are all facing a common set of problems, and so when somebody shares something, it's highly likely that a significant number of the group will identify with it."   Whereas Rev B, commenting on his experience, concluded: "Clergy networks generally don't work.   I think clergy are too guarded to be real."

Another source of support mentioned often was that of friendship.   Rev G comments probably summed up the feelings of others: "Keeping contact with friends is an important part of keeping a balance in life which is integral to health."

Overall, all participants in the study affirmed strongly the need for support networks to maintain health.   In the literature on clergy health, it is also featured significantly.   Roy Oswald in 'Surviving in Ministry' commented:

> "The effectiveness of my ministry is directly proportional to the quality of support I
> am feeling at any given moment."[23]

Also, Gilbert comments insightfully:

> "If the quality and breadth of support is a major factor in our ability to withstand
> change and stress of any kind, then it is important to have support networks in
> place."[24]

And William Hobgood writes succinctly:

> "Support systems are essential for a pastor's continuing health."[25]

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[23] Ibid, 98
[24] Gilbert, Barbara G. *Who Ministers to the Ministers?* (New York : Alban Institute, 1987), 22.
[25] Hobgood, William. *The Once And Future Pastor. The Changing Role of Religious Leaders.*
(New York : Alban Institute, 1998), 54.

B. INTENTIONAL

Support networks don't just happen; they need to be intentionally planned. Roy Oswald comments directly on this intentionality:

"I know it would be nice if support came with the job, but it doesn't. If you want support for the work of your ministry, you will have to build your own support network;" and, "I became aware of the key myth that I had lived with for many years, that support systems happen by accident. It's a myth I continually encounter when I work with clergy groups."[26]

If ministers are to have adequate and quality support to minister through the good and bad times, they will need to develop these vital networks.

C. NEED FOR NETWORKS

Ministers face many pressures, which makes it imperative that they have quality support networks, including:

i) Common Human Needs

The minister faces all the life pressures that everybody does and has similar needs. In particular, they have need for social support. In the book 'Holy Matrimony' the authors write:

"Priests and their spouses have the same social and emotional needs for friendship, enjoyment, fun and support as most other people."[27]

The same point is made by Gilbert when he writes:

"Clergy and their spouses experience the same kind of joy, pain, brokenness, as their parishioners. Where do they turn when faced with personal problems? Who ministers to clergy and their spouses?"[28]

Also, although clergy are in a key supportive role to members of their congregations, it is sometimes not clear where they get their support. As I will explore later, congregational support is often limited and fraught with dangers.

ii) Marginality in Society

The role of the minister today is marginal to the existence of the majority of the population, and the truths proclaimed are either ignored or rejected. The reasons for this trend are:

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[26] Oswald, Roy M. *How To Build A Support System for Your Ministry.* (New York : Alban Institute, 1991), 1.

[27] Kirk, Mary and Leary, Tom. *Holy Matrimony : An Exploration of Marriage & Ministry* (Oxford : Lynx Communication, 1994), 162.

[28] Gilbert, Barbara G. *Who Ministers to The Ministers?* 1.

- ministers deal with abstract concepts rather than concrete issues;
- ministers provide a service - which doesn't appear to produce tangible results;
- the majority of the population find the message irrelevant;
- the church is at the edge rather than the centre of society;
- often the worship form is alien to this technological age;
- the church, and therefore the minister, tends to have little contact or relationship with the wider community.

Once the minister had an important place in society, which provided at least minimal support. In contemporary society, that support is no longer there and so the minister needs to look elsewhere.

iii) Role Uncertainty

Some of the roles traditionally done by ministers, e.g., counselling and relief work, have been taken over by professionals and government departments. This picture has been further confused by the laity now taking on many of the tasks previously performed by the minister. Although this last trend is to be commended, it has left many ministers with an uncertainty about their role and function. What's more, many tasks the minister is now being asked to undertake, he/she feels inadequately trained for. This is especially true of older clergy who were trained for a different church.

A support network is able to help the minister define his/her role and may be able to provide some training for this new role. Also, role confusion produces high levels of stress. This may be alleviated by a solid support network - which can offer perspective, distance and experience.

iv) Lack of Wider Family Support

The minister and his/her family, because of the nature of the job, often move to positions far removed from their families of origin. The support they would naturally get from them is not there. However, it is possible to maintain some contact or support through letters, e-mail, internet and telephone, and also regular visits. This of course is not as beneficial and supportive as the regular face to face contacts possible if the family lives close by.

Another issue for some ministers and their immediate families is that the wider family may not have an affinity with Christianity. They may not, therefore, be supportive of the work or the church. This can cause tension and produce a situation which is far

from supportive. Thus ministers often need to look elsewhere for support and encouragement.

v) Isolation

The scope and nature of the work of ministry leads inevitably to isolation. This is due to a complex number of factors, including:

- Most ministers work alone - having no colleagues for immediate on-the-spot support.

- They communicate attitudes and beliefs verbally or non-verbally - that separates them from the people they serve. This is part of the prophetic role. They exercise this, not just by what they say but who they are.

- The leadership role they have, by its very nature, is isolating.

- Often ministers are loners - choosing to do most things themselves and comfortable with the separation. This has lead one writer to conclude, "The major isolating factor is self-imposed."[29]

- The mobility of the ministry means that the minister regularly moves away from established support networks. These have to be re-established in the new area of ministry. This takes times.

- The differentness of ministers. Many ministers reject this notion, wanting to be the same as other people. But ministers are different. They see and hear things others don't, they think about things in ways others don't, and they have personal qualities that differ from others. It comes also as a result of their calling. Commenting on this aspect of ministry, several writers have said:

> "The setting apart of a person for ministry in ordination is an act of recognition of the isolating peculiarities that God conferred on the ordinand at birth or in childhood;"[30] and, "The pastor's life is marked by a type of loneliness which is peculiar to those who receive their calling from God. It is a solitude of sacredness, an isolation of the soul that feels the responsibility of eternal issues and must maintain its commitment to divine purposes above all else."[31]

One of the costs of ministry is the isolation inherent in this differentness. Ministers need to accept it about themselves and affirm it as a gift from God.

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[29] Moe, Kenneth A. *The Pastor's Survival Manual : Personal Integrity in the Choices and Challenges of Ministry and How to Handle Them.* (New York : Alban Institute, 1995), 19.
[30] Ibid, 19.
[31] Hart, Arch. *Coping With Depression in Ministry and Other Helping Professions* (Texas : Word, 1984), 17.

This factor doesn't mean that ministers don't need support. On the contrary, it will be a motivating factor to seek out support - especially with those who have the same calling. But it is clear that no matter how much support is gained, there will always be for the minister some sense of isolation and loneliness.

vi) Merging of Personal and Public Lives

In many aspects of the work of ministry, our public life gets mixed up with our personal life. One way this happens is that, because the office is often in the house, people's worries invade the kitchen, the sitting room and even the bedroom. It is often difficult to separate one's personal and public lives.

But for ministerial health and effectiveness, it is necessary to do so. The ministers need to find places where they can be themselves. Often a support group can provide such an environment.

vii) The Nature of the Work

The work of ministry is:

- *People Intensive*

    Constant people contact is draining and exhausting. Dealing with people issues can deplete energy and enthusiasm. A support network is one way of finding recreation and refreshment. It is a place where the minister can be cared for rather than caring.

- *Unending*

    This can lead ministers to overwork and therefore become exhausted or work burnout. A support network enables ministers to stop for a while and get some balance into their lives.

    > "Effective pastors are engaged in their work but not enmeshed in it. Discovering the right rhythm of rest and work is a primary task of all pastors."[32]

- *There is no objective measure for work.*

    This can result in the minister becoming disillusioned, despondent and depressed. It is possible for the minister to overwork to compensate for this and to lose perspective and direction.

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[32] Moe, Kenneth A. *The Pastor's Survival Manual*, 23.

All these factors contribute to the minister's need for the development and maintenance of ongoing support networks.

D. TYPES

It is clear from the reading and the participants in the study that all ministers need, for their health and well being, a number of well-functioning support networks - for example, Rev E's support networks include a spiritual director, two groups of colleagues, deanery and long-standing friends. Also, each person needs to find the ones that best suit them. Gilbert concludes, "No one person or group can meet all our support needs."[33]

Marital status and geographical location affect the minister's option for support. Generally, those in city placements have greater options than their country counterparts. Also, those who are single don't have the inbuilt relationship married people have. Sometimes, reduced options can be positive, as it means that the minister has to work harder at establishing and maintaining networks.

In discussing the various network options, the weaknesses as well as the strengths of each will be highlighted.

i) Marriage Partner

For many ministers who are married, the relationship with a marital partner is the most profound support base. This is clearly borne out in the participants of the study. The advantage of this support is that there is already a trusting relationship and that it is readily available. It has some limitations:

- The partner can become overburdened, especially if he/she is the only source of support.
- The support is as good as the marriage relationship itself. Therefore, the marriage needs to be nurtured.
- Each person in the marriage will need to have additional support if they are not to put undue stress on the marriage, and them personally.
- When both are under stress or in pain at the same time, support will be difficult. It may be necessary to temporarily suspend such support at these times.
- Often the partner is emotionally involved and so can't provide the much-needed objectivity.

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[33] Gilbert, Barbara G. *Who Ministers to the Ministers?* 22.

Despite these limitations, this type of support is still invaluable for ministers.

ii) Congregations

Ministers obviously need the general support of the congregation if they are to minister, and the development of relationships if their caring is to be effective. The question remains, 'Can the minister have personal friendships which provide support in the congregation where he/she is ministering?' Some commentators contend that it is possible. And one of the participants of the study received the primary support from a member of the congregation. It may be possible if the minister is careful not to emphasise or favour the relationship.

But most commentators agree that it is not advisable for ministers to have close relationships for support with members of their congregations. To do so runs the risk of:

- Giving the perception of playing favourites in attention and caring.
- Becoming obligated to these parishioners in ways that diminish pastoral authority.
- Creating tension between being friend and parishioner.

Most professional organisations in the health care sector discourage such dual relationships. Kenneth Moe concludes:

> "So relationships of pastors with parishioners need to be cordial, warm, caring, even loving, but not selectively intimate."[34]

However, ministers have found it helpful to retain and cultivate friends in a previous church where they have served. This can work very well. However, it has the following limitations:

- The distance involved may make the friendship contacts limited.
- Care needs to be exercised not to undermine the authority of the current minister through the friendship.

iii) Denominational Leaders and Structures

Generally, ministers will share congregational crises but not personal crises, with denominational leaders or their representatives. The reasons for this include:

- The denominational leader has control over the career path of the minister. The minister is reluctant to share anything with the leader which will jeopardise that.
- There is often no trusting relationship between minister and leader.

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[34] Moe, Kenneth Alan. *The Pastor's Survival Manual,* 15.

- Denominational leaders aren't seen as accessible. They are generally viewed as overburdened, distant and unsuitable counsellors.
- Denominational leaders seem to be more concerned with the job and the health of the church than with personal issues.

Amongst the participants in the study, nobody declared that they had an ongoing and close supportive relationship with a denominational leader. What's more, they were all realistic about the minimal amount of support they could expect to receive from a denominational structure such as a deanery. The deanery was viewed primarily as having a functional role rather than a supportive one. This was due largely to:

- the infrequency of meeting;
- focus of gatherings - generally business;
- jealousy and competition amongst clergy of the same denomination;
- different ministry styles and philosophies.

Reflecting on my positive experience of belonging to networks, I wondered why the Anglican Deanery doesn't provide such a positive environment. In this exploration, I discovered some of the positive aspects of networks which are not part of deanery life, including:

- Freedom to belong or not;
- Sharing with people of common values and outlook;
- Focus on some relevant aspect of ministry;
- Prayer for one another;
- A level of honesty which encourages and facilitates support;
- The network has a defined life. It ceases to exist when the members decide, or when the ministry topic agreed on has been dealt with.

Gilbert concludes:

> "The large official gatherings seem to provide only superficial support. But they do provide opportunities for sharing at one level and provide forums where deeper relationships can be nurtured."[35]

iv) Collegial Groups

Many ministers find this type of support the most significant they have. This was generally true of the participants in the study. This is because in these groups they share a common understanding of the pressures and challenges of ministry.

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[35] Gilbert, Barbara G. *Who Ministers to the Ministers?* 58.

Such groups work best when people
- have common interests and/or philosophy of ministry;
- are committed to regular attendance;
- are from multi-denominational backgrounds;
- are determined to build trust relationships over an extended period of time;
- are prepared to employ a competent facilitator or personal carer.

These groups can revolve around professional development. Gilbert comments on the value of these:

> "The central value of a support group seems to be having a place where one can be honest, accepted, affirmed and supported in growing and dealing with whatever is going on in one's life."[36]

v) Friends

As most of the minister's personal relationships are through professional contacts, genuine and long-standing friendships are all the more important. It is possible to cultivate friendships with clergy, Christians and non-church people.

These relationships are vital because it is possible for the minister to be out of the role. He/she can be themselves. There can be lots of frivolity and laughter. Such relationships are the most liberating and refreshing of all.

This was expressed recently by a participant in the study when he said, "Maintaining friendship links is important ... just going out for meals with friends where you don't have to be anything other than yourself. Where you are not the minister, just yourself. That helps enormously."

vi) Psychotherapy, Counselling and Professional Supervision

Some ministers have regular sessions with these professionals, not only in times of crisis but also when things are going well. This is a recognition that self-knowledge is important in carrying out the work of ministry.

For this to be effective, the minister needs to be honest about his/her struggles and be prepared to share them; and a trust needs to develop with the professional.

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[36] Ibid, 59.

A number of the participants in the study commented on the positive support they received from medical doctors. Also, one person mentioned the value of ongoing help from a psychiatrist.

vii) Continuing Education

This is where ministers are able to reflect on issues of importance in ministry - theory and practice - in a formal setting with peers. The Master of Ministry Program through Melbourne College of Divinity (M.C.D.) is one such program.

As well as the support from fellow students and lecturers, it is a great opportunity to feed the mind and think through issues. As a person is a unity, whatever feeds the mind feeds the whole person. One of the participants picked up the spirit of this when she said, "Intellect and heart are connected for me. If it feeds my mind, it will feed my spirit."

viii) Mentor

"Mentoring is a one-to-one relationship between a mentor and mentoree for the specific and definable development of a skill or an art."[37]

A healthy and effective mentoring relationship will be characterised by:
- Both partners sharing a compatible philosophy.
- Mentor being knowledgeable in subject being pursued.
- Mentor needs to believe in potential of person.
- Good communication.
- Freedom on the part of the mentor to explore options but leave person free to choose.
- There is accountability.
- A commitment to keep going, especially through the difficult times.

The mentoring relationship can be incredibly supportive as the participants explore the relevant issue together.

ix) Spiritual Director

The role of a spiritual director is to journey with a person and help the person discern the activity of God in their lives. A spiritual director is simply present with others,

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[37] Smith, Fred. *Mentoring That Matters*. (Leadership : Winter, 1999), 95.

listening, discerning, asking questions and offering insights. As the Holy Spirit is our true spiritual director, together there is a need to remain attentive to that Spirit.

A growing number of clergy are availing themselves of the support, encouragement and guidance of a spiritual director. More will be explored about this subject in the next section of this paper entitled 'SPIRITUAL LIFE'.

These are significant ways ministers can find support for their life and ministry. The need for support is basic to human life; without it, we will die. It is also essential to professional competence and well being.

E. HEALTHY CHARACTERISTICS OF NETWORKS

i) Leadership

The provision of a facilitator for a support network is the cornerstone of a healthy group. Such a person needs to have five basic qualities:

- *Competent* - to manage group life and resolve issues that arise.
- *Sensitive* - to the needs of the group members and the complexity of parish ministry.
- *Safe* - to manage the group in such a way that people feel safe. It should not be anyone who can influence the careers of the clergy involved.
- *Learner* - wants to grow and learn.
- *Keep Confidences* - is able to keep what is said in the group, in the gathering.

Leadership can be provided by a group member or can be rotated around members. However, it needs to be borne in mind that the leadership role detracts from the ability to participate in the group and receive from it. It also keeps the clergy person who assumes leadership in a carer's role. One of the aims of a support group is for the ministers not to be carers, but be cared for. Ideally, the group facilitator needs to be someone from outside the group who is chosen and paid for by the group. This will ensure objectivity, proper care for those involved and continuance of the group through different stages.

ii) **Development of Authentic Community**

This will take time and effort to develop. It is possible to identify four stages in the development:

(a) *Psuedo-Community* - where people are pleasant and nice to one another.

(b) *Chaos* - where people try to fix or change one another.

(c) *Emptiness* - where people give up the notion what the group should be and allow it to become what it will.

(d) *Authentic community* - where people can share who they are and how they feel in an accepting atmosphere.

The group will need to grow to trust one another, risk vulnerability, share openly and love generously.   In the book 'Covenant and Care', the authors, writing about collegial groups, declare:

"We need a collegial group that accepts us and gives us the message that we are good enough just as we are."[38]

This is the place of authentic community, which enables growth and transformation for the members of the group.

iii) **Member Selection Vital**

All people invited to the group need to share a common philosophy of ministry, otherwise there will be unnecessary tension and conflict.

