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Personal Growth Plan

What are your next steps as a follower of Christ?

CBOQ Pastors' Edition

This project was initiated in 2004 by CBOQ Youth because of a passion to serve God by serving our local churches and pastors. Originally created by Rev. Steve Brown, Director of Youth Discipleship and Mission, this second draft was modified and edited by Rev. Darren DeGraaf, Director of Leadership and Development in 2007.

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Why a Personal Growth Plan?

The apostle Paul admonished his young protégé Timothy to “...train yourself to be godly” (1 Timothy 4:7b). Paul used an athletic metaphor to demonstrate the important role that intentional personal development plays in the spiritual growth of a follower of Jesus Christ.

This metaphor is found in a number of Paul’s letters. In 1 Corinthians Paul, speaking about his own personal lifestyle says, *“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”* (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

To paraphrase these verses, Paul challenges himself, Timothy and all followers of Jesus to “take personal responsibility for intentionally and systematically investing in transformation toward Christlikeness.” Why? *“For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”* (1 Timothy 4:8)

The well-known author – Dallas Willard, in his book “The Great Omission” says this about discipleship, *“Disciples of Jesus are people who do not just profess certain views as their own but apply their growing understanding of life in the Kingdom of the Heavens to every aspect of their life on earth.”*

A holistic Personal growth plan is essential for the intentional and systematic growth of a disciple of Jesus. The word of God intersects with every aspect of our lives – not just our “spiritual lives”. A comprehensive Personal Growth Plan speaks widely into our spirituality, our families, our finances, our educational development, our ministries, our health, etc.

This is not meant to advocate self-reliant works but rather it is a partnership over time between the active Holy Spirit and the dependent but responsible and active follower of Christ. Paul in Philippians 2:12b, 13 writes, *“continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”* God, through the power of the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives transforming us. But we participate as partners in the process, God working in and through us, as we work out our salvation. Just in case we didn’t catch the importance of this process – Paul adds, “with fear and trembling”.

Intentional Personal Development is something that must be taken seriously.

Leading Disciples

Not only is a Personal Growth Plan essential for the ministry leader’s own development. It is also a critical step towards the creation of a plan for those we lead. If I am not intentional in my own life – it is not likely that I have thought intentionally about others.

Ministry leadership is about equipping God’s people for works of service (Eph. 4:12). Once a ministry leader has developed an intentional plan for their own growth, the next step is to develop a plan towards the intentional growth of all those that they lead.

Healthy leadership necessitates this order. While it is an often used metaphor, it is instructive to consider the words of a flight attendant prior to take off, “in the event of an emergency, oxygen masks will drop from the ceiling. Please securely place your mask over your mouth and nose before

attending to children or others in need.” Why such selfishness? It is really quite obvious. It is impossible to help or support others if I don’t have oxygen. Similarly, it is essential for the health of ministry leaders that they first develop an intentional plan for their own growth, and then work to help others establish one for their lives.

In the North American church this is a paramount need. Many years ago, the well-respected Indian revolutionary Gandhi is quoted: *"I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."* —Mahatma Gandhi

Unfortunately, many adult followers of Christ struggle with combining personal responsibility, intentionality and action in becoming more like Christ. In his book, Growing True Disciples, researcher George Barna notes that:

- 3 of 5 Christian adults claim to have a deep commitment to the Christian faith, but they are not involved in any intentional effort to grow spiritually.
- Only 4 of 10 church members responded that they had set personal spiritual goals for themselves.
- Only 2 of 10 believers who are serious about their spiritual development have defined rather specific goals.
- those with specific goals often “...have no idea how they will go about making those goals a reality.”

In a word, the fruit flowing from these statistics is “FRUSTRATION” – frustration with self, church and God for lack of growth. However, without any intentional effort, goals or a plan for growth, these outcomes of frustration should not be surprising.

In response, church leaders must lead the way and provide a contagious example in personal growth. In *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, author Stephen Covey argues that effective people must fight the ‘tyranny of the urgent’ and make intentional effort to ‘sharpen the saw’ or grow personally.

Building a Personal Growth Plan

If you've ever joined a fitness club you likely would have been offered the opportunity to be coached in the development of a very intentional personal strategy to accomplish specific goals in physical fitness. Ironically, many of the same principles apply to the development of a holistic personal fitness plan. The four steps are:

1. Identify a Focus
2. Set Goals
3. Plan and Resource
4. Evaluate and modify

In the gym, the fitness trainer will walk with you showing you the different machines, stations and resources available to accomplish physical fitness. However, through the intentional process of identifying a focus, setting achievable goals, planning a realistic strategy and then regularly evaluating your progress, many machines, weights and resources are not utilized. Similarly, in this Handbook, we will recommend many different areas of focus and growth. It is your job, through prayerful deliberation to put in place a manageable plan that has realistic goals, and healthy benchmarks for evaluation.

