

SELF-CARE

A SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Exercise

As spiritual leaders, all of us are at risk of crossing boundaries inappropriately, thereby violating our role and abusing those who are vulnerable. But this risk of doing harm to those we serve or supervise can be considerably reduced through self-knowledge and self-care. If we understand our personal history and its effects on us, our behavior and perceptions are less likely to be shaped by that history. If we are aware of our personal needs and are taking care of those needs in appropriate ways, we are less likely to impose those needs inappropriately upon our ministerial relationships. Furthermore, if we are aware of the power implicit in our role and how that power affects those we serve and supervise, we are less likely to misuse that power.

Use this checklist to assess your risk of violating boundaries. If you answer "no" to the first question in "Personal History" skip to the questions under "Psychosexual Integration." An answer of "no" to any question, except the first, indicates an area in which self-awareness and self-monitoring are crucial.

Personal History

- | | | |
|-----|----|--|
| Yes | No | Does my personal or family history include sexual abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, or other family dysfunction? |
| Yes | No | Am I coming to terms with the issues and feelings involved in my personal history? Am I able to identify areas in my history where I need healing? |
| Yes | No | Am I taking steps to address the areas where I need healing? |

Psychosexual Integration

- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | Have I discussed my sexual history with someone (a professional or a friend)? |
| Yes | No | Am I comfortable with my sexual orientation? |
| Yes | No | Do I monitor my sexual fantasies for inappropriate persons, such as children, clients, congregants, employees, etc.? |
| Yes | No | Are my personal friendships and intimate relationships appropriate—namely, age-appropriate and not involving anyone with whom I have a professional relationship? |
| Yes | No | Am I able to identify my emotional/sexual needs and meet them appropriately? |

SELF-CARE
SELF-CARE INVENTORY
Exercise

I take a real vacation each year.

I walk every day.

I have an interest/hobby that has nothing to do with my job.

I have a pet and I spend time with her /him.

I have regular prayer time each day.

I am active in an organization that has no connection to my job.

I have one close friend with whom I can talk honestly.

I spend time gardening.

I fast from electronic activity (email, facebook, etc.) at least one day a week.

I read at least one book a month for pleasure.

I play a musical instrument and practice regularly.

I take off at least 1.5 days per week.

I meet regularly with a spiritual director or therapist.

I meet regularly with a colleague with whom I can honestly share.

I exercise regularly.

I do not smoke.

I try to eat healthy, regular meals.

I listen to relaxing music regularly.

I try to get sufficient sleep.

I am careful how much alcohol I consume.

I get an annual physical.

For those with a partner:

I eat most evening meals with my partner/ family.

My partner and I get away for an overnight at least once every 6 months.

For those with children at home:

I attend most of my children's extra-curricular activities.

Once a month I do something special with my children.

What other self-care strategies do you use?

Read and Reflect:

"For the sake of others' welfare, do not neglect your own welfare. Understand your highest purpose and turn toward it. *Li*

(*Dhammapada*, The Self:10)

"The people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, making the Sabbath an enduring covenant for generations to come."

(*The Torah*, Exodus 31:16)

"The apostles gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves."¹¹

(Mark 6:30-32,NRSV)