One way to form a group is this: the person who has the idea invites one other colleague to meet with him/her and they decide together who else to invite.   When people are invited, it may be advisable to set a period, say three months, in which people can assess their suitability for the group and vice versa.

iv) **Covenant Clearly**

At the initial meeting, it is vital to make a covenant together about:

- Being committed to the group, pledging regular attendance.
- Regularity and length of each meeting.
- Leadership.
- Focus of group - personal care or professional development.
- Group attitudes - acceptance, care, understanding and compassion.
- Evaluation points - when will evaluation of growth, life and development take place?

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[38] Harbaugh, Gary, Brenneis, Rebecca and Hutton, Rodney. *Covenants & Care : Boundaries in Life, Faith and Ministry* (Minneapolis : Fortress Press, 1998), 24.

v) Confidentiality and Accountability

Without confidentiality, people will be reluctant to share deeply in the group about their failings and struggles. Any breach of confidentiality needs to be honestly faced in the group.

Accountability will ensure that there is ongoing growth in the group and its members. Bratcher comments:

> "If the participants are not held accountable, the group can never truly become an avenue for significant support."[39]

F. SUPPORT SUPPRESSORS

In the role and person of the minister, there are a number of forces which mitigate against support. These include:

i) Cultural Emphasis

In our Western culture, individualism, independence and self-sufficiency are strong values. These values may have been powerfully transmitted in the formative years. The nature of ministry, especially that most people work on their own, and the expectations of the congregation that the minister will function in an independent mode, reinforces this pattern. The healthy process of development is that people will grow from dependence in childhood to anti-dependence in adolescence, to independence in early adulthood, to finally inter-dependence. Life and ministry is lived ideally out of inter-dependence.

Issues of gender further complicate this picture. Masculinity is generally defined by separation and therefore relationships can be a difficulty; whereas femininity is generally defined by attachment and there can be difficulty in realising and maintaining individuality. It's generally true that women more naturally seek out support, while men find it more difficult. Clergy groups with males tend to be more competitive than collegial, being reluctant to share and trust, and finding it hard to respond adequately when sharing becomes deep. In her book, Gilbert quotes a clergyman who said:

> "It is difficult to ask for help because of my nature. I don't like to admit weakness. I don't like to be vulnerable. I was brought up with the superman mentality."[40]

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[39] Bratcher, Edward B. *The Walk on Water Syndrome : Dealing with Professional Hazards in Ministry* (Texas : Word, 1984), 111.
[40] Gilbert, Barbara G. *Who Ministers to the Ministers?* 30.

"To the extent that clergy and their spouses get stalled in their development by the cultural script that idealises independence, they may get cut off from finding support."[41]

This independent script is not only a psychological issue but a spiritual one as well, for it can prevent people trusting God. It is clear that people who know they can't do it alone are more likely to be open to God and other people.

Inter-dependence is true to the biblical revelation. Jesus surrounded himself with the fellowship of disciples whom He called friends (John 15:11) and with whom He shared his ministry. Also, Paul's emphasis on the imagery of the body to portray the church, emphasises the Christian life as one of community and inter-dependence.

ii) Metaphors for Ministry

There are a number of these that make it difficult for ministers to seek out support and care. Two common ones are:

(a) Shepherd

The assumptions here are that the minister is the person who cares and it is the people who need caring for. The degree to which ministers fall into this role makes it more difficult to realise their need for support and help. This metaphor is hierarchical, placing the minister in a superior position. Often, congregations want to maintain the image of the minister as one of helper. Also, it is often easier for ministers to live out of that image than to change it.

A more helpful metaphor is one of partnership and mutuality - where each member has equal investment and responsibility for the body. The minister, as part of the community, provides leadership and helps the church function as the body of Christ. Although this is by far a healthier image, the church generally still emphasises the shepherd metaphor. The challenge is "to find ways to transfer the congregation's dependence on clergy to our mutual dependence or inter-dependence on God."[42]

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[41] Ibid, 27.
[42] Ibid, 41.

(b) Godbearer

This image emphasises the responsibility the minister has to represent God in the way he/she lives and ministers. This is a valid and important task. But it becomes imbalanced when it is isolated from the humanness of the minister.

Clergy often want to project this distorted image out of a sense of inferiority and lack of self-worth. So they do all they can to feed people's illusions of the all-sufficient and all-knowing one. Congregations can also keep ministers in this role by refusing to allow them to express their humanity and frailty. Therefore it is necessary for the minister to

> "risk being real, not only for the sake of ourselves but for the sake of others ... It is in our sharing that we give permission for other people to open up their woundedness to the possibility of healing."[43]

Dorothy McRae-McMahon challengingly writes:

> "Once you step into the river of humanness, I can't imagine you would want to go back to the desert of apparent invulnerability for too long; it's too lonely, too alienating from one's own self, too far from a kindly God, and too pale a shadow of the rigour of real life."[44]

But it is all too common for clergy to "feel the need to be almost superhuman, possessing unusual gifts of intellect, social grace and moral strength."[45] Such an attitude produces ministers who fail to recognise their need of support.

iii) Perfectionist Attitude

Many ministers have a perfectionist attitude. It can be present in varying shades of intensity and more pronounced in some situations than others. A minister with this attitude has unrealistically high expectations for self, others, or both, coupled with a fear of making mistakes. Such people either see things as a great success or dismal failure. They consider that if it's not perfect, it is not worth anything. These pastors are good at their job, but become compulsive about the tasks at which they excel, while avoiding the tasks they are inadequate at, lest their imperfections become commonly known.

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[43] Ibid, 37.
[44] McRae-McMahon, Dorothy. *Being Clergy, Staying Human, Taking A Stand In The River.* (New York : Alban Institute, 1992). 8.
[45] Hart, Arch. *Coping With Depression,* 13.

Some psychologists suggest that perfectionism arises from a childhood that is chaotic without discernible limits, or over-controlled. Such people learn during childhood how to make rules for themselves to avoid the negative consequence of making mistakes, or live in fear of being exposed as vulnerable and therefore unlovable.

Perfectionistic ministers who live in a state of high anx, avoid support groups. They need support desperately, but the support they need, they seldom get.

iv) Personality Issues

The personality of the minister will determine to some extent the person's desire for, and participation in, support groups. The work of Myers-Briggs has been invaluable in the development of this section.

(a) Extroverts and Introverts

Extroverts prefer to focus on the outer world of people and things, and get their energy from interaction with the outer world. In contrast, introverts prefer to focus on the inner world of thoughts, feelings and impressions, and get their energy by being alone and escaping to their inner world. The majority of Anglican ministers are introvert.

Of these two personality types, extroverts are more likely to take up the suggestion of a support group. Introverts are more hesitant and once involved, are careful about what they share and how.

(b) Sensors and Intuitives

From observation, it appears that there are more people in the ministry who are by personality intuitives rather than sensors. Sensors focus on the present reality and on the information brought to them by their senses, while intuitives focus on possibilities and plans.

For sensors to join a group, they will need to gain something from it every time. Generally, intuitives are too busy to be involved, although they theorise about the need for support.

(c) Thinkers and Feelers

Thinkers like to arrive at conclusions by logic and objective analysis, while feelers base their judgement on personal values. Thinkers are by nature more

independent and therefore less likely to feel the need to belong to a group. Feelers are good at giving support but find it difficult to ask for or receive it.

(d) Judgers and Perceivers

Judgers prefer an organised and planned approach to life and ministry, while perceivers like a flexible and adaptable attitude to life. The latter are more likely to seek a support network than the former.

v) Low Self-Esteem

The self-esteem of the minister in today's church has taken a battering through the diminishing value placed on the profession by the community and the apparent reduced role in the church. It is imperative that ministers seek to obtain their self-esteem from their relationship with God and not from their role or function.

Low self-esteem in ministry often leads to fostering a pedestal image of the clergy, neglecting self-care, workaholism. obsession with pleasing others, and an unhealthy dependence on the façade of total self-sufficiency. And it also means ministers will be more reluctant to reach out for support.

The ministers who have a solid sense of who they are, find it easier to reach out for the support they need. In contrast, those who lack good self-esteem are more reluctant to seek out such support. As well as missing out on much needed support, they fail to have the environment which could assist in the development of self-esteem.

vi) Competitiveness and Distrust

This is very prevalent amongst ministers, especially within the same denomination. This is why denominational support networks don't work as well as ones which are inter-denominational. These patterns arise because of our isolation, reduction in the potential for church membership, suspicion of theological emphases and low self-esteem. Forces such as these often make it difficult for ministers to relate in a healthy and effective way. In discussing his experience with clergy support, one of the participants in the study concluded, "Clergy networks generally don't work. I think clergy are too guarded to be real!"

However, my perception is that things are beginning to change. As the church seeks to minister in this post-Christian era where mission is imperative, clergy are

recognising that they need one another. In this day when resources are sparse, direction often unclear and ministry and church life more complex, ministers are more inclined to seek support from their colleagues. Once in a supportive relationship, clergy move from competition to co-operation, and from distrust to trust.

vii) Nature of Work

(a) Time Pressures:

It's true that in ministry the job is never finished. Also, most ministers are very conscientious and therefore work long hours. Many would argue that they don't have time to belong to a support network. But making time for anything is a matter of deciding on priorities and what is important. It's clear that support networks are invaluable and time needs to be created to be a part of them.

(b) People Intensive:

Ministry involves people - and as such, is demanding and tiring. Often ministers contend that they have very little energy left over for participation in support networks. They just don't need more people! But the role of these groups is to bring renewal, refreshment and refocus so that the minister can face the demands of ministry with a new vitality and freshness.

viii) Hard Work To Establish Support Networks

They don't just happen - they take hard, consistent work. Some ministers are not prepared to make the effort to establish and maintain them. The authors of 'Covenants and Care' pointedly remark:

> "Developing solid relationships with colleagues who feel safe and provide for support in ministry takes time and intentional effort."[46]

G. FUNCTIONS

It has been stated that these groups are designed to provide support for those in ministry. This support has as its goal the maintenance of a long term, healthy and effective ministry. The support provided needs to have many aspects, including:

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[46] Harbaugh, Gary, Brenneis, Rebecca and Hutton, Rodney. *'Covenants and Care'*, 24.

i) **Blankets** - which describes the care needed in these groups. Ministers who are damaged need to be surrounded by people who can hold and protect them. To be cared for as a person is the number one need for every human, including clergy.

ii) **Sandpaper** - represents the need for people to be confronted at times. This needs to come out of an environment of love and care. It is necessary at times to confront people with issues they can't see or have been avoiding.

iii) **Open Arms** - describes the task of the group to affirm each person as worthwhile, primarily in who they are, but also in what they are doing.

iv) **Birds In Flight** - represents the need the group has to provide perspective. When people are involved in ministry situations, they can lose perspective. The group, like the bird flying, can do this as it views the situation from a distance.

v) **Parachutes** - the network helps people see that they are in more trouble than they realise and explores possible ways out.

vi) **Life Buoy** - when people pass through difficulties and life transitions, the group can be like a life buoy, holding them up, when they feel like they are about to drown.

vii) **Sign Post** - Ministry is often perplexing and complex. It is not always clear what to do or how to act. Groups can ask the right questions and point to the appropriate resources.

viii) **Fellow Travellers** - indicate that groups have people in them who share similar goals and vision, and face similar problems. This enables all involved to continue to be motivated for ministry and find the support for the visions and goals they hold dear.

ix) **Clowns** - means that groups can add perspective and support through humour or a light touch at an appropriate moment. Laughter is a total body experience which both stimulates and relaxes.

x) **Balloons and Streamers** - denotes the function of the group, to celebrate triumphs large or small. It is often harder to rejoice with a fellow minister in triumphs than to comfort in tragedies.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Support networks are invaluable in the ongoing health and well-being of those in the ordained ministry. Gilbert challenges us when she writes:

"Even though we conclude that support is essential for all of us, my research indicates that clergy and clergy spouses often have quite sparse support systems."[47]

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[47] Gilbert, Barbara G. *Who Ministers to the Ministers?* 21.

Similarly, Roy Oswald writes:

> "Knowing what I do about the importance of support in our lives for health, sanity and job effectiveness, I am surprised that little or nothing about support is taught to us anywhere in our formal education. We can't live without it yet it is taken for granted as the air we breathe."[48]

6.4   SPIRITUAL LIFE

C. H. Spurgeon once said,

> "Many ministers I know would make great martyrs : they are so dry, they would burn quickly."

The author commenting on this wrote,

> "But God calls ministers to be alive, awake and passionate about the grace they receive through Christ."[49]

Robert Munger warns that:

> "Non-stop activity for the Lord can be devastating if there is not the counterbalance of quiet solace - taking time to be with one's Friend and Captain."[50]

A. IMPORTANCE

The maintenance of a vibrant spiritual life is indispensable for those in the ordained ministry. Robert Munger, in writing about his spiritual journey, highlighted this point:

> "To attempt to do supernatural business with merely natural ability ultimately is futile. It simply doesn't work. We must take God seriously and be willing to let Him operate the business as we pray and let Him do His work in His way."[51]

i) Foundation for Ministry:

Nurturing our connectedness with God is not optional - it is essential. It provides the foundation and grounding for life and ministry. Clergy need to find authentic ways to

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[48] Oswald, Roy. *How To Build A Support System for Your Ministry"*, Preface.
[49] Colglazier, R Scott. *Rediscovering Passion in Daily Ministry. Tending To The Things That Bring Joy in Ministry.* (Ministry, January/February, 1998.), 8
[50] Munger, Robert Boyd. *Leading From The Heart : Lifetime Reflections on Spiritual Development.* (Illinois : Intervarsity Press, 1993), 123.
[51] Ibid, 123.

nurture their spiritual life as a foundation for life.   When clergy were asked by Gilbert about their spiritual lives, they concluded:

> "that when they intentionally nurture the spiritual dimension in themselves, their lives and ministries are undergirded and empowered."[52]

Jesus' relationship with the Father was so foundational that He declared He only did and said what His Father did and said.   In emphasising our dependence on God, Jesus on one occasion used the imagery of the vine and branches (John 15).   His stark conclusion was that we could do nothing unless we were connected to Jesus the Vine.

A relationship with God is fundamental and central for those in the ordained ministry.

ii) Source of Assurance:

Life and ministry can buffet us and make it difficult to hang on to the truth of who we belong to and the security inherent in this.   It is in the maintenance of their spiritual life that clergy are affirmed that they are created and saved by God.   This needs to be their primary and most important reality.   Those truths give them the security for ministry, the confidence to draw limits to maintain health, and positive patterns in relationships.   Ministers need to be frequently reassured that first and foremost they have been created by God and they belong to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

One of the participants in the study, Rev B, highlighted the importance of acceptance for him when he said Paul Tillich's words are an ongoing source of strength - "Justification by faith is accepting the acceptance of God even when you know you are unacceptable."

iii) Renewal:

In the book 'Covenants and Care', the authors, in discussing spiritual dryness, comment with insight:

> "It would be interesting to know whether the spiritual dryness and loss of meaning ..... is a result of trying to meet time pressures and incessant demands or whether ..... it causes a minister to be vulnerable to those time pressures and especially the inappropriate expectations."[53]

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[52] Gilbert, Betty. *Who Ministers*, 63.
[53] Harbaugh, Gary. et al. *Covenants and Care*, 12.

Ministry has many demands. There is always more to do than there is time available. In the face of time pressure, it is easy for ministers to let the maintenance of spiritual life drift. Each of the participants interviewed emphasised strongly that the scheduling of time for spiritual feeding was essential for their effectiveness in ministry. Time had to be set aside intentionally - otherwise there was a good chance it wouldn't happen. Rev A, one of the participants commented about his daily spiritual feeding, that he used it "to calm down, refresh myself and feel God's presence." Rev B commented, "Essentially, if I don't have time focussing on who I am in God, and having time with Him, I would dry up. I would be working purely out of human resources. I need spiritual feeding." In one form or another, all those interviewed emphasised the need for specific times of spiritual renewal.

On a number of occasions, Jesus withdrew from the crowds to pray. He knew the importance of spiritual renewal. His invitation to the disciples then and now is, "Come aside and be renewed!" Ministers need to take the time for regular renewal. This renewal will not only affect them spiritually but also in every other aspect of their being.

iv) Direction:

There is need for a minister to be clear about his/her personal direction and the direction of the congregation. It is relatively easy to lose both of these in the midst of seemingly endless demands and conflicting explanations. How to order my time and how to direct the church are crucial issues for effective ministry. Times of spiritual feeding give ministers opportunities to reflect on their agendas in the light of God's purposes for their lives and churches.

Robert Munger writes pointedly:

> "You can be mature in knowing how to minister and still not be mature in knowing the ways of God in ministry."[54]

Ministers often do work for God rather than doing God's work in God's way and in His strength. The first can lead to exhaustion and even burnout. The other will flow out of God's heart and strength and therefore bring life and energy.

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[54] Munger, Robert. *Leading From the Heart,* 166.