Warning: Without focus or the hard work of “editing your plan” – you will develop something that lacks focus, direction or sustainability. A Personal Growth Plan requires all four steps towards successful implementation. Like physical training – sometimes a coach, an instructor or a friend is the most valuable tool that you can utilize towards success. Don't do this in isolation. Include your spouse, friends, mentor, and potentially even a spiritual director or coach who can help get you started on the right pathway!

Blessings on your journey! You will be amazed at how such a simple tool in your life can lead to radical transformation, through the power of prayerful consistency and intentional focus on growth as a follower of Jesus. As you are transformed as a leader, it is our prayer that your congregation, or those you serve in other contexts are also transformed!

Building your Plan: Step One

Identify A Focus

The first solo visit to a fitness club can be overwhelming. There are dozens of machines to build muscles, machines for cardiovascular training, pilates, spin classes, jazzercise, etc.

Often there are two different outcomes to this first visit. The first approach is to simply become overwhelmed, and run out of the building screaming. This approach seldom leads to success in physical training. The second approach is to simply jump in. Utilizing random weight lifting machines until exhausted, or pushing buttons on the cardiovascular machine until you start pedalling, or moving. This approach may produce some results, but rather than seeing effective development and intentional progress, the solo trainee often wastes important time, utilizes the wrong approach, or even hurt themselves through over-exertion, or improper usage. Frustration and demotivation often follow.

A third approach which is advocated by trainers and specialists, is to not start alone, but rather to utilize resources and a trainer to build a plan, starting with a focus.

The coach or trainer will ask you specific questions: What goals would you like to accomplish at the gym? Do you want to see increased stamina and mental agility? Are you wanting to lose weight? Are you interested in building muscle mass? Do you want greater strength? What is the purpose of your strength training? (i.e. Improved golf game, or success in another sport) All of these questions and many more are asked by the wise trainer.

While asking these focus questions, the trainer or consultant also does a present reality check. If you have never worked out before, have a prior injury, or other health risks these must all be taken into consideration.

This same approach is helpful in the development of a personal growth plan. As a Christian we may desire many good and noble approaches to spiritual or personal growth. We may dream of becoming Olympic in our spiritual disciplines, or like Billy Graham in our evangelistic endeavours. However, if we simply jump in, we can quickly become overwhelmed, focus on the wrong areas or grow frustrated, which often leads to resignation toward any kind of systematic approach or plan.

There are many areas in every life that require attention. As you sit with your journal in hand it is helpful for you to begin to consider important areas for growth in your life. This first brainstorming session will begin to develop a variety of options. Of all the possible areas for growth at this point in your life – where will you focus?

NOTE: The following brainstorming exercise has a worksheet that you may choose to follow as you work through the following pages. It can be found as Appendix A

Brainstorming: (Go to Appendix A for the worksheet)

- A. Pray. Ask God for insight. Ask him what area(s) in your life he would see as priority growth areas.

During your prayer time, begin with Psalm 139:

“You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways...Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

Listen to God and hear from Him. Then focus your time of prayer through questions such as the ones below:

- What three changes in my life would be most pleasing to God?
- Does God’s word affirm these as priority areas for my life?
- What are my motivations for focusing on these areas of my life? (present your motivations before God, and ask him to bring purity).
- What single change in me would transform my:
 - Marriage
 - Family
 - Character
 - Ministry effectiveness
- What obstacles are presently in my life that are keeping me from pleasing God?
- What opportunities are presently available to me to bring Glory to God?

NOTE from experience: Sometimes we can fixate so much on an area of sin in our lives that we can’t see other areas that are in the shadow of that sin. It seems that sometimes the enemy’s greatest strategy is to have us fixate on a specific sin, to the exclusion of other areas of positive growth, kingdom impact or relational intimacy.

Certainly include a plan to deal with ongoing sinfulness. Ask God to give you wisdom, courage and self-discipline as you seek healing, freedom and growth in that area of your life. However, sometimes in our zeal to remove things, we forget that it is just as important to add things. The best way to remove an unhealthy habit, relationship, action, might be to focus on additions to our lives—healthy habits, relationships or actions. Don’t grow so focused on the negative that you ignore God’s present work in your life—that is a scheme of the enemy!

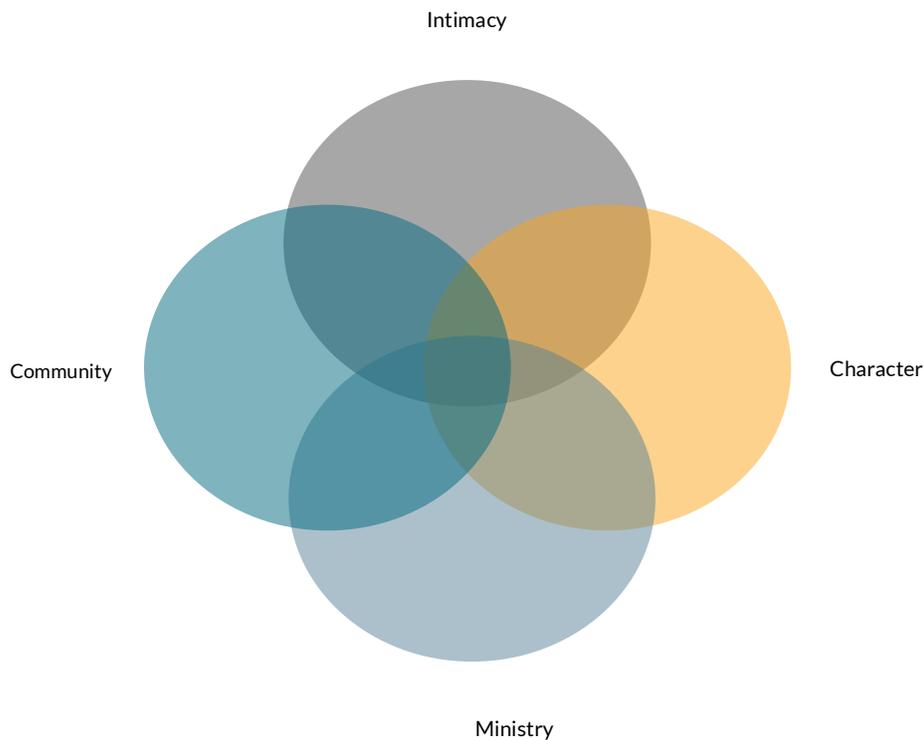
Seek Feedback. Ask respected key influencers in your life (spouse, church leaders, accountability partner, a mentor or supervisor, friends, colleagues, etc.) for their input on priority growth areas in your life. (This is sometimes called “360° Feedback”).

Ask similar questions of these people depending on your level of intimacy or relationship (not all questions are prudent to ask of all people)

- What three changes do you think would make the biggest difference in my life?
- Are there blindspots in my life that hold me back from effectiveness?
- Where do you see strength in me that I should develop?
- What single change in me do you think would transform my:
 - Marriage
 - Family
 - Character
 - Ministry effectiveness
- What do you see as my spiritual gifts, and key contributions to the kingdom of God?

B. Review the Roles and Realities in Your Life – Every person has been given multiple roles and realities in life. The following four steps will help you review, prioritize and plan growth in your life roles.

1. List your roles in life (i.e. child of God, servant of God, husband/wife, parent, son/daughter, friend, volunteer, employee, ambassador for Christ, etc.).
 2. Consider a holistic approach to your life. Review the five key elements of your personhood:
 - i. Spiritual development – devotions, spiritual maturity, study of word, etc.
 - ii. Physical development – your health, sexuality, fitness, etc.
 - iii. Mental development – educational opportunities, intellectual stimuli, etc.
 - iv. Emotional development – counselling, assessment tools, intimacy, etc.
 - v. Social development – friendships, hobbies, clubs, etc.
 3. Be aware of the stage of life that you are presently in, and how that affects your focus: Here is a very generalized “stage of life” chart in terms of priorities and general focus points:
 - i. Teens and early 20’s – character development and education
 - ii. 20’s and 30’s – skill acquisition, marriage, children
 - iii. 30’s and 40’s – skill mastery, career dev’t, impact
 - iv. 40’s and 50’s – equipping, aging parents, teen children, focus on what is best versus what is good.
 - v. 50’s and 60’s – Leadership development, mentoring, legacy,
 4. Assess your present personal Capacity. Consider a variety of capacity questions: i.e. health capacity (handicap, illness, injury) , mental capacity (mental health, academic ability, intellectual breadth) , emotional capacity, spiritual maturity, etc.
 5. Give each role and reality a priority grading based on two criteria: importance, urgency (1 – 3, with one being a high priority, two a medium priority and a three meaning someday)
 6. Outline your desire for each role, or life reality. Develop your focus beginning with the roles with highest priority and greatest deficit. (i.e if you rated your relationship with a child as a high priority, but know it requires significant focus and energy – this becomes a key focus area)
- C. Conduct a “Jesus focused” review of your dreams and goals – Now that you have done extensive brainstorming and a wide evaluation of your present roles and realities, it is now time to bring your focus under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Based on a study of Jesus’ life, there are four key components to the Christian life.