Jesus often spent time with His Father at critical times of His ministry, e.g., choosing the twelve and before the cross. He needed God's insight, direction and enabling. Those who follow the Master - especially those in the ordained ministry - surely need to do the same.

v) Perspective:

Robert Wicks writes:

> "It is easy enough to lose perspective when we are prayerful people; without it, one is sure to go adrift."[55]

Maintaining spiritual life enables ministers to have perspective. Dealing with people and their problems can lead to the minister losing perspective on life, faith, and even God. Also beset with challenging decisions in a congregation, it is possible to become confused, overwhelmed and disorientated.

The spiritual life of the minister can help to bring some perspective - by bringing the situations into the illumination of God. It is possible for people to begin to view the crises from the standpoint of God's nature and workings. Often, the truth that breaks through at such times is God's sovereignty and that He is completely trustworthy. To know that God is in control when we are not, can help our perspective on the situation.

Rev H, one of the study participants, highlighted the importance of reading scripture regularly because for him, "This sustains me when I get pre-occupied with local concerns. They are insignificant when I see the grand revelation and plan of God in the scriptures."

vi) Correction:

The spiritual life of the pastor can enable him/her to correct their conduct and attitudes. When people honestly relate to God, God is able to convict people of unbiblical thinking and acting.

In Romans 12, we are encouraged to offer ourselves to God and be changed by the renewing of our thinking. In Hebrews 4, we are told, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double edged sword .... It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart ..... Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of

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[55] Wicks, Robert J. *Handbook of Spirituality for Ministers.* (New York : Paulist Press, 1995), 251.

Him to whom we are must give an account." To engage consistently with God will mean for the minister that there will be correction. Attitudes and actions will change.

vii) Authenticity:

This involves a connection between who the minister is and what he/she says. It is possible for ministers to experience this divide which is disastrous for ministry and church life. Fenhagen comments on this issue

> "Without deeply planted spiritual roots, the leadership that gives power to persuade others can all too easily become so dependent on external recognition that it loses touch with the self."[56]

> And he continues: "Authentic Christian leadership ..... draws its primary strength, not from without but from within, where a sustained connection has been made with the Christ of whom we speak. Without this, our roots wither and we lose the sense of authenticity that is life-giving to others and to ourselves as well."[57]

The minister's authenticity is nourished and maintained by a consistent and dynamic spiritual life.

viii) Health and Vibrancy:

Certainly, a growing spiritual life will go a long way toward maintaining vibrancy and health. The writers of 'Covenants and Care' go further when they say:

> "The most important relationship to have right is our relationship with God. Out of that vertical relationship, which is the source of life and health, will flow life and health in our relational and personal life."[58]

To have the relationship with God right will enable the minister to be able to maintain health in the other areas of his/her life.

Clearly, the maintenance of spiritual life for ministers is essential to health and effectiveness in ministry.

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[56] Fenhagen, James C and Hahn, Celia Alison. *Ministry,* 110.
[57] Ibid, 111.
[58] Harbaugh, Gary et al. *Covenants* 13.

B. FACTORS MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN SPIRITUAL LIFE

A consistent spiritual life is often difficult to maintain for ministers. Speaking specifically about prayer, Fenhagen and Hahn write, "Every ordained person I know struggles with the call to prayer, because deep down he or she knows it is important, even when it is difficult to sustain."[59]

There are many factors, including -

i) Excessive Demands:

The greatest frustration in finding time needed for spiritual growth is that it is often crowded out by the demands of the job.   In ministry, there are many things clamouring for attention and completion.   It is inextricably enmeshed with people's expectations and needs.   Busyness, Peterson in 'The Contemplative Pastor' contends, is either caused by wanting to appear important or letting others decide the minister's agenda.   Moreover, busyness is a challenge to choose one's priorities deliberately.   Martin Luther is reported to have said, "I am so busy that if I didn't spend 2 or 3 hours each day in prayer, I couldn't get through the day."

Ministers are the master of their own time.   They are able to schedule time for spiritual renewal and feeding.   If ministers make it a priority, they will have time for it. However, what Hands and Fehr say about this issue is sadly true

"Neglecting one's spiritual condition and needs is ..... one significant aspect of the general self-neglect that characterises so many busy and successful clergy."[60]

ii) Immersion in Spiritual Things:

Often ministers believe that, because they are involved with spiritual issues as part of their every day work, their spiritual needs are taken care of.   But clearly, attention needs to be paid to their own spiritual lives.

But this can be more insidious.   "Often concealed in his/her immersion in the things of God - preaching, visiting, teaching, etc. ..... can co-exist with an almost complete absence of private, personal presence of God...[61]

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[59] Fenhagen, James C and Hahn, Celia Alison. *Ministry.* 111.
[60] Hands, Donald R and Fehr, Wayne L. *Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy. A New Psychology of Intimacy with God, Self and Others.* (New York : Alban Institute, 1993), 58.
[61] Ibid, 54.

Doing spiritual things is never a substitute for consistently developing one's spiritual life.

iii) False Guilt:

Ministers have responsibility for the spiritual needs and health of those in their fellowship. Much of the minister's spiritual activity is directed to meet the needs of others. As a result, often ministers feel guilty taking time for their own spiritual feeding; they regard it as selfish. About this attitude, Roy Oswald comments:

"They do not realise that, unless regular time is taken, they will not have the spiritual depth to sustain a healthy ministry."[62]

iv) Loneliness:

This is a particular problem in the ordained ministry because ministers are forever moving between the experience of intimacy and intimacy lost. The pain of intimacy lost - loneliness - can be so intense that ministers avoid intimacy with God and others.

To move through this pain, ministers need to embrace the loneliness and accept the gift of solitude. By accepting the gift of solitude, the pain of loneliness can become a source of healing and a spur to intimacy because it frees us to connect. Loneliness, if viewed in the context of solitude, can be the environment to a greater connectedness to God.

C. SPIRITUALITY DEFINED

Spirituality is about how we engage with God. It's about knowing God and being known by Him. Although it finds particular and focussed expression in the practice of prayer, meditation and the word of God, it involves and affects the whole of life. Moreover, it is -

i) A process of formation.

In this, Christ takes the initiative. It is a work of grace from start to finish. In this process, people are being formed by and in, Christ. The progress is towards a fuller understanding of the mysteries of faith and transformation into the likeness of Christ. It is a move towards maturity. Christian maturity is defined in the New Testament

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[62] Oswald, Roy. *Clergy Self-Care.* 95.

Letters as putting on a new nature, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ (e.g., Ephesians 4:23; Romans 13:14). It is more to do with love than enlightenment. Often it is not without pain, especially for ministers; "in travail until Christ is formed in you." (Galatians 4:19)

ii) In the context of the community of faith.

Kenneth Leech concludes:

> "There is in fact very little in the New Testament Letters about spiritual formation as such ..... its spirituality is social."[63]

For to be in Christ is to be part of a new community and this is the environment for spiritual formation. Involvement in the faith community, the church, is essential because -

- it is the guardian of the Word of God;
- it develops a liturgy to re-enact the God events;
- it offers a context of relationships which provide support, encouragement, correction and energy for the journey;
- it is a place where people tell their stories and they find coherence, direction and ultimate meaning with the God drama.

iii) It involves and shapes the whole of life.

When life is appreciated as a gift of God, it is not possible to think of spirituality as a part of life. It involves the five other dimensions of our humanness - the physical, mental, emotional, social and environmental. No part of life is excluded from a healthy and vibrant spirituality.

It also shapes life. Spirituality can be viewed as the way people perceive life. Christians see life through the eyes of faith. To see this way is to recognise the presence and power of God at the heart of the ordinary physical, mental, emotional and social dimensions of life.

iv) It calls to action.

Spirituality is incomplete unless it is expressed.

> "Thus a test of our spirituality must be whether it makes us more aware of the realities of the world and therefore more ready to respond to them."[64]

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[63] Leech, Kenneth. *Spirituality and Pastoral Care.* (London : Sheldon Press, 1986), 9.
[64] Ibid, 35.

Our spirituality needs to have a behavioural component. When people experience the compassion of God, they want to express that compassion to others in the exercise of mercy, justice and caring concern.

D. CALL : AT THE HEART OF SPIRITUALITY

i) Its centrality:

Spirituality originates and continues in the call of God. In fact, the persuasion of call that will not let go, sustains the spiritual life of the minister. On this topic, Johnson writes, "God's continuous call provides the dynamic element in spirituality and our response forms it."[65]

All participants in this study referred to the importance of call for ministry's continuance. Two comments especially reflected this truth. Rev D said, "The sense of being in partnership with God within His church is important. You wouldn't actually stick at if unless you were convinced it was the right thing to be doing, and that there is nothing else that would give the same satisfaction, purpose and meaning." Rev G put it more bluntly when he said, "Nobody in their right mind would take on ministry - and remain there - unless they knew the Lord had called them ... Call is part of your being. It has kept me in ministry over all these years."

There was, however, a wide divergence in the way this call was understood. For example, one of those people, Rev E, remarked, "Call, in the classic sense, is not part of my experience. However, I try to pay attention to the feeling of rightness."

Ministers need to know God has called them and have that call re-affirmed regularly. It is this dynamic which sustains and empowers spiritual life and ministry.

ii) Its Nature:

All Christians are called to faith in Christ. This call originates in the election of God before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1:14). For a call to be manifest, it needs to be responded to. All Christians have in their own way responded to the call of God to be united to Christ and His church, and serve Him in the world.

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[65] Johnson, Ben Campbell. *Pastoral Spirituality. Focus For Ministry.* (Philadelphia : Westminster Press, 1988) 13.

But although all Christians share a common calling, not all have the same call when it comes to ministry. The call to the ordained ministry is a call to a particular office within the life of the church. Johnson, in focussing on the ordained ministry, writes:

> "The call to faith doesn't predispose one toward ministry. But the initial call to faith provides the context within which a person hears the call to a particular office in the church."[66]

The call to an office is an extension, a clarification, a focussing of the initial call. The call to the ordained ministry is heard initially by the individual, affirmed by the church, and tested through college and life experiences.

For a minister, there needs to be clarity about the initial call to serve in the church in this way, but also to a particular place. But call's clarity is often blunted by the demands of life and ministry.

iii) Its Loss:

It is relatively easy for ministers, amidst the daily demands, to lose the sense of call. In general, the person then has no clear sense of identity, spiritual power, or conviction, and no enthusiasm for the daily task of ministry. Johnson writes insightfully of this condition:

> "When you lose the sense of call, you become a religious functionary without spiritual depth. In this bland state, you carry out the functions of your role without the sense of the holy."[67]

Of course, God's call to ministry is still active at times ministers don't feel confident of it. The symptoms of this condition can include:

- An increase in activity, with its resultant weariness.
- Loss of clear direction.
- Duty paramount; joy of ministry lost.
- Ministry tasks seen as routine, even boring.
- Doubts are ever present - about self, ministry, faith and God.
- God seems unreal, distant and absent.
- Spiritual life is sparse, professional, or non-existent.
- Conversations about personal faith experiences of God are avoided.

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[66] Ibid, 14.
[67] Ibid, 17.

But the loss of call is an invitation. It invites the minister to stop, to notice, and to listen to God. God has not abandoned the minister who has lost the sense of call; rather, it has been stifled. The confusion, pain and darkness of the loss of call beckon the minister to discover afresh the call and the Lord who stands irrevocably behind it.

In writing about the importance of call, Johnson declares boldly:

> "What on this earth can hold greater significance than the conviction that the Eternal Mystery knows a person's name, elects a person for a role in the divine mission to the world, discloses that call in human consciousness and confirms it by nature, inner persuasion, providence and the policy of a particular church?"[68]

To maintain and nurture a sense of call will invigorate a minister's spiritual life, empower ministry tasks, and assist in the maintenance of wholistic health.

E. NURTURING SPIRITUAL LIFE

i) Authentic Expression:

There are numerous ways for ministers to maintain their spiritual life; but there are no absolutes. This is reflected in the variety of ways the people in this study maintained their spiritual life. Some of the ways mentioned were contemplative prayer, corporate worship, the daily offices, reading the scriptures, journalling, quiet days, annual retreat, preaching, reading theology, developing relationships, and focussing on social and community issues. All these people have discovered what assists them in maintaining spiritual health.

Each person needs to discover what is right and authentic for him/her. They can have many elements - some quite traditional, others highly innovative. There are many factors which will inform and form it, including:
- our personality type;
- our lifestyle;
- our metabolism;
- our theology;

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[68] Ibid, 15.

- the tradition of which we are a part;
- our spiritual journey.

The participants in this study reflect the diversity of ways it is possible to maintain spiritual life. However, a common emphasis was the use of the daily offices for spiritual nurture, which reflects the Anglican heritage.

It is necessary, therefore, for ministers to find and practice spiritual disciplines with which they are comfortable and contribute positively to their spiritual health.

ii) Personal Disciplines

(a) Disciplines - Nature and Importance:

Discipline comes from the Latin word meaning 'learner'. So to engage in disciplines is to seek to be open to learn about God - His person, His ways, and the ways He relates to individuals and His world.

Spiritual discipline can be the means whereby ministers:
- open themselves to the grace and power of God;
- are restored to a sense of being whole, forgiven and at peace;
- keep going, even at times when spiritually they are dry;
- have an essential framework to maintain spiritual vitality.

(b) Disciplines Explored:

There are many appropriate disciplines that can be adopted for ministers to maintain spiritual life. Among these are:

(1) Reading the Scriptures.

It is important to read Scripture meditatively and reflectively. Some helpful questions to ask can be - Where do I identify with this passage? and, What is God saying to me through this passage? Ministers need to be careful to read the Bible for their own nurture and renewal, not just for the tasks of ministry.

(2) Prayer.

This involves praise, adoration, confession, petition, intercession and listening. It is necessary to set aside a specific time for prayer, otherwise it may never happen.

It needs to be honest in its expression. Often, negative emotions arising from our ministry and/or life can block our relationship with God. These need to be expressed in prayer without guilt, so we can find freedom and renewal. The Psalms are a marvellous resource in this regard.

(3) The Daily Office - Matins, Evensong, Compline, etc.

Many Anglican clergy find this discipline helpful. Some use them regularly, others irregularly. It is generally more helpful to those ministers who are more structured and ordered. Even when going through dry times spiritually, this discipline can enable ministers to persevere.

(4) Retreats.

These can be for a day, several days, or longer. They can be structured and lead by a director, or private and unstructured. Over the years, I have found it invaluable to take day retreats monthly and longer retreats annually. Robert Munger, reflecting on his experience, comments:

> "My daily hour of bible reading and prayer I found inadequate in maintaining connection with God. So I put aside a day a month to be alone with Him."[69]

With this, I and many of the participants in the study would concur. These times are extended periods when ministers can enter into silence before God, to pray for themselves, their families and their congregations. They are wonderful opportunities to be refreshed and renewed spiritually, to be better able to do ministry.

(5) Self Denial Exercises.

In our daily lives, people are used to incessant noise and conversation and the ongoing demands of the body to be fed. The two disciplines outlined here reverse these everyday trends -

(i) Silence:

This enables people to enter more fully into an experience of God and hear Him speaking to them. The authors of 'Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy' comment:

> "What seems to be crucial for spiritual deepening and growth is a discipline of silence. One needs to be outwardly and inwardly

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[69] Munger, Robert B. *Leading From The Heart,* 127.

quiet, without agenda, in reverent openness to the blessed Mystery."[70]

(ii) Fasting:

This can be done for a short or extended period of time. It can be a partial fast where some meals are missed, or a full fast where no food is eaten. This discipline has great value in that -

(a) It helps people centre on God. Richard Foster, in his book 'Celebration of Discipline', quotes John Wesley:

"First let it (fasting) be done unto the Lord, with our eye singly fixed on Him. Let our intention herein be this, and this alone, to glorify our Father which is in heaven."[71]

This is the primary purpose of fasting, from which all others flow.

(b) It reveals the things that control us, so that Christ's life is more fully formed in us.

(c) It helps to keep a balance in life. How easy it is to allow non-essentials to take precedence in our lives. Fasting puts those into balance.

(d) It puts us in touch with the corporate pain of one third of the world that goes to bed hungry every day.

(e) It rids our bodies of many toxins. Therefore, it is one of the healthier things you can do for your body.

(f) It heightens our spiritual awareness - so that there is an increased effectiveness in prayer, guidance in decisions, and revelations.

When fasting, it is good to drink lots of fluid, and begin and end a fast gently.

(6) Meditation

The practice of meditation is often seen as a form of Eastern piety or a stress reliever employed by secular practitioners. Clearly, meditation does promote health - allowing people to quiet their minds and relax their bodies.

[70] Hands, Donald and Fehr, Wayne. *Spiritual Wholeness,* 61.
[71] Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline. The Path To Spiritual Growth.* (London : Hodder & Stoughton, 1980), 48.

However, meditation has always stood as a classic and central part of Christian devotion. Christian writers throughout the centuries have practised and encouraged others to meditate. Richard Foster concludes that the upsurge in Eastern meditation is because the churches have abrogated the practice. However, it is being restored to the church today through various means, including the ecumenical movement with its establishment of Christian meditation communities in the English speaking world. Meditation is the discipline of quieting our beings to be able to experience God and hear His voice.

To meditate effectively, a person needs to -

(a) Find a quiet place - free from interruptions and noise.