As you read the descriptions below, which component would be most strategic for your own growth focus?

Intimacy – Jesus repeatedly demonstrated his need for and dependence on a deep, vibrant and dependent personal love relationship with his Father. Specifically, this area of ‘being’ a son or daughter of God includes connecting with God in heart and mind through spiritual disciplines. Although this component is the well-spring for Christian life and ministry, it is often neglected in favour of ‘doing’ ministry.

Character – Jesus was tempted in every way, but by God’s strength Jesus chose and lived a life of complete obedience. In a culture where moral failures are anticipated, Christian leaders need to live transparent and authentic lives where integrity of actions, thoughts and words are lifelong.

Community – Jesus chose to live, love, serve and suffer in the context of community. Unfortunately, Christian leaders often feel disconnected from true community. Relationships with family, friends, church and world are included here.

Ministry – As a servant leader, Jesus boldly challenged, loved and led others in their quest toward a relationship with God. He called disciples to count the cost and radically follow him. He invested his life in training and developing others who would continue the mission in their own unique ways. He finished well and left the world a different place. Accordingly, each of his followers has been given gift(s), talents and experiences to be used in ministry.

- Have you identified your spiritual gifts?
- Does your ministry flow from clear vision and values?

- What one area of ministry development would most help your ministry now? In five years?

We have also identified some suggested core ministry skill areas:

- Leading Others (Cultivating and Equipping Volunteers, Casting Vision, etc.)
- Pastoral Care
- Administration
- Communication (Speaking, Writing, etc.)
- Relational Skills with Key Partners (Church leaders, Lay Leaders, Peers in Ministry, Community Leaders, etc.)

D. Create or Renew Your Personal Mission Statement. Do you have a personal mission statement? Answer some of the following questions in a personal mission statement:

- What is God’s calling on my life?
- How has God confirmed that calling?
- Do others affirm that calling?
- Is my calling being sharpened or redirected over time? How?
- What is my unique contribution to the kingdom, and how will I endeavour to fulfill that contribution with intentionality?

Special Note:

If you haven’t developed a personal mission statement, this may be a great place to begin (see Appendix F).

- E. Assess your need for Continued Education or input – Is there a degree or formal education program that would exponentially grow the depth, breadth or impact of your ministry?
- F. Boil it all down. Can you take some time to develop a ONE WORD FOCUS for your next year? It might be “radical devotion”, “health”, “education”, “freedom” “impact”, “family-first” or something far more unique and personal to you.

Building your Plan: Step Two

Setting Goals

With your focus coming into greater clarity, it is now time to set goals to assist your growth. Your goals should meet the following criteria:

Specific – You need a clear, compelling and specific target. If you desire to grow in intimacy with God, your goal should be more like, “I want to grow in the inward spiritual disciplines of meditation, prayer, fasting and study” than the vaguer, “I want to grow in the spiritual disciplines.”

Measurable – You need to be able to measure or evaluate progress toward your goal. For instance, the goal, “I want to learn, grow and practice one spiritual discipline each month this year” can be evaluated each month. A non-measurable goal is “to increase my healthy eating habits”. By changing this to “eat 3 servings of vegetables, and 2 pieces of fruit a day” moves it from obscure to tangible.

Achievable – Your goals need to be challenging but achievable. Too many people set unachievable goals or set too many goals and grow in frustration rather than progress. Take an inventory of your priorities, the time you have available to commit to this growth process and start with fewer goals and smaller goals. This will help add motivation and momentum over the long-term.

i.e.: If you desire to grow in intimacy with God, committing to learn about and practice one spiritual discipline each month (except your busiest ministry/life month) may be an achievement that brings motivation and momentum not frustration and despair. Remember that sustainability requires incremental small steps over time – for example, memorizing one Scripture verse per month from age 16 leads to 120 memorized verses by age 26! Many people decide to jump into the deep end – setting a goal of a 30 minute devotional time when previously they didn’t spend any time. Set the goal incrementally (“5 minutes a week for the next month, and then growing by 5 minutes each month until I reach 30 minutes”.)