(b) Assume a posture which is comfortable and can be maintained for a reasonable time. Many people favour sitting or walking.

(c) Determine precisely how long the time of meditation will be. To begin with, 10-15 minutes would be ideal.

(d) Be able to exercise imagination; for the inner world of meditation is entered through the door of imagination.

(e) Use some specific exercises, which may include:

Centering on breathing - By becoming conscious of breathing, a person can begin to relax and begin to centre on God. When exhaling, the person can consciously give to God the forces that mitigate against the life of the Spirit; and when inhaling, receive the life and peace of God.

Ponder carefully or prayerfully on some aspect of creation. God made the heavens and the earth, and uses this creation to show us His glory and give us His life.

The use of Scripture. This can be an event, a small passage, or even a single word. It is important to take time to enter into the Scripture - to become an active participant, not an observer. By doing this, Christ is encountered.

Reflecting on the current events and seeking to gain God's perspective on them. "This form of meditation is but accomplished with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other."[72]

Roy Oswald, sharing his experience with meditation, wrote:

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[72] Ibid, 28.

"The quality of my day is different when I take fifteen minutes before I rush out the door in this meditative space ... I try to keep the practice going throughout the day by attaching it to certain triggers, e.g., sitting at a red light or in an airplane ready to take off."[73]

(7) Spiritual Journal

Some people find it profoundly helpful to work with their thoughts and feelings through the recording of them and their reflection on them. The keeping of a journal can help people clarify experiences, discern God's guidance, and gain helpful insights into the nature and workings of God.

(8) Use of Devotional Resources

These can include - books of prayer, the Bible, hymn books, lives of the saints, and the great classics of spirituality.

(9) Chanting

In this, people take a biblical or theological theme and sing it repeatedly. It is powerful, because it anchors the words of a chant in consciousness with a combination of sound, feelings and images. One popular source of chants is the Taize community in France. It helps people commit to memory some of the rich religious themes which can undergird and transform their lives.

F. SHARING THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Many clergy attest to the value of having a spiritual friend, companion or director, to regularly share their spiritual journey with. It is true of the majority of the participants in this study.

i) **Nature of Spiritual Direction:**

It is the "pastoral guidance of a person's spiritual life by counsel and prayer, through the illumination, grace and power of the Holy Spirit."[74] It can assist a person to better relate to God and to live out with integrity the implications of that relationship.

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[73] Oswald, Roy. *Clergy Self Care*, 99.
[74] Kingham, Ross and Prior, Robin. *Out of Darkness - Out of Fire. A Workbook for Christian Leaders under Pressure.* (Melbourne : Joint Board, 1988), 86.

ii) **Focus of Spiritual Direction:**

Briefly expressed, this is to help the person grow spiritually. This involves the discussion of -

(a) Spiritual resources to enhance a person's journey.

(b) The specifics of God's activity at any given time in the person's life.

(c) The way God is speaking to a person and how to respond to this.

(d) Life issues - because God is in all of life.

(e) Ways of coping, especially in dry spiritual times.

iii) **Patterns of Spiritual Direction:**

There are a number of common areas, including -

(a) Mutuality

This is when two people agree to share their spiritual journey and be an assistance to each other.

(b) Group

A group of 3 or more people can covenant to share their growth and life in God. The basis of this needs to be mutual trust. It can either have a permanent leader, or leadership can be shared.

(c) One to One

This is when a person seeks out another person to be a guide for his/her spiritual life and growth.

iv) **Characteristics of a Spiritual Director:**

A person who would provide good spiritual direction has the following marks -

(a) Knows God

A person who is clearly close to God and has personal holiness in life. There is an authentic maintenance of spiritual life and discipline, and a continual discovery of more of God and His workings.

(b) Knows Resources

It is important for him/her to know the Bible, understand theology and have a grasp of spiritual disciplines and their history.

(c) Knows Another

This means that such a person needs to be able to relate well to others. Two significant gifts in relationships the person needs to have are - the ability to listen and discern the activity of God in a person's life.

(d) Knows Oneself

A person of experience who has struggled with the realities of prayer and life, and who has encountered conflicts, suffering and triumphs.   Although he/she needs to know they haven't arrived, there needs to be marks of maturity.   This includes integration of life experiences with faith, and an acceptance of one's humanity.

James Dodge's writing about the value of a Spiritual Director says:
> "Through a spiritual director relationship, a pastor can become more centred on God and more attentive to the ever-present Holy Spirit. Such attention to one's spiritual life will enable one to minister with more love, justice and compassion."[75]

G. CORPORATE NURTURE

Many of the participants in this study expressed strongly the value of some of the corporate tasks in the maintenance of spiritual health.   The two components regularly mentioned were preaching and the leading of the Eucharist.   Not only did these activities help maintain well-being but they helped them persist through difficult times and when their trust in God was buffeted.   Rev G, one of the study participants, reflected succinctly what other people expressed, when she said she found "the celebration of the eucharist refreshing and enjoyable ... I am anchored in common prayer."   This highlights the need for both a personal and corporate nurture for spiritual health for all believers, but especially clergy.

Writing with insight about this, the authors of 'Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy' declare:
> "It is apparently quite possible for many clergy to live their spiritual lives in the public or communal modes of liturgical prayer, teaching and ministering to others ..... On the other hand, a clergy person who almost completely neglects times of silence, meditation and personal prayer is very likely to leave his or her own personal relationship to God in the obscure background of awareness."[76]

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[75] Dodge, James. *Spiritual Direction for Pastors in Christian Ministry.* 1996, 31.
[76] Hands, Donald and Fuhr, Wayne L. *Spiritual Wholeness,* 58-59.

H. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

"Yet to be true, in the final analysis, the pastor's spiritual self care is not really care of self at all but divine enabling. ..... It's the work of Jesus Christ, the Bishop and Shepherd of our souls (1 Peter 2:25) who upholds, sustains and pastors the pastors of the flock."[77]

"Ministry will happen best for us when we are healthy on all three fronts: physical, emotional and spiritual. (We could add mental, environmental and social.) ..... Wholistic health begins with spiritual health, and spiritual health then informs and directs the other two."[78]

6.5   SATISFACTION

A. INTRODUCTION

Ministry can be and often is the source of great satisfaction. In it, there is the privilege of serving the eternal God, helping people in His Name, celebrating the sacraments, and proclaiming in word and deed the life-changing gospel. What could bring greater satisfaction to people than that?

But inherent in the task of ministry are some forces that would undermine satisfaction. In 'Mastering Ministry', the authors write about one aspect:

"People are designed by God to receive satisfaction when they have accomplished a worthy task. Unfortunately, the pastorate is one of those vocations where the worthiest accomplishments .... are intangible."[79]

Is it possible to experience satisfaction in ministry? It is my contention from this research that it is not only possible, but also necessary for health and well-being.

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[77] Shucksmith, Barry. *The Pastor's Self Care (Churchmen,* 112), 162.
[78] Oswald, Roy. *Clergy Self Care,* 114.
[79] Cedar, Paul, Hughes, Kent and Patterson, Don. *Mastering Ministry : Mastering the Pastoral Role.* (Oregon : Multnomad Press, 1996), 16.

B. DEFINED

Satisfaction can be defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. It can also refer to a person's general attitude to their job. A person with a high level of satisfaction holds positive attitudes to the job, while a person who is dissatisfied with their job holds negative attitudes about the job.

James Fenhagen defines it as, "more than a good feeling or sense of accomplishment. It's a feeling that comes as a result of doing what deep within ourselves we feel called to do."[80]

C. WORK SATISFACTION CONTRIBUTORS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO MINISTRY

It is possible to arrange these factors under three main headings:

i) Work Content:

(a) Mentally Challenging

Work that is mentally challenging, that the person can successfully accomplish, is satisfying. If work involves too little challenge, it creates boredom, but too much challenge creates frustration and feelings of anxiety, anger and failure. Therefore, under conditions of moderate challenge, people will experience work pleasure and satisfaction.

Ministry is a very challenging job. The challenges come in a variety of ways, including dealing with people in crises, the multiplicity of tasks, working with people, being a public figure, and sharing leadership. One of the participants in the study confessed that he "was stimulated by a challenge." It's my impression that all the other participants would echo this sentiment.

(b) Job Compatibility

It appears that where there is a good match between people's skills and abilities and work demands, satisfaction is assured. Conversely, where job fit is low, job

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[80] Fenhagen, James C. *Ministry For A New Time,* 30.

satisfaction is also low. People need to feel they are using their gifts and abilities in their work for them to experience fulfilment.

In a study of Lutheran ministers reported in 'Pastors in Ministry. Guidelines For Seven Critical Issues', the clergy generally felt positive about six ministerial activities:

- Preaching
- Worship leading
- Teaching of adults
- Sick visitation
- Ministry with the aged
- Counselling

By contrast, they felt least positive about the following:

- Youth work
- Evangelism
- Community responsibilities
- Administration
- Prophetic witness
- Confirmation
- Specialized group work [81]

Likewise, the participants in our study identified as the most satisfying aspect of their ministry - preaching, leading worship, preparing and taking funerals, and nurturing faith in people. More than half the people involved in this study seemed to recognise that to have a satisfying focus in the midst of a multitude of demands was essential for their ongoing health and well being.

Due to the multiplicity of demands in parish ministry, ministers often spend an excessive amount of their time on tasks they least enjoy and are not gifted or trained for. This can lead to a good deal of dissatisfaction. However, if a minister can be focussed enough to spend a considerable amount of time using the specific gifts God has given them, then satisfaction will result.

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[81] Hulme, William E, Brekke, Milo L, Brehens, William C. *Pastors In Ministry. Guidelines For Some Critical Issues.* (Minneapolis : Augsburg Press, 1985), 19.

In 'Working From The Heart', Jacqueline McMakin suggests that one way to discover your gifts is to reflect on activities we enjoy. Then to use these gifts will bring satisfaction. To underline this truth, the same author writes:

> "When we offer the fullness of our gifts, our work does not rob us of energy but gives it to us. The quality of our work increases. The rich mix of who we are is what enables us to innovate, to be creative, to offer our best."[82]

Although some degree of satisfaction is necessary for ministerial health and effectiveness, it needs to be recognised that at the heart of ministry is service. Often this involves sacrifice, doing things we don't enjoy, going beyond our comfort zone, facing challenges, and enduring frustrations

(c) Skill Variety

Satisfaction will generally be experienced when work requires a variety of activities and the use of a number of gifts and skills.

The ministry provides a wide-ranging task and skill usage. At times, this can provide frustration and dissatisfaction. However, it also has the potential to enhance the work experience and give great satisfaction. Working on one or a limited number of tasks can bring boredom and lack of motivation, whereas working on a variety of tasks which require differing gifts can bring enhancement and motivation to work.

(d) Task Identity

When a person is able to handle an entire job function from start to finish and is able to achieve a tangible outcome, there will be satisfaction. Airline pilots have a high degree of task identity, while assembly line workers have a low degree.

Much of the work undertaken by ministers has a high degree of task identity. Leadership of worship and preparing and delivering sermons are two obvious examples. Both these were mentioned by a majority of participants in this study, as a source of great satisfaction. For example, Rev B says that "he is stimulated by worship that goes well, and preaching."

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[82] McMakin, Jacqueline. *Working From The Heart.* (San Francisco : Harper Collins, 1989), 13.

(e) Task Significance

Work has significance when it affects the organisation creatively and contributes to the enrichment of people within and outside the organisation.

The task of ministry can contribute significantly to the well-being of the church and of individuals. Ministers have the privilege of being closely involved with people's lives and to be with people during critical life passages - birth, illness, marriage and death. In this study, many of the participants mentioned funerals as being satisfying. The satisfaction comes from doing something significant. Here ministers meet people at a point of grief in their lives and are often able to assist them move along in the process of dealing with it. The preparation for, the funeral itself, and the follow-up afterwards, are great opportunities to significantly minister into people's lives.

(f) Feedback

This is the ability to learn about the effectiveness of one's work performance from managers, colleagues or from the results of the work. Often in organisations there are established mechanisms for this to happen.

Ministers sometimes receive positive feedback from people about a ministry task undertaken. Formal and consistent feedback could be obtained by establishing a small, trusted group with whom the minister could meet regularly to gain feedback. In this process, the minister would need to be able to receive negative and positive feedback. Such a group could be invaluable in a minister's development and effectiveness.

ii) Work Context:

(a) Conducive Working Conditions

The environment of work needs to provide for personal comfort and the necessary facilities for doing a good job. Temperature, light and noise need to be controlled to provide a satisfactory work environment. Also, the equipment needed to do the work has to be well maintained.

A good deal of a minister's work is done in an office. This is generally provided for in the Vicarage or in the church building. Wherever it is, every effort needs to be made to make the environment attractive and comfortable. The furniture in it

needs to be of a good quality and the equipment, such as a computer, needs to be relatively new and work effectively. The minister needs to be pro-active in having this sort of space available to him/her from which to work. Art, flowers, plants, and the general décor will also help to make the working environment more people-friendly. Having worked in a renovated garage without adequate light, heat or ventilation, I know at first hand the importance of an adequate environment.

(b) Supportive Colleagues

For most people, work fills a need for social interaction. Not surprisingly then, loving, friendly and supportive fellow employees leads to increased work satisfaction. Also, the attitude of those in management positions is crucial. Satisfaction increases when they are understanding, friendly, provide positive feedback and show personal interest.

In the Australian Anglican Church, there are a number of multi-staffed parishes; but overall, most ministers work on their own in a parish. Also, those in authority, the bishops have little ongoing contact with the minister. It is imperative then for ministers to build support networks as written about earlier - to receive encouragement, correction and support.

(c) Equitable Rewards

Generally, workers want pay systems and promotion policies that they perceive as being just and unambiguous. When pay is seen as fair and based on job demands, individual skill level and prevailing market pay standards, satisfaction is likely to result. Also, workers who perceive that promotion decisions are made in a fair and just manner, are likely to experience satisfaction. The central issue here is one of fairness.

Anglican ministers within the Diocese of Melbourne have an agreed minimum stipend and allowances. Some are paid more than this minimum. There is equity in wages for Anglican ministers in this Diocese. Although ministers and their family need money to live, wages for most of them are not a formidable issue. As ministry is a call rather than a career, the size of the pay is not a high priority.

The call nature of ministry also affects attitude to promotion. Most ministers would move to a church of God's directing, whether it was considered to be a promotion or not, or paid more or not. Only one participant in the study mentioned remuneration as an issue. Call, therefore, in ministry is more important than rewards.

(d) Autonomy

- The degree to which the work gives the person substantial freedom, independence and direction in scheduling the tasks and determining procedures used in carrying them out. It is the degree of autonomy which will affect job satisfaction and performance.

Ministers have an enviable degree of autonomy in their work. They can generally choose what to do when and have great freedom in how they accomplish tasks. This provides for a high level of flexibility, innovation and creativity.

iii) Personal Issues

As well as content and context of work, there are personal factors that contribute to satisfaction. These include:

(a) Personality Type

When there is a high agreement between personality and work expectations, the person is more satisfied. People with personality types congruent with their chosen vocations, will generally find they have the right gifts and skills to meet the demands of their jobs. Such people are more likely to be successful in their jobs; and because of the success, they have a greater probability of achieving high satisfaction from their work.

Introversion and extroversion are terms referring to personality which are now more widely understood and used. It appears that the majority of Anglican clergy are more introvert than extrovert. That is probably why many of them find satisfaction in people-orientated tasks such as small group work, counselling and caring for people in loss and other crises. However, because of the public side of the ministry, it is advantageous for ministers to have some degree of extroversion. For a minister to consistently work outside his predominant

personality type will bring stress and undermine satisfaction. Conversely, for a minister to primarily work within his predominant personality type will bring great satisfaction and fulfilment.

Personality type also can determine whether people see the world in an emotionally negative or positive way. Those who view the world in an emotionally negative way are less likely to be satisfied in their work than those who interpret events in a more positive way. This affects the way people view their work environment and their attitude and motivation towards the work. Generally, it appears that ministers, because of their personality and faith, have a positive outlook on situations and events.

(b) Self Esteem

This can be defined as 'the evaluation a person makes of himself or herself'. Such an assessment is affected by situations, success or failure, and the opinions of others. This characteristic can influence work selection, work satisfaction and inter-personal relationships. Low self esteem will make work selection difficult, work satisfaction less likely and relationships difficult. The converse is true of high self esteem.

Self esteem for a Christian needs to primarily come from God, who declares people righteous apart from any effort on their part. It's an assertion people can make about themselves as redeemed people of God in the light of and in spite of all strengths and weaknesses they may have. But there is often a tension between this truth and life's experience. Robert Lutz expresses it this way:

> "Claimed by God in the waters of baptism, renewed and strengthened by word and sacrament, I should know the source of my security and self-confidence. Yet often the jagged edges of my life experiences keep me uncomfortable and anxious."[83]

Psychologists tell us that self esteem is especially developed in childhood in interaction with parents and significant others. If people don't experience this environment, they may go to great lengths to prove their value through what they accomplish. The conditional reward for such work is temporary, so people need

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[83] Lutz, Robert and Taylor, Bruce. *Surviving in Ministry*, 77.

more and more tasks to keep their self esteem. This can result in perfectionism, compulsion and sheer exhaustion.

To develop positive self esteem will enable ministers to find greater satisfaction in their work, but able to go on despite the set-backs, and provide leadership in areas where there is not popular support. With low self esteem, ministers will struggle in all these areas.

Satisfaction, therefore, is related to self esteem. It will be high when self esteem is good and low when it is fragile.

D. SPECIFIC SOURCES OF MINISTRY SATISFACTION

We have explored factors which bring job satisfaction and how they relate to ministry, but are there specific tasks that contribute to satisfaction for the minister?
Although ministry satisfaction is experienced by different clergy in various ways, according to their own uniqueness, it comes generally from three sources:

i) **Sacramental and Spiritual Aspects:**
   In 'Ministry For A New Time', the authors quote the words of a young minister, ordained eleven years:

   > "Satisfaction comes from seeing people flourish in their faith and being part of
   > this process; also, to see a community do this; those moments when I have
   > been in a situation in which someone sees God acting in their lives, glimpsing
   > a vision of life they had never seen before."[84]

   Many of the participants in this study expressed satisfaction with this aspect of ministry. For many of them it came through seeing people grow in their spiritual life, celebrating the Eucharist, preaching and leading people into a relationship with Christ.

ii) **Interpersonal** - interacting with people at significant moments in life.
   Ministers often have open invitation to congregational members personal lives and an opportunity to be with people during critical life passages - birth, illness, marriage

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[84] Fenhagen, James and Hahn, Celia. *Ministry For A New Time,* 31.

and death.   Frequently, participants in the study mentioned the satisfaction they received from preparing and taking funerals.   This was largely due to the fact that they felt they could make a difference at this critical phase of a person's life.

iii) Developmental - seeing situations and people change as a result of their intentional efforts.

> "My deepest satisfaction in ministry comes from planning and carrying out something that changes lives or systems,"[85]

was a comment made to the authors of 'Ministry For A New Time', by a minister ordained thirty years.   Many participants in this study found great satisfaction in witnessing people's lives change by the power of the gospel and achieving significant change in congregational life.

Those three themes are at the heart of ministry.   Fenhagen and Hahn conclude:

> "Unless all three are somehow connected, with the opportunity for
> ministry to be expressed through them, the chances are that in the place
> of satisfaction, we will know mostly discouragement."[86]

E. SATISFACTION AND EFFECTIVENESS

Ministers generally desire to be effective.   But what does it mean to be effective?   And how do you measure effectiveness in ministry?

The Oxford Dictionary describes a person who is effective as being able to bring about or accomplish something.   Effectiveness then can be seen as the results of a person's efforts.

In ministry, effectiveness can be measured in a number of ways:

i)   Ministerial Performance and Leadership Skills:

This is the degree to which a minister performs with distinction, the activities expected of him/her.   Especially in the current climate within the church and the society, it is imperative that ministers exhibit a high degree of skill and proficiency. This is one reason why ongoing personal development for ministers is vital.

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[85] Ibid, 31.
[86] Ibid, 32.

However, as important as the development and expression of ministerial skills is, it won't necessarily guarantee effectiveness.

There are times when, despite lack of skills or weakness, there is effective ministry undertaken and fulfilled. Surely this has something to do with the grace of God in the task of ministry. In no way is this to argue against the need for ministers to continue to improve their skills. But it is a recognition that, however competent a person is, there is always the grace of God as the essential dynamic for ministry.

ii) Growth in Congregational Numbers:

Over the last few decades, especially through the church growth movement, there has been a strong emphasis on the growth of numbers being a measure of effectiveness. But what about the church where numbers are stable or even declining? Does this mean that the minister is ineffective? It can, but it doesn't necessarily follow. Often, in this situation, ministers can be effectively carrying out ministry - without numerical growth.

A number of writers caution against using this as the sole measure of effectiveness:

> "The blessings of ministry can be overlooked when ministers focus on measuring ministerial success in quantitative terms."[87]

And

> "We are constantly tempted to measure effectiveness of leaders in materialistic terms (bodies, budgets and buildings), but to do so is a tragic mistake."[88]

iii) Spiritual Growth in People:

Some participants in this study expressed that their greatest satisfaction in ministry came from seeing people growing in their faith. Conversely, often the greatest frustration expressed was when people were not prepared to change and grow.

One of the primary focuses of ministry is to make and nurture disciples of Jesus. To witness people beginning and growing in their life in Jesus is for most ministers very satisfying.

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[87] Harbaugh, Gary, Brenneis, Rebecca and Hutton, Rodney. *Covenants & Care,* 110.
[88] Means, James E. *Leadership In Christian Ministry.* (Michigan : Baker Book House, 1989), 13.

iv) Empowering People for Ministry:

All believers are called to ministry within the church and the world. The task of the ordained minister is to equip people for this ministry. Paul expresses it this way as he focuses on leaders in the church: "It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers - to prepare God's people for works of service..." (Ephesians 4:11 and 12). How fulfilling it is for ordained ministers to see people using their ministry gifts for Christ and His Kingdom.

v) Fostering of Cohesion in the Church:

Unity is to be a hallmark of the life of the church. It is a unity which is founded on Jesus and enriched by the diversity of its members. It is vital for the church's internal health and effectiveness of its outward witness. The clergyperson as leader has a pivotal role in maintaining this unity. When there is co-operation and team work in the life of the church, the minister finds this exhilarating and fulfilling. However, when conflict is rife, the clergyperson is often stressed, anxious and uneasy. One skill the minister needs is to be able to help people deal with the inevitable conflict that arises in every congregation.

vi) Contributing to the Well Being of the Local Community:

The church is to be the agent of God's love, mercy and justice in the local area where it is. There are many and varied ways of doing this. It is the clergyperson's responsibility to motivate and empower people to do this. When ministers are able to do this and the church is effective in the local community, there is a sense of satisfaction.

All these things listed above are signs of the minister's and the church's effectiveness - which contributes greatly to satisfaction in ministry. In her book 'Clergy Stress', Mary Coates writes: "The inability to achieve results is a cause of dissatisfaction and stress."[89] The converse is also true - satisfaction comes from seeing results.

But a word of warning. Achievement is inherently a good thing, for it makes clergy feel good, generates self-respect and increases motivation. But Robert Lutz writes:

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[89] Coates, Mary Anne. *Clergy Stress. The Hidden Conflicts In Ministry.* (London : S.P.C.K.. 1989), 72.

"When self worth and security are defined by what we accomplish, achievement occupies a dangerous place in our lives."[90]

Ministers need to know they are valuable even if there is no obvious results. In discussing this issue from a personal stance, Robert Lutz shares:

"The subtle shift towards valuing being as well as doing, has made me no less busy. But it has relieved much of the pressure and drivenness of the doing. The focus is more on being faithful to God's call rather than on doing as if I were God. The result seems to be a far more relaxed and healthy position for doing effective ministry."[91]

Being productive can be very satisfying; but the drive can be destructive.

F. IMPORTANCE FOR HEALTH

Satisfaction in ministry contributes to:

i) Resilience

Satisfaction enables ministers to continue long term in ministry and overcome many of the challenges and difficulties.

In the early 1980's, there was a study undertaken in the Uniting Church in Victoria, of 145 ministers and deaconesses. In reflecting on the factors that brought them satisfaction and success, the respondents concluded:

34% Intrapersonal Factors (fulfilment, satisfaction, acceptance, goal achievement, trust, personal growth, sense of call, spiritual awareness).

29% Ministry / Work Related Factors (people's response to God / Gospel, making people aware of Christ, using gifts, innovations, growth in individuals).

19% Appreciation / Support from Others (co-operation, response to pastoral care, being in demand, appreciation of service / preaching, affirmation, involvement).

18% Interpersonal Factors (relationships, reconciliation, fellowship).

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[90] Lutz, Robert and Taylor, Bruce (Eds). *Surviving In Ministry*, 84.
[91] Ibid, 86.

These reflect fairly closely the satisfaction factors of ministry discussed earlier in this section. This satisfaction lead the respondents to conclude that -

94% are certain that ministry is the right vocation for them now.

86% do not wish they were in a different appointment in the church (79% in rural parishes).

81% are optimistic about the future of the Uniting Church of Australia.

75% have adequate opportunity to develop their skills and gifts for ministry.[92]

It appears from these figures that satisfaction in ministry enables people to feel good about what they are doing and therefore continue on.

The Hay study in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane in 1994 of 142 clergy, highlighted the link between satisfaction in ministry and resilience. It stated that:

"On average, the clergy rated themselves high for their levels of overall effectiveness and personal satisfaction, and reported a low desire to leave the ministry. Clergy ranked their levels of stress, however, in the moderate range with a reasonable spread of scores."

It was outlined in Table 2 of the Report:

	Mean	SD
	(1–7 scale, where 7 is high)	
* Overall effectiveness as a clergyperson	5.1	0.9
* Overall level of personal satisfaction as a clergyperson	5.3	1.3
* Stress in your vocation as a clergyperson	3.6	1.6
* Thinking about leaving ministry	2.1	1.3

The report concludes from these figures:

"The clergy data demonstrates a predictable set of relationships, as measured by correlations between stress, burnout, satisfaction, effectiveness and desire to leave. Higher rates of stress were associated with high rates of total burnout, an increased desire to leave the ministry and reported lower ratings of overall effectiveness."[93]

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92 Prior, Robin. *At Cross Purposes.* (Kew : Uniting Church Synod, 1986), 39-40.
93 Hay, I. *Stage One Report To The Clergy On The Anglican Diocese of Brisbane's Clergy Stress / Wellbeing Survey.* (Diocese of Brisbane, 1994), 3.

All the people in this study demonstrated a high degree of resilience. Most had faced, or were facing, personal or parish crises which they were able to navigate successfully. Rev B reflected all the people's attitude when he said, "The intensity of ministry I often want to run from. Often, I get down - but I don't stay there - I can't."

ii) Motivation

Ministers generally have a relatively well-developed internal motivation for task. But external factors such as arise from achievement and feeling of satisfaction, are important motivators as well. In the Uniting Church Report, half the clergy surveyed related their positive orientations in ministry to religious / theological factors, a quarter to vocational competence, and a quarter to experiential factors such as enjoyment, positive feedback and personal support.[94]

The people in this study displayed a similar degree of motivation, with a great desire to be effective and to overcome personal and parish setbacks.

iii) Overall Health

Generally, clergy who experience high levels of satisfaction will be relatively healthy in all aspects of their lives - physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual and environmental. This will further enhance a person's effectiveness.

G. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Although satisfaction is not easy to define in the day to day work of a minister, most ministers are generally able to identify some areas which contribute to this feeling. To be able to find satisfaction in some areas of the work clearly enables ministers to be better able to maintain well being.

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[94] Prior, Robin. *At Cross Purposes,* 43.

6.6   DEALING WITH EXPECTATIONS

A. EXPECTATIONS : STRESS OR STIMULUS?

Expectations can create stress.   Ministers are confronted by a multitude of expectations which can never all be satisfied.   It is possible for the minister to try to meet all of them, or have anxiety because it is impossible.   High expectations from within or without can lead a minister to become frustrated, despondent, stressed and ineffective.   When the gap between the minister's goals and the church's expectations is too large, the minister's leadership and work effectiveness suffers.   As James and Evelyn Whitehead succinctly said, "Ministers trapped in a web of conflicting expectations become increasingly ineffective."[95]

However, some difference between the minister's understanding and the group's expectations is to be expected.   Without this tension, ministers risk being embedded in the group and can fall into the subtle trap of trying to please everyone.   But it can also make a minister deaf to the needs of the people he/she serves.   Thus ministers need to be able to maintain a healthy tension between asserting their expectations in order to lead a church beyond the status quo, and listening to the pastoral concerns of the community sometimes expressed in their expectations of him/her.

B. EXPECTATIONS - FROM WITHIN

In 'Covenants and Care', the authors write insightfully:

"Expectations from a congregation are real and must be dealt with in a realistic and pastoral way.   However, the research suggests that much of what leads ministers to 'frustration, depression and feelings of inadequacy' are the idealistic expectations we lay on our selves."[96]

"In short, our own expectations about meeting expectations can be an even larger part of the problem than expectations laid on ministers by others."[97]

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[95]   Whitehead, James and Evelyn.   *The Promise of Partnership : A Model for Collaboration Ministry.* (San Francisco : Harper Collins, 1991), 72.
[96]   Harbaugh, Gary, Brenneis, R and Hutton, Rodney. *Covenants and Care,* 35.
[97]   Ibid, 36.

However, in our study, only a few of the participants mentioned internal expectations. Most concentrated on external expectations. One of the reasons for this is that external expectations are far easier to identify than internal ones. Also, no specific question was raised about internal expectations. Despite the minimal reference to this in the study, it is still an important factor to explore. (*See Appendix 8.6 D.*)

The pressure of expectations from within can arise in ministry from a number of sources, including:-

i) Modelling

Ministers often have unrealistically high expectations of themselves in that they see themselves as the resident 'holy man or woman' who will live a model Christian lifestyle. This stance is often reinforced by the scriptural injunctions for leaders within the church, e.g., 1 Timothy 3:1-7. It puts considerable stress on the clergy and his/her family to endeavour to model perfectly all aspects of the Christian life.

Much of the pressure to perform as a model Christian comes from perfectionism, from which many ministers suffer. A perfectionist is a person who has unrealistically high expectations for self, others or both, coupled with fear of making mistakes. There is a huge difference between the desire to do ministry well and the compulsion to do everything well. Perfectionists have an inbuilt system of punishment for failing to reach perfection. They have the attitude - if it's not perfect, it is not worthy anything - and see things as either a great success or dismal failure. It's true that perfectionism in ministry can be present in varying shades of intensity and can be more pronounced in some situations than others.

Perfectionists are prime candidates for burnout because of the high level of energy required to do everything perfectly. Often they take full responsibility for the complete emotional and spiritual health of their parishioners, keeping them weak and dependent. Also, they are "good at their job, but some become compulsive about the activities at which they excel, while avoiding those in which they are inadequate, lest their imperfections become commonly known."[98]

Generally speaking, perfectionism springs from feelings of inferiority, which may have their roots in childhood.

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[98] Moe, Kenneth A. *The Pastor's Survival Manual,* 47.

ii) Competency

Some ministers consider that they need to be competent at everything. Arch Hart speaking from personal experience writes:

> "In my experience a tendency towards depression in ministers is directly related to an inability to accept fallibility...They must do everything perfectly. No minister can survive with such a tendency."[99]

Ministry is so multi-faceted that it is impossible for one person to be competent in every area. Also, even the highly competent in some areas have less competency in other areas.

iii) Availability

Often ministers want to be seen as always being available. The expectation can be that you will be on call 24 hours a day. With this mindset, ministry can become the single purpose for living to the detriment of all else. It is clearly absurd to expect that ministers will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For effective ministry, rest and recreation need to be intentionally planned.

iv) Approval

Some ministers expect that people will approve of all that they do. Their self esteem can depend on people's encouragement and appreciation. Clearly, there are many times ministers won't be approved of. These include when a sermon is challenging and prophetic, initiating change which is resisted, and when the task performed is less than competent and efficient. Approval is not part of the job, but the need to learn to live with some degree of disapproval is.

Overall, my research indicates that ministers with good self-definition have a realistic assessment of themselves as it pertains to modelling, competency, availability and approval.

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[99] Hart, Arch. *Coping With Depression,* 17.

C. DEALING WITH SELF-EXPECTATIONS

Discussing self-expectations in ministry, John Sanford writes:

"It is as though there is a 'Voice of Expectation' within us, an 'Inner Monitor' or 'Inner Secretary', who continuously admonishes us about what we should be doing and keeps careful track of all our failures and omissions."[100]

Moreover, it is difficult for ministers to deal with self-expectations because of the amount of guilt they often carry. But it is imperative for health and effectiveness that they are dealt with.

What are some things that will help ministers deal with self-expectations?

i) Accepting Humanness

Writing in the context of ministry, Marlene Cohen succinctly states:

"We can be certain of one thing - in every person there is a fascinating conglomeration of sterling strength and daunting frailties, of understanding skills and bumbling ineptitudes, vast stores of information and huge vistas of ignorance, breathtaking courage and paralysing fears, sickness and health, certainties and uncertainties, in every aspect of our being and doing."[101]

In endeavouring to be a model or God-bearer, ministers can work hard to cover up unacceptable aspects of their personhood. But to do this will not only exhaust him/her, but impoverish his/her personality and in the long run, impoverish congregations.

Ministers are human first of all, and like other humans, they get tired, anxious, discouraged and upset. The witness of Jesus' humanity where we see Him tempted, hungry, tired, lonely, frustrated, fearful, angry and joyful, will encourage us to own our humanity.

"Jesus appears to have been a rigorous and human figure. He was indeed a good man but the Scriptures don't present Him as saintly in an other-worldly sense."[102]

The desire of the world will also encourage us ...