Realistic – Are you both able and willing to accomplish this goal. Is it a goal that you can achieve? (i.e. World peace sounds great in a beauty contest, but can Miss Iowa achieve that goal?).

Timely– A good goal is time based. (i.e. In the next three months, or by the end of June).

Special Note: It’s often best to plan that achieving your growth goals will take you twice as long as you first imagine. So, plan to achieve half as much in your estimated time or set aside twice as much time. This approach will help you see achievements rather than be discouraged.

Coaching Questions in goal setting:

Large Sized Questions:

What am I motivated to focus on right now? Is this the best and most important use of my time and energy?

The 60% Rule – Is there an area of focus in my life that would radically improve my life if I as to give it 60% of my personal growth focus?

How much challenge can I personally add to my plate? (assess level of present stress, focus, boredom, lifestage reality – i.e. A newborn baby)

Is there an area of my life that I can simply not afford to ignore at present? (i.e. debt, addictions, conflicted relationship, vocational uncertainty, unemployment, health or illness)

Medium Sized Questions:

On a scale of 1-10 where am I presently on this behavioural goal? Where do I desire to be.
-Address areas where you are: stalled, declining.
-Celebrate areas where you are increasing or at a presently acceptable level.

What personal or external resources do I presently have available to address this goal?
(i.e. finances, education, energy, network, risk tolerance, etc.)

What additional resources are necessary for me to move to the next step?

Specific Sized Questions:

What goals offer the greatest leverage to my existing strengths?

Are there vocational, character or relational blind spots that I have chose to ignore that are limiting my freedom, success or focus?

Am I presently experiencing a healthy work/life balance? What steps could I implement immediately to remedy or improve a negative balance.

What experiences would I benefit from the most in terms of my personal development and growth (specifically in areas of character, competency or relationships).

Building Your Plan: Step Three

Plan and Resource

Written Plan - To achieve your goals you will need to develop a written plan. The plan will ensure you remember your goals, enable others to encourage you and allow you to evaluate progress. Take your journal notes, and all of your present work on focus and goals, and begin to categorize, pair down, and illustrate.

See Appendix B and C to review some sample written plans and plan templates.

Time Commitment – Stephen Covey’s book, First Things First reinforces the need to make our highest priorities reality by setting aside necessary time and maintaining this priority. What time commitment does your plan require? What time commitment is reasonable? Set this time aside now in your day timer and guard this time by scheduling around it.

NOTE: A helpful lesson from Carson Pue, CEO of Arrow Leadership Ministries: Sometimes important goals or high priorities need to be set aside because of emergencies or urgent demands. Don’t remove these important goals or high priorities from your calendar – reschedule them. For instance: You may need to cancel a date night with your spouse because of a family emergency, or something urgent that arose at work. Don’t cancel that date night, but immediately reschedule it on your calendar – even if it means replacing something already scheduled but less important. Similarly, if your devotions, or prayer times always seem to be squeezed out by other things – schedule them in, prioritize them, and then if necessary reschedule, but don’t delete.

Resources – As you plan to achieve your goals, you will need to assemble a toolbox of resources. Your creativity is your only limitation. Your preferred learning style (i.e. visual (read), auditory (hear), experiential (do), etc.) should also be your guide. Which ideas from the following list could be a component of your own plan?

Books	Magazines
Periodicals	Internet
Tapes/CD	Conference or Seminar
Arrow Training Program (see Appendix D)	Marriage Encounter Retreat
Invest Time in a Key Relationship	Spiritual Director (see Appendix D)
Mentor or Mentors (see Appendix G)	Sabbath Retreat (see Appendix D)
Volunteer Role	Counselling (see Appendix I)
Road Trip to Visit a Key Ministry or Ministry Leader	
Lunch or Coffee with an Expert – Bring Your Questions	

CBOQ staff may be able to provide additional ideas and connection points to resources.

Support – Everyone needs prayer, encouragement, support and accountability. Who could you recruit to fill these roles for your growth plan? Involving your spouse, church leadership and/or ministry team to some degree during this process may be a wise idea to establish a support base as well as for you to model intentional growth.

Building your Plan: Step Four

Evaluate and Modify

As specified in your plan, take the time to evaluate your progress at regular intervals. Modify your plan as needed and set another evaluation date. Celebrate your progress!