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[100] Sanford, John A. *Dealing With Ministry Burnout.* (New York : Paulist Press, 1982), 35.
[101] Cohen, Marlene. *The Divided Self.* (London : Harper Collins, 1996), 47.
[102] McRae - McMahon, Dorothy. *Being Clergy, Staying Human : Taking A Stand In The River* (New York : Alban Institute, 1992), 2.

"The world is waiting for a human church - where people can be honest with one another, in which leaders give clear evidence of going through universal human struggles."[103]

Ministers need to feel free to be honest about their humanness, for it gives permission for other people to do the same. It also witnesses to the operation of God's grace and power in the midst of humanness. This surely is what is at the heart of what ministers need to be modelling to the church and the world. And not some perfectionist façade! Dorothy McRae-McMahon emphasises the risks and freedom of honestly owning humanity:

"It takes courage to be real with people in the church today. If we will not be real, we participate in the maintaining of churches that will never be truly inviting to real people, churches that support only the 'successful', where all people are 'faithful', all are 'coping', and all are in the end afraid of being found out."[104]

And: "When you step into the river of humanness, I can't imagine you would want to go back to the desert of apparent invulnerability for too long; it's too lonely, too alienating from one's self, too far from a kindly God, and too pale a shadow of the rigours of real life."[105]

ii) Accept Limitations

The minister needs to be able to accept the limitations to his/her competency and communicate this clearly to those in the church family. This will not only relieve the minister being all things to all others, but it will free the congregation to be able to minister in their competency and giftedness. It will also mean that the church will operate as it is intended - all people using their gifts to build up and make the church effective. For one person to project competency in all areas is to keep the congregation weak, but to affirm competency in all people is to build a strong and healthy congregation.

Ministers need also to accept their limitations of availability. To communicate total availability is to deny the need for rest and recreation.

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[103] Ibid, 3.
[104] Ibid, 7.
[105] Ibid, 8.

"It is generally accepted that leisure and recreation contribute significantly to the social, psychological, physical and creative well being of humankind."[106]

And discussing the need to plan for it, the same authors write:

"It is our belief that within each of us rests the ultimate control over what we choose to prioritize into our daily life ... if you want more leisure time, you have to make it happen by valuing your need to recreate at least as strongly as you desire to serve others."[107]

If ministers don't differentiate their need for a balance of work and leisure, they blur the boundaries between their private and public life. Such a blurring is neither helpful for themselves or for those they serve.

iii) Building Strong Self Esteem

Poor self esteem fuels the many facets of self-expectations. Self esteem is developed in childhood through interaction with parents and significant others. If these foundations are not strong, then people continue to be uncertain, anxious and seek approval as a never-ending quest. Often ministers with poor self esteem seek to bolster it through their work. However, self esteem comes first as a gift from God, who declares people righteous apart from any efforts on their part. It is also an assertion people make about themselves as redeemed people of God in the light of and in spite of all strengths and weaknesses they may have.

Ministers self esteem can be improved by being a part of a support system, with healthy, honest and constructive feedback. It also may require professional assistance. The development of a healthy self esteem will be an invaluable tool to deal effectively with self expectations.

D. EXPECTATIONS - FROM WITHOUT

Kenneth Moe, writing about internal and external expectations, said insightfully:

"Parish ministry is crowded with unrealistic expectations from members of congregations and from pastors, arising from their mutual misperception. ...
The quality of the ministry can be significantly affected by how pastors

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[106] Lutz. Robert and Taylor, Bruce. *Surviving In Ministry,* 47.
[107] Ibid, 59.

respond to these unrealistic expectations ... and even more so by how well pastors can recognise the extent of his/her own."[108]

Self-expectations can be more difficult to handle than expectations of others. External expectations are only a source of stress when there is a wide divergence between the expectations of self and others, and where expectations can't be met. Amongst those mentioned by the participants in the study were - constant availability, having all knowledge, multiplicity of roles and tasks, modelling gospel living, being a reconciler, and growing the church. It was also acknowledged that it is easy to pick up the unspoken expectations of others and difficult to deal with conflicting expectations. (See *Appendix 8.6 D.*)

External expectations come from four sources:

i) **God**

Most ministers would affirm that they are primarily serving God. It is to Him that they ultimately answer. God's expectations of the minister are threefold -

(a) Call

God expects that the minister will be faithful to his/her call. In fact, some would argue that the only real evaluation of ministry success is faithfulness.

(b) Character

Much is written in the scriptures about the character of the leader in a congregation. In addressing overseers, Timothy urges them to be "above reproach, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well ... and a good reputation with outsiders..." (1 Timothy 3:1-6)

Character is vital for ministry. For ministry to have an effective cutting edge, there needs to be a correlation between profession and practice. Although a minister needs to aim at all times for this exemplary character, there needs also to be a recognition that when it is not lived out, God offers forgiveness and a new start.

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[108] Moe, Kenneth Alan. *The Pastor's Survival Manual*, 43.

(c) Concern

Paul's words to the Ephesian elders as he prepared to leave them encapsulates the care ministers need to take for the flock: "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God which he bought with his own blood." (Acts 20:28)

Ministers have the ultimate responsibility for the wellbeing and growth of individual believers and the church. He/she will find this a huge burden unless there is ongoing reliance on the power and grace of God.

The expectations God has of ministers will not create stress and anxiety when they are viewed, not in a legalistic way, but in the context of grace.

ii) The World

Although the church is on the margins of the life of the world, people still have expectations of ministers. These expectations include:

(a) Integrity

The world expects ministers to practice what they preach. When they don't, they are very critical and condemnatory. Many people outside the church still consider the church and therefore its ministers, to be guardians of morality. However, the world is generally less impressed when the church even appears to be imposing their standards on them.

(b) Provision of Religious Services

Many people still expect the church to provide to all who request them, the conduct of rituals at significant life junctures. This includes marriage, death and the birth of children. For ministers to refuse is often considered insensitive and not true to the ideal of love which the church espouses. Blunt refusals have contributed to a growing distance between church and the world.

(c) Provision of Social Services

The church and its ministry are still considered by many in our community to be the source of social welfare. There is an expectation that the church will

provide a wide range of assistance to people in need with no strings attached.

iii) The Denomination

Although each local Anglican congregation and its minister has a large degree of autonomy, there are expectations which inevitably flow from the denominational structures. Included in these are:

(a) Ministers and their congregations will support the wider church.

(b) Ministers will endeavour to make and maintain the local church financially viable.

(c) Ministers will keep the church stable and enable it to grow.

(d) Ministers will involve the people of God in the work of ministry.

iv) The Local Congregation

It is common for the congregation to reinforce many of the self expectations of the minister. Included amongst these are the expectations of modelling, competency, availability and approval. However, the greatest area of expectation clashes between minister and congregation, is in the issue of role.

v) Role Confusion

This is particularly prevalent in the contemporary church, due to the following factors:

(a) The changing status of ministers within the church and the world.

(b) The affirmation of lay ministry, which has contributed to the lack of clarity about the minister's distinctive role.

(c) Ministry is in a period of transition. New models are beginning to emerge, but are not yet fully developed. In such a period, there is often a forceful reaction from the old models. Both ministers and congregations, because of anxiety and uncertainty, endeavour to hold on to the old models.

(d) There are many models of ministry vying for allegiance. Anthony Pappas provides an outline of Margaret Fletcher Clark's 'Ten Models Of Ordained Ministry', which include:

- "Counsellor / Healer / Caretaker - counselling and visiting tasks.
- Minister of the Word - preaching and teaching.
- Administrator / Manager - managing an efficient and effective organisation.

- Prophet / Social Activist - involvement in social concerns of the community.
- Social Exemplar - setting forth social norms for people to emulate.
- Ring Leader - holds together a complex organisation.
- Community Personage - being active in community affairs.
- Celebrant - leads the congregation in worship.
- Spiritual Guide - encourages the development of spiritual life in the congregation.
- Witness - by presence and proclamation.

The minister can be an evangelist or trainer of evangelists."[109]

vi) Role Confusion Causes Stress

There are three ways in which expectations can clash in the area of role. They can be categorised under three headings:

(a) Different

Stress results when the minister emphasises one of these pastoral roles while the congregation expects a different one to be primary. For example, a minister may emphasise his/her social activist role, while the congregation values the Counsellor/Healer/Caretaker role.

(b) Insufficient

There may be agreement between minister and congregation on the primary role but not on secondary roles. Most ministers have a pastoral role definition, broad enough to include more than one of those models. Congregations also have a breadth of role definition. Tension can arise when there is lack of agreement on secondary roles.

(c) Inefficient

Even when there is agreement on roles, the pastoral task may be accomplished poorly, belatedly, insensitively, begrudgingly, or just differently. This will cause inevitable stress between minister and congregation.

Role confusion and conflict causes ministers to have high levels of job-related tension, low job satisfaction and low self confidence.

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[109] Pappas, Anthony G. *Pastoral Stress.* (New York : Alban Press, 1995), 59.

E. DEALING WITH THE EXPECTATIONS OF OTHERS

Although it is impossible or even desirable to eliminate all expectation clashes, the minister needs to work hard at defining his/her expectations and dialoguing with those who have expectations of him/her.

The participants in the study mentioned that they dealt with people's expectations by naming limitations and stresses to the congregation, defining boundaries clearly, retaining clarity on vocation and direction from God, and maintaining a balance in life between work and time off. (See *Appendix 8.6 D.*)

There are some other positive and creative steps the minister can take to minimise the expectation clashes:

i) Clarify the Ministerial Role:

Gilbert gives a timely warning: "If we don't define our roles, others will do it for us."[110] Ministers need to define their ministry role in light of their own giftedness and the current needs in the life of the church they lead. This will define where the minister puts his/her energy and time. It will give a clear focus to the task of ministry at any given time and situation. It is valuable if this can be done at the beginning of a new ministry or assignment, and regularly after that.

ii) Communicate Role Expectations:

The minister needs to share his/her role clarity and allow others to express their role expectations of him/her. These issues need to be brought out into the open so that people will understand each other, not necessarily agree. Such a forum provides the opportunity to discuss potential clashes of expectations and communicate which expectations he/she will not be able to fulfil.

iii) Review Role Expectations Regularly:

Role expectations for the minister and congregation change over time and with altered circumstances. Therefore, it is necessary to have a review process to look afresh at them. This will involve re-clarifying expectations. It can also be a forum for the minister and congregation to express disappointment about unfulfilled expectations.

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[110] Gilbert, Barbara. *Who Ministers?* 67.

iv) Manage Boundaries:

Ministers need to work hard to maintain boundaries in at least five areas:

(a) Who am I as a Christian minister? In tension with, Who am I as a human being? This will enable ministers to draw limits on availability, energy and competency.

(b) Who am I as a private person and family leader? In tension with, Who am I as a minister and congregational leader? This boundary will assist us to distinguish between our personal and professional lives.

(c) Who am I as an individual? In tension with, Who are the persons I minister to? This boundary defines us as separate from the persons we minister to and allows us to say 'yes' and 'no' more clearly to ministry demands.

(d) What are my vocational obligations? In tension with, What are my vocational opportunities? This boundary separates work from play, and cuts down on workaholism.

(e) What am I able to do and not able to do? In tension with, What do people expect of me? This boundary aids in separating realistic from unrealistic expectations people have.

If the minister doesn't set boundaries, the chances are the congregation won't. The setting of them is crucial to a balance in life, but runs the risk of saying 'no' and not being liked. The setting of boundaries is best achieved by ministers who have a growing sense of self esteem.

v) Being Assertive:

Oswald, in his book 'Clergy Self-Care', writes insightfully:

"Good self care habits clearly involve being able to assert our needs in the face of the demands of others. Without this ability, we become victims of every situation."[111]

When ministers stand up for their rights, they show respect for themselves and win the respect of others. In choosing to be assertive, the minister considers the need of him/her self and of the people in the current situation.

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[111] Oswald, Roy. *Clergy Self-Care,* 173.

CONCLUSION:

Stephen Covey sounds a timely warning:

> "The cause of almost all relationship difficulties is rooted in conflicting or ambiguous expectations around roles and goals."[112]

This is why it is important to clarify expectations in ministry intentionally and regularly. Many ministers struggle with defining expectations and living with expectations in themselves and from others.   The excerpt of Huggins Thesis reproduced in 'Stress and Clergy : A Report To The Anglican Diocese Of Melbourne' contained this significant statement about expectations:

> "As priests get older, it seems that they become more relaxed about how they handle the range of expectations associated with their role.   The priests come to terms with the fact that they do some things better than others and they find a way of balancing diocesan and parish expectations."[113]

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[112] Covey, Stephen. *The Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People : Restoring The Character Ethic.* (New York : Simon & Schuster, 1992), 194.

[113] Lake, Michael. *Stress & The Clergy,* 130.

7.   SYNTHESIS, CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   SYNTHESIS

The focus of this research report was to identify factors which contribute to the maintenance of health in Anglican clergy within the Diocese of Melbourne.   In this process, 8 clergy - 4 men and 4 women - were interviewed and filled in a questionnaire.   Prior to the identification of the issues, my motivation for exploring this subject was outlined.   Included in this were personal and spouse health issues, the changing nature of ministry over thirty-five years and various experiences with support networks.   Then there was a comprehensive discussion on what is health and why it is important for ministry.   In doing this, six components of health were identified - physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual and environmental.   In the crux of this paper, four issues for the maintenance of health are identified - spiritual life, support networks, satisfaction and dealing with expectations. These are the four factors highlighted by the participants in the study.   In the discussion of these issues, one important thing that is emphasised is the need for pro-active self-care.

7.2   CONCLUSIONS

A.   **MINISTRY** has changed dramatically over the thirty-five years surveyed in this paper. It is now clearly more stressful than it was and stress is predicted to increase in the years ahead.   Health issues for ministers need, therefore, to be addressed by the church with some urgency.

B.   **HEALTH IDENTIFICATION**

i)   It needs to be recognised that health is not simply the absence of disease or illness; it involves the person's whole well-being, potential capacity and functionality.

ii)   Health is not an end in itself.   People don't live to be healthy - they live better by being healthy.   In ministry, health contributes to effectiveness, positive modelling and the health of the community of faith.

iii)   Health and ill health can contribute to ministerial effectiveness.   God can use brokenness and incompleteness for His redemptive purposes, for the minister and also for those he/she ministers to.

iv)   There are six inter-related components of health - physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual and environmental.   It is possible to identify signs of health and ill health in each area.

C. PRO-ACTIVE SELF-CARE

It is vital for ministers to be pro-active in self-care. They need to take active and intentional care of themselves - by putting self-care strategies in place.

D. SUPPORT NETWORKS

These need to be developed by ministers. Although they can take various forms, it appears that the most helpful ones are with colleagues, preferably with a paid facilitator.

E. SPIRITUAL LIFE

i) This needs to be nurtured by daily disciplines, regular retreat periods, and spiritual direction. Clearly, this is indispensable for ministry health and effectiveness.

ii) One important aspect of spirituality is the call to ministry. Call needs to be nurtured, for it invigorates a minister's spiritual life, empowers ministry tasks and assists in the maintenance of wholistic health.

F. SATISFACTION

i) For ministers to continue creatively in ministry, they need to experience satisfaction regularly. From this paper, satisfaction comes from three areas - sacramental and spiritual, interpersonal relationships and developmental aspects of individual and community life.

ii) Ministry satisfaction contributes significantly to resilience, motivation and overall well being.

G. EXPECTATIONS

i) Many of the expectations that ministers face come from within themselves. They revolve around modelling, competency, availability and approved needs. It is possible to deal with them by accepting humanness and limitations, and building strong self esteem.

ii) External expectations come from God, the world, the denomination and the local congregation. In order to deal with these, the minister needs to clarify ministerial roles, communicate role expectations, renew role expectations regularly, manage boundaries, and develop assertiveness.

iii) Some conflicting expectations between minister and congregation are inevitable and even desirable. Such conflicts can stimulate ministry and the life of the church.

7.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

These suggestions are illustrative of issues revealed by this paper, but are by no means comprehensive in scope.

A. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PHASE

The idealised aspect of responding to a perceived call to ministry needs to be balanced by a realistic appraisal of gifts for and the demands of day-to-day ministry.   In this process, issues that need to be addressed include:

- Some of the powerful negative stresses in ministry.
- Impact of vocation on spouse and family - especially the balancing of private and public aspects.
- The need to deal with internal and external expectations.
- The personality and background experiences which may negatively impact ministry.

B. TRAINING PHASE

This period of basic education is vital for the development of pastoral praxis, collegial support, spirituality and other dimensions of practical ministry.   Some of the issues that need to be addressed are:

- Factors which will assist in the maintenance of health as it pertains to ministry.
- Finding satisfaction in ministry.
- Dealing with internal and external expectations.
- Maintaining spiritual life in ministry.
- Awareness of causes, symptoms and prevention of distress in ministers and their spouses.

Overall, there needs to be a greater integration between what's needed to be leaders in the local church and what theological colleges teach.

C. INITIAL MINISTRY PERIOD

The first five years or so are crucial to the establishment of a positive approach to the challenges and stresses of ministry if creative and healthy patterns are to be developed. In the Anglican system, this period corresponds to curacies and the beginning of the first parish. It is well recognised that the first parish is a critical time.