FOR CBOQ PASTORS:

Register Your Commitment to Personal Growth

CBOQ would like to encourage you in your commitment to personal growth. So, if you register your commitment to personal growth (see Appendix E), you will receive the following:

- \$25 gift certificate to assist you in purchasing personal growth resources at the Read On Bookstore

As you review the registration card in Appendix D, you will note that the focus and details of your plan are not disclosed – this is your plan and your private business. CBOQ only asks that you share your plan with a peer/friend for accountability purposes. The registration card simply helps CBOQ support you on your growth journey.

Step by Step Recap

The discipline of developing a personal growth plan involves the following:

Step 1 – Identify A Focus

- Utilize the Brainstorming Worksheet (See Appendix A)
- Pray, Seek Feedback,
- Review the Roles in Your Life
- Create a Personal Mission Statement (See Appendix F)
- Look at areas of Intimacy, Character, Community and Ministry

Step 2 – Set Goals

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable – start with fewer goals and give more time than you anticipate
- Realistic
- Timely

Step 3 – Plan and Resource

- Written Plan (see Appendix B and C for samples and templates)
- Time Commitment
- Resources (see Appendix D for Starter’s List)

Step 4 - Evaluate and Modify

- Regular Intervals of Evaluation
- Modify for Future

Special Note: CBOQ Pastors: Register Your Personal Growth Plan
Receive Support From CBOQ (see Appendix E)

Appendix A – Brainstorming Worksheet

A. Pray

Psalm 139:

“You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways... Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

Listen to God and hear from Him. Then focus your time of prayer through questions such as the ones below:

What three changes in my life would be most pleasing to God?

Does God’s word affirm these as priority areas for your life?

What are my motivations for focusing on these areas of my life? (present your motivations before God, and ask him to bring purity).

What single change in me would transform my:

- Marriage

- Family

- Character

- Ministry effectiveness

What obstacles are presently in my life that are keeping me from pleasing God?

What opportunities are presently available to me to bring Glory to God?

Appendix A Cont'd:

B. Seek Feedback.

Ask respected key influencers in your life (spouse, church leaders, accountability partner, a mentor or supervisor, friends, colleagues, etc.) for their input on priority growth areas in your life. (This is sometimes called “360° Feedback”).

What three changes do you think would make the biggest difference in my life?

Are there blindspots in my life that hold me back from effectiveness?

Where do you see strength in me that I should develop?

What single change in me do you think would transform my:

- Marriage
- Family
- Character
- Ministry effectiveness

What do you see as my spiritual gifts, and key contributions to the kingdom of God?

Appendix A Cont'd:

C. Review the Roles and Realities in Your Life

1. List your roles in life (i.e. child of God, servant of God, husband/wife, parent, son/daughter, friend, volunteer, employee, ambassador for Christ, etc.).

2. Review the five key elements of personhood:

- Spiritual development – devotions, spiritual maturity, study of word, etc.
- Physical development – your health, sexuality, fitness, etc.
- Mental development – educational opportunities, intellectual stimuli, etc.
- Emotional development – counselling, assessment tools, intimacy, etc.
- Social development – friendships, hobbies, clubs, etc.

3. Assess Stage of Life: What stage of life am I in and how does that impact my capacity or my focus?

Stage of Life:

Impact:

Focus:

Appendix A Cont'd

4. Assess Present Personal Capacity: How much capacity do I presently have, and how does that impact my goals and next steps?

- Health Capacity
- Mental Capacity
- Emotional Capacity
- Spiritual Maturity

ACTION STEP 1: Now go back and give each of the above roles or realities a priority grading in terms of two criteria - urgency and importance. (1 – 3, with one being a high priority, two a medium priority and a three meaning not urgent, not important).

Ie: if you have under health “my weight is increasing my likelihood of illness, and causes me to be less energetic than I could be” – you might grade that as follows: Urgency – 1, importance - 1

ACTION STEP 2: outline your desire for each role, or life reality. Develop your focus beginning with the roles with highest priority and greatest deficit. (ie if you rated your relationship with a child as both an urgent and important start with that role and develop a goal – or desirable future reality)

5. Conduct a Jesus-focused review of your dreams and goals

- Intimacy
- Character
- Community
- Ministry

6. Answer the following questions:

- What are my spiritual gifts?
- Does my ministry flow from clear vision and values?
- What one area of ministry development would most help my ministry now? In five years?
- Do I have areas of ministry development that require focus or attention?

Appendix A Cont'd

D. Create or Renew Your Personal Mission Statement. (See Appendix E for more detail)

Do you have a personal mission statement? (if Yes, what is it?)