It would be beneficial to encourage collegial groups of those new to ministry. Such groups will need to have strong accountability and mentoring structures. In this environment, many of the issues raised in the training phase can be developed. These issues can now begin to be integrated into the practice of ministry. If principles for the positive maintenance of health can be adopted at this stage of ministry, it will be invaluable in the years ahead.

D. APPOINTMENT PROCESS

As part of this process, there needs to be negotiation and clarification about issues, including:

- Mutual goals and role expectations. The prospective minister and congregation need to honestly discuss the expectations each has and clarify commonality and work through conflicting ones.
- The need to develop collegial support for the minister and/or spouse.
- The need for the maintenance of spiritual life essential for ministry effectiveness.
- The particular gifts the minister brings which will contribute to his/her satisfaction, and how these will be complemented by those in the congregation.

E. REGULAR REVIEW PROCESS

The issues raised in the appointment phase need to be reviewed at least every two years. This can generally be done by the minister and representatives of the church leadership. However, if there are perceived difficulties or tensions, a consultant could be employed.

F. ISSUES FOR DIOCESAN OVERSIGHT

i) The need to encourage and actively model the:
   - importance of support networks;
   - value of spiritual direction;

- centrality of spiritual life in ministry. Retreats and quiet days can be regularly organised and ministers encouraged to make them a priority.
- Importance of professional development.

ii) The development of better 'early warning systems' to respond with support, counsel and professional help, where there are symptoms of vocational stress and low satisfaction, unrealised expectations and burnout, spiritual struggles or crisis of faith.

iii) The identifying and training of spiritual directors and support group facilitators.

iv) The development of guidelines for handling creatively the conflict between the ministers' professional and private lives. One issue that needs to be faced is where the vicarage is sited ... on church land or in the community? The latter provides possibilities for the better maintenance of the minister's health and his/her private life.

8.   APPENDICES

APPENDIX : 8.1   PHILOSOPHY OF, AND QUESTIONS FOR, INTERVIEWS.

PHILOSOPHY OF INTERVIEWS

1. **Focus**

   To determine by allowing the person to tell his/her story -

   1:1   What the person understands by health.

   1:2   What factors have assisted a person to maintain health.   And why these factors have been important.

   1:3   To be aware of issues a person hasn't raised, and be ready to ask about that.

   1:4   To discuss any times of ill health and the effect these have had on their maintenance of health.

2. **Analysis of Material**

   2:1   To compare and contrast all interviews to highlight the common factors which contribute to health raised by the interviewees.

   2:2   To compare and contrast these factors highlighted with the issues raised in the books referred to.

   2:3   To critically analyse why these factors are so important in the maintenance of health.

   2:4   To integrate the main findings of the interviews with the material in the reference books.

QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

Physical

How have you maintained your physical health?

Have you had physical conditions serious enough to affect your ministry? How did you overcome them, or adjust to them?

Mental

How have you coped with crises and changes?

What courses/seminars have you undertaken to develop yourself professionally?

Do you get satisfaction from ministry?

Emotional

How have you handled normal levels of stress?

How have you handled disappointments, frustration and hurt?

Do you have any creative outlets?

Social

How do people assess how you relate to and work with others?

What have been the major sources of support over the years?

How have you handled conflict?

What effect has your family of origin had on you?

What is the attitude of your family and friends to your ministry?

Spiritual

How have you organised your own personal spiritual life?

How have you handled the public ministry?

Do you have a strong sense of being created, saved and called by God?

How do you handle your doubts?

Environmental

How do you relate to your environment?

Are you able to create environment in church, family, etc?

What is your communication style?

APPENDIX : 8.2 PROFILE OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS AND SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

The Rev. A.

Profile:

Gender:	Male
Age:	50-60
Marital Status:	Married
Children:	Primary School Age
Ordained:	22 years
Time Present Position:	7 years
Previous Positions:	2

Summary of Interview:

In reflecting on the question, 'What is health?' he commented that it is the ability to cope with a variety of situations. Also, you can be healthy when you have some disability or disease. In considering health, we need to remember it is relative - for example - a person at 20 and 80 can be healthy for his/her age, and take into account the aging process and the reality of death. He considered that spiritual and emotional health were the most critical for clergy.

In discussing his spiritual life, which is central to the maintenance of his health, he shared that he regularly uses the morning and evening offices. He sees its effect in that he uses it "to calm down, refresh myself and feel God's presence". He confessed that he hadn't always been that disciplined.

His physical health he maintains largely by swimming regularly. In commenting about this activity he said, "It is a diversion. Swimming takes a lot of concentration. If I sit,.I'll sit and worry. After swimming, I come back elated and better able to tackle the issues of life and ministry".

Time off is important to him. He takes a regular day off which he spends at his own home outside the parish. Holidays are also taken regularly. He is prepared to take extra time if needed. One of his regrets is that, apart from holidays, he never gets a weekend with his children.

He has been able to separate church from family and work from time off by establishing an office in the church complex. This separation he commented strongly "is an essential ingredient in clergy health."

He cites the support networks he has as being vital in maintaining health. These include a clergy group which meets regularly, the bishop's staff meeting, various colleagues and friends, and a long-standing relationship with a Christian doctor.

Conflict has always been an issue for him. When it is out in the open and people are prepared to discuss it, he handles it well. But when it is deceitful and hidden, it is destructive and difficult to handle. He is now fairly bold about confronting conflict. It wasn't always that way however. In sharing openly about one incident in a parish he had been in, he concluded that the person producing the conflict was evil. "If a priest doesn't recognise when he is wrestling against principalities and powers and not flesh and blood," he commented, "then his health was bound to suffer." He is able to combat evil by being aware of it, being regular in prayer and sacraments, getting enough exercise and rest, and have people support him and discern evil in people.

A sense of call is very important to him. Commenting on this he said, "It's the thing that keeps you going when things get bad. If you didn't have that sense of call to a place, you wouldn't stay." It especially helped him when he went through a two year period of great desolation and loneliness which mystics call the "dark night of the soul".

One of the ways he especially maintains health is his long-standing involvement with disabled people. In particular he has run a scout group of disabled people for 30 years. "It's the delight of his life", he comments enthusiastically. And he further commented, "This ministry has kept me healthy in many ways. It helps me put life into perspective when dealing with much of the pettiness of the church. It gives me a bigger picture."

He lists among his major stresses in life and ministry - tensions in the family, moving parishes, marriage tensions, and lack of emotional and sexual closeness through spouse's illness.

In his ministry, he cites funerals, marriages, change which he facilitated, and growth in people's faith, as among the most satisfying aspects. He values the positive feedback he receives from people, but generally this doesn't come very consistently. When people don't express how they feel, he presumes it is negative. But overall he deals with this lack of consistent affirmation by developing the stance that he is "not primarily trying to please the people - I am trying to serve them."

The Rev. B.

Profile:

Gender:	Male
Age:	60-70
Marital Status:	Married
Children:	Young Adults all married
Ordained:	30 years
Time Present Position:	8½ years
Previous Positions:	3

Summary of Interview:

The word that best described health for him was "well being", which he unpacked by saying, "A person has well being when he/she can wake up feeling reasonably happy with themselves - with their life and what they are doing, are able to cope with what they are doing, have a balance to life, enjoy life basically, and have energy and vitality about life and people."

In beginning to explore things that help him maintain health, he highlighted two vital things for him - the gospel he proclaims, which keeps him going and says what he is doing is worth doing, and his love for people.

"Essentially, if I don't have time focussing on who I am in God, and having time with Him, I would dry up. I would be working purely out of human resources. I need spiritual feeding," he commented, as he discussed the vital necessity of a personal and corporate spiritual life. His wife is a tremendous support in his spiritual life. He is very honest in his relationship with God - sharing his joys and his frustrations. At the heart of his relationship with God is the knowledge that he stands accepted. This truth came home to him some years ago with a new clarity when he read Paul Tillich's words, "Justification by faith is accepting the acceptance of God even when you know you are unacceptable." He concluded about this, "That's probably one of the keys to health for me." Being part of a worshipping community and especially the Eucharist helps maintain his spiritual life.

In sharing about support he receives, he concluded, "I am not a person who needs massive amounts of support." But he recognises the vital support role his wife, a group of parishioners, his family and a small group of clergy plays. In discussing his experience with clergy support he said, "Clergy networks generally don't work. I think clergy are too guarded to be real."

He is stimulated by a challenge, being innovative, worship that goes well, preaching, and seeing people grow and change and take responsibility for themselves. It is common for him to be frustrated by people unwilling to take responsibility in the church, critical people, and when he can't achieve what he wants to achieve. Overall he reflects, "I don't know what else I would like to do - other than ministry. It's still enormously worthwhile."

Time off from him is very important. He takes regular days off and holidays - which are often spent at a country property he owns. Also he takes off the weekend closest to his wedding anniversary. Reflecting on his growing tiredness with age, he concludes that he will need to take extra Sundays off if he is to maintain ministry until retirement.

He recognises that ministry is stressful because of the excessive demands. This is combated to some extent by working outside the vicarage in the parish office and having a private phone line into the house. But even so, living on the property he concludes "puts great pressure on your health".

His physical well being suffers because of his over-emphasis on work. He reflects, "I don't have a balance" and "You can be focussed on the job, but also you can let guilt feelings make you do more than you should. That's an unhealthy attitude". Also, he doesn't discipline himself to have regular exercise. "We have to remind ourselves that we are not God" was another insightful comment he made.

When faced with difficult issues or people in ministry, he seeks to resolve it and grow through it. He states unequivocally, "I am more concerned to stand before God having endeavoured to exercise leadership than fearing people". And nearing the end of our time together, he commented insightfully, "The intensity of ministry I often want to run from. I can get worn down by it. Often I get down - but I don't stay there - I can't". Such is his resilience in ministry.

The Rev. C.

Profile:

Gender:	Female
Age:	40-50
Marital Status:	Never Married
Ordained:	16½ years
Time Present Position:	3½ years
Previous Positions:	2

Summary of Interview:

"Healthy is something I would like to be all the time. But I am not," she said with refreshing honesty. In defining health, she considered it to be feeling well, in the process of getting well if one isn't well, and dealing with one's ill-health. Also, health to her is having a good relationship with one's doctor, and discovering more about herself that contributes to ill-health and seeking with help to rectify some of them. She concluded, "Health is a process - not a state to arrive at. We are all on a process towards health."

Her support, particularly during this period of ill-health, has come from her psychiatrist, GP, the bishop and the parishioners who have loved and cherished her. One of the parishioners has been particularly supportive whom she would consider her mentor. As well, this year she has taught at Trinity and studied at Tabor at Geelong. These she considered to be therapy for her. In her association with the local minister's group, she has been both supported and challenged - especially in her Anglo-Catholic expression. In her usual frankness she admitted, "So I believe in being accountable. That accountability has its costs - but I am not a private person."

As she struggles to get well, the parish has given her the freedom to take extra time off besides the weekly day and four weeks annually which she takes regularly. "The idea is to give me little bits of time off to recharge the batteries so I can keep going," she said. Speaking about the parish's attitude to her time off she said, "They don't want to lose me. That's been amazing! I didn't need to be on edge wondering if I will be able to continue here."

The maintenance of a spiritual life has been difficult for her since 1991, when she had burnout. Her spiritual life has been maintained through reading Morris West's novels focussing on social and community issues, and being involved as a leader in the Cursillo Movement. In her capacity as a Benedictine oblate, she takes seriously the vow structure of conversion of life, stability and obedience. Two things which recently have assisted her spiritually are: the discipline of preaching without notes and reading a book and sharing their

stories at one of the churches in her parish. Commenting on where she is spiritually at the moment she said, "On my current spiritual journey, I am discovering what is right for me in terms of spirituality." Part of this journey is to be much more human. "I know what it means to be me ... I'm a bit crazy and different ... I'm much more free to be myself and if people don't like that - too bad" she said firmly and with pride.

Call has always been important to her. At times she thinks, "Why did I ever want to do this?" - but knowing all the time, "I wouldn't want to do anything else."

She is frustrated by her lack of power, her inability at times to bring about change, the indifference to Christianity in the community, and the financial precariousness of parish life. But amidst these frustrations, she has come to see "that it's about working creatively with what God has given me at the present moment. I am trying to help the congregation to be happy with what we've got, and take responsibility for what is."

Partly because of her family of origin and who she is, she finds conflict difficult. Also, she finds it hurtful when people are critical of her and leave the church. Commenting on this she said, "I am learning not to take things so personally. I am learning also to roll with a few punches. I thought that I was God's gift to everyone. But that is not so ..."

Her satisfaction in ministry comes from the development of more eucharistic celebrants, the recognition of 80 year olds as elders, the setting aside and anointing of people for tasks and travel, and doing funerals. Overall, she reflects, "It is doing the ordinary things day in and day out - and nothing happens. Then something significant happens. You say something, do something or turn up somewhere - and it's important and significant."

In the latter part of her sharing, she mentioned her involvement in Rotary, a sense of humour, her dog, reading novels, and keeping an interest in the world and the church - as important to her in maintaining health.

The Rev. D.

Profile:

Gender:	Female
Age:	40-50
Marital Status:	Never Married
Ordained:	13 years
Time Present Position:	4½ years
Previous Positions:	3

Summary of Interview:

Health was defined by this person as being about maintaining health and being able to operate effectively and efficiently. It also involved having good relationships and feeling okay about yourself.

Overall, this person maintained health by being pro-active and pragmatic. She comments about this stance to life: "Being single means that you have to look after yourself ... because no one else is going to" and "I have learned that pastoral care is up to me. I think you have to organise it for yourself." And in reflecting on stress: "I generally try to look after myself and give myself a little T.L.C. occasionally."

In maintaining health, a number of things are important for her. Especially vital is a support network of friends - both clergy and lay, and a group which meets for half a day once a month. This group includes prayer and sharing about life issues. Her spiritual life has also been very important. The saying of the daily offices is supplemented by regular journaling, an annual retreat, and a monthly quiet afternoon. Commenting on this quiet afternoon she said, "It has more to do with what's going on in me. I have time here, and I know I am not going to be interrupted ... You can get into the contemplative stuff ... " She also has had a spiritual director in the past and is keen to find another one.

In commenting on the importance of call she remarked, "The sense of being in partnership with God within His church is important. You wouldn't actually stick it out unless you were convinced it was the right thing to be doing, and that there is nothing else that would give the same satisfaction, purpose and meaning."

Her major frustrations come from people's trivia and pettiness, and the excess amount of administration that needs to be done. Being able to take leadership has been a growing thing - and she has sometimes struggled with people's perception of women in leadership.

Her struggles, it appears, are far outweighed by her sense of satisfaction. This primarily comes from doing the Sunday liturgy well, and working hard on preparing and presenting a good funeral service. Her overall comment was, "I love big occasions in parishes. I think I do them well."

Her physical well being is taken care of by taking regular days off and holidays. Walking daily is her major exercise. She also tries to control the number of nights she works. If she has a night off, she generally doesn't go out because, as she comments, "I am by nature an introvert - and I need my space and I make sure I get it. I'll spend it alone, and I won't be lonely. I know I need my space to recharge my batteries."

One of the foundational factors in the maintenance of health for her was her family of origin. From here she got good genes, and a pragmatic, unemotional involvement with life. In expressing this attitude she said, "I get that pragmatic approach to life from my mother. She was never much for sentimentality - she just got on with it."

The Rev. E.

Profile:

Gender:	Female
Age:	40-50
Marital Status:	Never Married
Ordained:	12 years
Time Present Position:	4 years
Previous Positions:	0

Summary of Interview:

Health is defined by her to be having "the energy to do things I want to do, and the capacity to do them." She recognised that disease in one area of her life affects all other areas.

The thing that she identified as the most significant thing for her in maintaining health was sufficient sleep. For her this meant 9 hours per night. Also, she eats lots of food and good quality.

One incident in her life illustrates her pro-active attitude to health. When the priesthood of women was not on the horizon, she ran away, metaphorically speaking, to America. As she described it, many of the women were suffering physically because of this stressful situation. In her own words, "I thought, I don't want to pay a physical health cost – because the church is sick ... I made a conscious decision to get out of the context that had a great potential to make me sick." Commenting on her experience she said, "I went away for my health – and came back with my health."

Her support network includes a spiritual director, two groups of colleagues, deanery and some long-standing friends. Each play an important part in her support. The spiritual director often talks straight to her, and with the groups of colleagues she is able to share deeply. In her attitude to support, she is also proactive. She readily commented, "I am a self-starter. Experience tells me you get what you ask for ... I see some clergy operating on a model which says that some-one should give them what they need without them asking for it. But I don't operate that way. I know when to get it – so I go get it. It's up to me."

Her days off and holidays are taken regularly. She especially enjoys doing solitary pursuits. Also she makes sure she leaves the vicarage for her breaks. Occasionally she gives herself, when needed, some extra time off.

The Rev. F.

Profile:

Gender:	Female
Age:	40-50
Marital Status:	Married
Children:	Young Adult
Ordained:	11 years
Time Present Position:	2½ years
Previous Positions:	1

Summary of Interview:

Health is seen by this person wholistically. It involves being in a good relationship with God first and foremost, and in good relationship with others. It is also about "having a good outlook on life; being glad to be alive, being glad to be doing what you're doing." It may well involve accepting a certain degree of frailty and physical limitations.

Her spiritual health is maintained by contemplative prayer and corporate worship. The first of these is done in a block of half a day on a Monday. Sharing about this she remarked, "I do some reading in that time, but I mostly walk and try and engage in contemplative prayer – which is not about words." She finds the celebration of eucharist refreshing and enjoyable. Insightfully she said about this corporate expression, "I am anchored in common prayer..."

Time off for her is essential. So days off and holidays are taken regularly. They have a house near the beach where they spend a good deal of time. Also they have greater freedom now their son is no longer living at home. Time off is taken in the understanding that you have to live with the fact that you can't get everything done." This is pivotal to my understanding of health," she reflected.

Her support comes from a variety of sources. These include her spouse, spiritual director, colleagues, spouse's family, and a few close friends. Also, the parishioners are very supportive of her – in fact she reflected, "they have a long history of caring for their clergy – so it is part of the psyche of the place."

While being frustrated with the pettiness of church life and the ignorance of long-standing members, there are many things she finds satisfying. These include – preaching, especially when people get hold of an important truth; helping some-one through a crisis; working with children; and taking funerals. Also, she is encouraged by some discernible changes. One of these is a growing expression of honesty in the congregation now. Commenting on this

In discussing her spiritual life, she considers spirituality to have a lot to do with the quality of relationships. She, however, does use the daily office fairly regularly; although she goes through periods when she doesn't. Preaching is also a means of keeping her spiritually healthy. Reading theology is also spiritually useful to her. As she remarked, "Intellect and heart are connected for me. If it feeds my mind, it will feed my spirit."

Call, in the classic sense, is not part of her experience. However, she tries "to pay attention to the feeling of rightness."

Her satisfaction in ministry comes from preaching, teaching and presiding at worship; developing strong relational links with parishioners; initiating change, and taking funerals. One of her frustrations is doing administration. The burden of this is eased by having an office secretary for 20 hours per week.

When faced with a crisis, she is also pro-active about it. She decides on the people who would be most appropriate for the particular issue and gets them to be available for support. Commenting on this she said, "I know what my needs are, and I am motivated to get them met appropriately. And if you do that in the ordinary things, it's just a few notches up when the crises come."

To maintain her physical health, she walks regularly and sometimes swims. However she finds physical exercise quite boring.

In her final comments she remarked, "I wonder about the aging component of health – whether I'll get frustrated or slightly easier on myself." And, "I do thank God for my health. Some of my health is genetic, accident or overactive divine blessing."

she said, "They are all very polite here...it's a mark of this place...I have tried to dismantle this...So naming the reality – and seeing people set free by doing it – is most satisfying."

Her physical exercise mainly comes from bike riding which she does with her spouse, and gardening at their beach house.

She prefers to confront conflict head on – but finds it difficult to resolve when things are covert. In discussing this she remarked, "Nobody enjoys it, but unless you try to deal with it, it doesn't go away."

"I've had my fair share of personal crises. Learning to live with the past crises enabled me to deal with the crises that come," she began her remarks about life crises. When facing a chronic depression, she sought the help of a psychiatrist. Reflecting on this experience she said, "It's quite powerful to have been through it ... It gives you an appreciation of what people face in their lives – when there is no instant cure." And, "I learnt early that it was alright not to be alright. You didn't have to keep things together...it could fall apart for a while. You could stop work, go away and get better. It was quite a learning experience." She also struggled with the often painful and long debate over the ordination to priesthood of women. It was her sense of call that kept her going through this period. She remarked insightfully, "I am not here because I think it is a good idea, I'm here because this is where I believe God wants me to be." Her other crises came over the decay of the church. It was a crisis of what she was to do with the state of decline in the church. In this struggle, she came to the position that, although the church in its current form is dying, God will enable something new to arise. She eventually decided she wanted to be part of that process of renewal.

Her professional development comes through attending seminars, reading, conferences and personal reflection.

In conclusion she highlighted her love of music as life-giving and contributing to her health.

The Rev. G.

Profile:

Gender:	Male
Age:	50-60
Marital Status:	Married
Children:	Young Adults
Ordained:	27 years
Time Present Position:	3 years
Previous Positions:	2

Summary of Interview:

Health was considered to be, by him, wholeness of being. He also recognised that a person could be physically impaired in some way but still be relatively healthy.

He readily highlighted spiritual health as the most important aspect of health. To maintain this, he spends the first hour of every day in prayer and bible reading. Also he journals twice weekly, and conferences provide spiritual input. Reading books and listening to tapes feeds and refreshes him spiritually.

Call has always been important to him. In commenting on this he said, "Nobody in their right mind would take on ministry – and remain there – unless they knew that the Lord had called them ... Call is part of your being. It has kept me in ministry over all these years."

His primary support comes from his spouse, and a Retreat Group he belongs to gives him support at a relatively great depth. This group is a whole person caring environment. Also, he has some long time friends in ministry who understand the struggles and joys. He is free to share with them as the need arises. In reflecting on the friend network he said, "Keeping contact with friends is an important part of keeping a balance in life which is integral to health." In his current parish, he is fortunate to have a number of mature Christians who support him and a couple of men he meets with weekly. In addition, he has a couple of people who intercede for him who he keeps in touch with by phone or e-mail.

While he acknowledges that administration, the multiplicity of tasks in ministry, dealing with the church bureaucracy, and callers who come looking for money, frustrate him, generally ministry is very satisfying. In particular, he enjoys preaching (but not the preparation), leading small groups, counselling, and talking to people about Jesus.

In reflecting on how he handles conflict, he realised that his tendency to want to avoid it comes from his family of origin. Facing this issue honestly he concluded, "I've got better at handling it over the years – but I still don't handle it well. I don't like it – I avoid it if I can, and hope it will work itself out!"

"One of the things which is vital for my health is that I have a complete day off ... For me that has been one of the essential things. I don't think I would have survived without it," he remarked candidly. He also takes regular holidays, and for recreation enjoys going to the football, doing woodwork and playing golf occasionally.

Over the years in ministry, he hasn't had major crises in parishes but he has had some personal crises centering around his children's illnesses. In many of these crises, he has obtained support from people outside the parish, feeling that he had to keep up an appearance in the parish. Also, he recognised these incidents have thrown him back on the Lord.

Stress is something he has always battled with – and he stated, "That's one aspect of my health which isn't under control," and "I don't handle it well – I tend to fight it. I think if I'm a man of God and a man of faith, I should be able to overcome it. And also I think, where is God's peace?" When experiencing distress, he either does less work, or he just pushes on. Going out into the bush he finds refreshing and stress releasing – but freely admits that you also have to deal with stress which is primarily internal.

He is constantly open to growth, learning and innovations. To keep abreast of new trends, he goes to a training seminar twice annually.

One of the final things he said was very significant for the maintenance of his health: "Maintaining friendship links is important ... Just going out for meals with friends where you don't have to be anything other than yourself. Where you are not the minister – just myself. That helps enormously."

The Rev. H.

Profile:

Gender:	Male
Age:	50-60
Marital Status:	Married
Children:	Young Adults and Teenager
Ordained:	33 years
Time Present Position:	2 years
Previous Positions:	2

Summary of Interview:

In responding to the question "What is health?" he decisively and succinctly said that it was shalom – a sense of being right with God, others, including family and friends, and society.

In his discussion on things that had helped maintain health, he cited the importance of feeding on scripture regularly. This not only feeds him spiritually, but in his own words, "so I have a big vision. This sustains me when I get pre-occupied with local problems. They are insignificant when I see the grand revelation and plan of God in the scriptures." Also, he identified support networks as significant. He works as a team with his wife, and meets with a group of colleagues weekly. In sharing about this group he remarked, "It doesn't take us long to recognise that we are all facing a common set of problems, and so when some-one shares something, it's highly likely that a significant number of the group will identify with it." In further reflecting on support networks, he felt that deanery meetings need to move from agenda-based gatherings to a place where you can care and share with one another.

Time off is taken fairly regularly. All four weeks Annual Leave is taken in the year it is due. Days off are not taken weekly but are accrued and are often taken in blocks of two or three days. This is a pattern he has always followed since his ordination. It works well for him.

For recreation, he enjoys the garden and even mowing the lawn. And he walks about ½ hour each day.

Long standing depression and a recently diagnosed physical ailment have made it necessary for him to be vigilant about his health. He is acutely aware of the signs of ill-health and adjusts his lifestyle accordingly.

He identified conflict as the No 1 Stress in ministry. He didn't handle it well in the early years of ministry, partly because of excessive and destructive conflict in his family of origin

and not expecting it to be in the church. But he copes better with it now because he expects it, can be more objective, and can confront it when it is necessary. He needs to be careful not to resort to alcohol to relieve his stress, as this can lead to addiction. Also, there has been a vocational crisis some years ago from which he emerged stronger and more focussed on his call.

In reflecting on what brings him satisfaction in ministry, he enjoys the variety of tasks associated with it. He concluded insightfully, "So I see myself as an all-rounder ... it means I am not really good at any one thing...but that's the way the Spirit has equipped me, and that's okay." In contrast, the thing that he finds difficult in ministry is people leaving the fellowship. It is difficult for him to remain objective about it and not take it personally.

Commenting on the diocesan scene, he said with conviction, "There is a lot of pressure on the Anglican clergy of the diocese with the shrinking base. It's causing a great deal of discouragement and stress. Sociologically, it's a very difficult time to be an Anglican priest in the diocese of Melbourne."

**APPENDIX : 8.3   ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM INTERVIEWS
WHICH HELPED MAINTAIN HEALTH**

1. Maintenance of a spiritual life   (8)

2. Regular time off   (8)

3. Developing support networks   (8)

4. Finding satisfying foci - within or outside the parish   (8)

5. Physical care   (8)

6. Centrality of call   (7)

7. Dealing with conflict   (7)

8. Dealing with expectations (3)

9. Maintenance of marriage and family relationships   (3)

(Note: Numbers in brackets indicate number of interviewees who
mentioned that issue.)

APPENDIX : 8.4   COMPONENTS OF HEALTH CORRELATED WITH
FACTORS THAT MAINTAIN HEALTH

PHYSICAL *Physical Care and Recreation*	**MENTAL** *Professional Development*
PSYCHOLOGICAL/ EMOTIONAL *Emotional Care Authenticity*	**PSYCHO - SOCIAL** *Support Networks Family of Origin*
SPIRITUAL *Spiritual Life and Formation*	**ENVIRONMENTAL** *Relate positively and creatively to it*

APPENDIX : 8.5   MAINTAINING HEALTH

A QUESTIONNAIRE

1. HEALTH ASSESSMENT
Please score yourself on the following scale - where "10" represents maximum health and "0" represents extreme ill health.

A. A Significant Crisis Time: What you have been?

Physical Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Mental Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Emotional Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Social Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Spiritual Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Environmental
Integration   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Comment: _____

_____

_____

B. Present Level of Health: What are you now?

Physical Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Mental Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Emotional Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Social Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Spiritual Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Environmental Integration   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Comment: _____

_____

_____

C. Ideal Level of Health: What you would like to be.

Physical Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Mental Health 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Emotional Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Social Health 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Spiritual Health   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Environmental
Integration   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Comment: _____

_____

_____

2. REFLECTION ON HEALTH ASSESSMENT

2:1   How would you account for the differences between what you have been (A) and what you are now (B)?

2.2   How would you account for the differences between your present (B) and ideal (C) states of health?

3. Many factors can affect our ministerial effectiveness.   What personal and/or parochial or diocesan conditions were serious enough at the time of this crisis (A) to affect your health, and therefore adversely affect your ministry?

How did you adjust or overcome them?

If you considered leaving the ministry as a result, what motivated you to remain?

4. What EXPECTATIONS in ministry do you find difficult to deal with?   Why?

How do you typically handle expectations in ministry?

5. ANY FURTHER COMMENTS:

Name_____Phone_____

**APPENDIX : 8.6   RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRE
"MAINTAINING HEALTH"**

A. HEALTH ASSESSMENT:

The participants were asked to score themselves on a scale of 0-10 (0=extreme ill health; and 10=maximum health) on the various components of health and on specific times.

i) Crisis Time : What you have been!

	Range	Mean
Physical	3.5 - 8	5.93
Mental	3 - 9	5.37
Emotional	2.5 - 6	4.18
Social	3.5 - 7.5	5.12
Spiritual	4.5 - 8	6.18
Environmental	3 - 7.5	4.60

ii) Present Level : What you are now!

	Range	Mean
Physical	5 - 9	7.25
Mental	6 - 9	7.81
Emotional	5 - 9	7.50
Social	6 - 9	7.93
Spiritual	6 - 9.5	8.18
Environmental	7 - 9	7.70

iii) Ideal Level of Health : What you would like to be!

	Range	Mean
Physical	8 - 10	8.68
Mental	8 - 10	8.87
Emotional	7 - 10	8.75
Social	8 - 10	9.00
Spiritual	8 - 10	9.00
Environmental	8 - 10	8.83

B. REFLECTION ON HEALTH ASSESSMENT

i) Accounting for the difference between crisis and present state of health:

(1)   Renewed prayer life   (2)

(2)   More disciplined emotional life

(3)   Fuller understanding of self

(4)   Being able to name internal issues

(5)   Improving self esteem

(6)   Supportive congregation

(7)   Working in a team situation

(8)   Greater physical activity   (2)

(9)   Loss of weight

(10) Better medication

(11) Dealing with stress and tiredness of crisis

(12) Considerable work on ill health

(13) Renewed understanding of faith and self

(14) Dealing with some issues which caused anxiety and stress

(15) Medical advice

(16) God's grace

ii) Accounting for the difference between present and ideal state of health:

(1)   Being human and a sinner   (2)

(2)   Demanding job   (2)

(3)   Family pressures

(4)   Inner conflicts

(5)   Fallen world

(6)   Reflection on current role and its effect on health

(7)   Don't expect perfection this side of par?   (3)

(8)   Lack of physical exercise   (2)

(9)   Poor emotional self-management

(10) Need to keep working on health

(11) Not allow other people's value judgements to affect me

(12) Becoming more resilient

(13) Still growing and becoming healthier

Insightful comment by one participant: "I think it's important for ministry to have had experience of less than 100% health in order to have genuine compassion for others who are less than 100% - but there is nothing intrinsically worthy about remaining unhealthy."

C. **ISSUES - PERSONAL, PAROCHIAL AND DIOCESAN, WHICH AFFECTED HEALTH AND MINISTRY EFFECTIVENESS, and how overcame them.**

	Issues	Overcome/Adjusted
(1)	Criticism	Ignored
(2)	Long working hours	Cut back intentionally
(3)	Relational conflicts	Confront and negotiation
(4)	Little diocesan support	Sought support proactively
(5)	Ordination of women	Church ordained women
(6)	How I fitted into church	Theological reflection informing practise
(7)	Inner unresolved issues	Counsel and prayer
(8)	Difficult parish situation	Decision to move
(9)	Midlife crisis	Counselling

Motivation to Remain in Ministry

(1) Call   (5)

(2) Options limited

(3) Influence it is possible to have in church

(4) Not going to let go of something fought many years to gain

(5) People's encouragement

(6) Strong personal faith

All but one participant indicated that they had considered leaving while in the crisis.

D. EXPECTATIONS

In the interviews, the issue of expectations in ministry was only raised with a few of the participants. Considering this to be a crucial area, as part of a subsequent Questionnaire specific questions were asked about this. The responses were as follows:

i) What expectations in ministry do you find difficult to deal with?

1. Always being able.
2. Have all the answers.
3. Often being alone.
4. Growing a large church.
5. Pick up unspoken expectations of others.
6. Being a reconciler - if don't, it causes stress.
7. Effect of parental expectations which affect life and ministry.
8. That we should know someone is sick or in need without being told.
9. Conflicting expectations within congregations - how do we maintain unity and harmony?
10. To be able to make the Anglican Church as pervasive and powerful an institution it was in the 50's and early 60's.
11. To be one of the "boys" or "boys club".
12. Being constantly on call.
13. Multiplicity of role expectations, e.g., visionary, leader, entrepreneur, teacher, proactive pastor, etc.
14. Multiplicity of tasks, e.g., preaching, youth, counselling, etc.
15. The creative partnership of minister and lay leadership.
16. Meeting deadlines.
17. Modelling gospel living.

ii) How do you typically handle expectations in ministry?

1. Take time off / recreation   (3)

2. Reading more to gain knowledge.

3. Answering honestly, "I don't know."   Not feeling I have to defend God.

4. Maintaining a balance in life - work and time off.   (2)

5. Reflecting long and hard about what can be done rather than reacting quickly.

6. Give power to lay leadership to deal with issues.   Minister provides a consultative role.

7. Try to remain objective.   Not always easy to do, especially if issue surfaces unexpectedly.

8. Separate expectations from hopes and reality.

9. Do reality checks and tone down own expectations.

10. Naming limitations and stresses so that parishioners are aware of the situation.

11. Retaining clarity on vocation and direction from God.

12. Doing what is possible, and endeavouring not to let demands overwhelm.

13. Defining boundaries - what is possible and what is not.

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