Answer some of the following questions in a personal mission statement:

- What is God's calling on my life?

- How has God confirmed that calling?

- Do others affirm that calling?

- Is my calling being sharpened or redirected over time? How?

- What is my unique contribution to the kingdom, and how will I endeavour to fulfill that contribution with intentionality?

E. Assess your need for Continued Education or Input

Is there a degree or formal education program that would exponentially grow the depth, breadth or impact of your ministry?

F. Focus:

What one word could you assign to the work you have done today in brainstorming that would sum up this next year?

(i.e. "radical devotion", "health", "education", "freedom" "impact", "family-first," etc.)

Appendix B – Sample #1 – PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

Note: This is designed to be a 2-year plan

Family Development

- Take my spouse on a cruise
- Necessary sacrifices for spouse professional development.
- Make my day off fun for and with the family.
- Establish a Family recreation activity



Tip #1 Starting with your mission statement helps keep your focus and flow

Personal Development

- Strong fitness routine that focuses on muscle and cardiovascular development with 3 times per week schedule.
- Take anger management course with my mentor.
- Get help from mentor with development and practise of gentleness.
- Map out my exploration of my fear of illness and need to control it. (Fear inventory)
- Begin guitar lessons and learning.
- Say 'no' more

Educational Development

- Work towards a Masters degree.
- Read 1 book a month. (include Sacred Romance and Journey of Desire)
- Investigate and develop my prophetic gift.

Ministry Development

- Limit my work week to 2 nights a week on a consistent basis (40 weeks a year).
- Develop effective work schedule that reflects my responsibilities/gifts/skills.
- Focus on the development of leaders by identifying 4 leaders and invested 3 hours per week in them.
- Take "Solitude Retreats" two times a year focussed on personal reflection.
- Limit extra speaking engagements to four times a year. (i.e. camps, conferences)
- Create a quarterly peer cluster mentor group within my own city.

Support

(Ideas: Small Group, Ministry Team, Prayer/ Accountability Partner, Mentor, Counsellor, etc.)

- Mentor re: Anger management/patience
- Peer Accountability for remainder – bi-weekly

Evaluation/Celebration

(When will you evaluate your progress and plan?)

- Monthly review of progress, modify plan at 6 month intervals for 2 yrs

Appendix B – Sample #2– PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

Goals & Objectives : 16 month plan

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

G1) Re-establish Spiritual Disciplines

- Re-read 'Celebration of the Disciplines'
- One time meeting with spiritual director
- Listen to entire NIV audio Bible (driving)
- Solo worship time @ piano weekly
- Journal weekly

G2) Commitment to Integrity & Accountability

- Establish bi-monthly connection with an older mentor
- Maintain monthly, open communication with peer mentor

G3) Learn from Christian History

- Read 'The Normal Christian Life' & George Muller biography

G4) Transition Bibles

- Transfer all notes from NIV Study to Life Application Bible

FAMILY

G1) Remain available and supportive to Spouse

- Complete reading 'The Power of a Praying Husband'
- Four days at camp for our 10th anniversary
- Release spouse for four '48 hour' getaways
- Take off one day each week for rest and family
- Re-establish bi-weekly date night
- Increase frequency of prayer times & laughing together!

G2) Remain available to Three Children

- Ski trip with children (Winter)
- Pray daily for (and with) each child
- Take children into school in morning whenever possible
- Bi-weekly 'lay-down night' with each child
- Help with homework whenever possible
- Monthly date with each child individually

G3) Remain available to Key Mentees

- Email, MSN or phone at least twice weekly
- Host and/or special occasions bi-monthly

G4) Stabilize Family Finances post-move

1. Develop detailed family budget (Fall)
2. Meet twice with advisor re long-term planning
3. Look into home based income for spouse

G5) Maintain Communication with Parents & Siblings

FRIENDS

G1) Develop Friendships with Neighbours

- Host D&H, N&J for backyard BBQ
- Coach kid's team (summer)
- Plan 2 summer outings with all the kids & parents

G2) Increase Investment in Key Relationships

- Pursue more time with 2 mentors – A and B
- Remain available to past 'mentees'

HOME

G1) Finish Transition

- Unpack and organize garage, crawl space, tools & office

G2) Continue with General Projects

- Paint foyer, LR/DR and all 4 bedrooms
- Replace windows in remaining 2 bedrooms
- Build and stain 2 loft beds

VOCATIONAL GOALS

Prayer

G1) Grow Prayer Support Team

- Develop new prayer card by August
- Invite 500 members to join monthly email update
- Recruit 3 'daily warriors' for my personal protection
- Pray DAILY for 2 members of my support team

Continuing Education

G1) Receive Credentialing

- Complete assignments and meeting (April)

G2) Establish Education Plan to commence by Sept

- Follow-up re DMin status
- Look into DMin opportunity
- Look into auditing college business courses

Time Management

G1) Balance Stewardship of Time vs Gifts/Abilities

- Maximum 5 couples for pre-marriage counseling
- Be strategic re ministry involvement at church
- Transfer and organize all files onto one computer system
- Establish wireless network for home office

Specific Ministry Goals...

Appendix B – SAMPLE #3: PERSONAL GROWTH PLAN

My Personal Focus is: Intimacy with God

Pre-Evaluation: Before working this plan, how would you describe your current status in this growth area?

Intimacy with God is hard for me. It's easier to serve him out of love for the cause or duty than to receive God's love or to serve out of true loving devotion. My devotions have been replaced by study – two different things. My prayer has become a long list rather than time in the presence of my king.

My Personal Growth Plan is to:

- ❑ Have a weekly Sabbath – time of reflection, journaling and creative worship times
- ❑ Have a monthly Prayer Afternoon or Morning – focused on drawing close to God (extended Sabbath time)
- ❑ Go on a One Day Spiritual Retreat twice per year
- ❑ Start reading: Richard Foster, Celebration of Disciplines and Prayer
- ❑ Memorize Psalm 23 over the next 2 months

Support:

I will share this growth focus and plan with my spouse and small group – asking them for prayer and accountability.

Evaluation/Celebration:

This is an on-going growth focus, but I will evaluate my progress monthly for 3 months.



Tip #2 - Be sure to add in support and accountability components for your plan

Appendix C – Template #1 – Personal Growth Plan

Date: _____

Personal Mission Statement:

Family Development

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Development (Spiritual, Physical, Relational, etc.)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Educational Development

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Ministry Development (Specific Ministry Goals)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Support (Ideas: Small Group, Ministry Team, Prayer/ Accountability Partner, Mentor, Counsellor, etc.)

- _____
- _____

Evaluation/Celebration (When will you evaluate your progress and plan?)

Appendix C – Template #2 - Personal Growth Plan

My Personal Growth Focus is... _____

Pre-Evaluation: Before working this plan, how would you describe your current status in this growth area?

My Personal Growth Plan is...

- _____
- _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

Support: (Ideas: Small Group, Ministry Team, Prayer/ Accountability Partner, Mentor, Counsellor, etc.)

- _____
- _____
- _____

Evaluation/Celebration:
(What time frame before your first self-evaluation?)

- _____

Appendix D – Starter’s Guide to Resources

Please Note: The following list of resources is not by any means exhaustive. Please feel free to suggest resources that have been helpful to you and we will update future resource lists. In addition, the following resources do not necessarily represent the views of CBOQ – as always, discretion is advised.

Intimacy With God

Prayer, Richard Foster – Discover many different kinds of prayers with practical ways to pray. ISBN - 0060728833

Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, Jim Cymbala – An inspiring read with examples of how God responded to the passionate and faithful prayers of his people at Brooklyn Tabernacle. You’ll be praying more by the end of this book! ISBN - 0310251532

Celebration of the Disciplines, Richard Foster - Outlines the inward, outward and corporate spiritual disciplines. Workbook also available. ISBN - 0060628391

Spirit of the Disciplines, Dallas Willard – Reveals key to self-transformation is in practice of spiritual disciplines and how their practice affirms human life to the fullest. ISBN - 0060694424

The practice of the presence of GOD, Brother Lawrence – Do devotions feel like doing the dishes? You know you should do them and you often do them but it’s often like a chore before you really start your day? This very short book of letters is written by a monk from 300 years ago. Deals with cultivating a ‘chapel’ in your heart where you have true day-long devotion in the presence of God. ISBN – 156563148X

Love Beyond Reason John Ortberg - Moving God’s love from your head to your heart. ISBN - 0310234492

The Life You’ve Always Wanted, John Ortberg – Modern perspectives on the ancient path of the spiritual disciplines. ISBN - 0310226996

Sacred Pathways, Gary Thomas - Discovering your unique connection path to God. ISBN - 0310230926

Too Busy Not to Pray, Bill Hybels – How to slow down, listen to God, practice the presence of God, overcome prayer barriers and respond to what we hear from God. ISBN – 08308189711

The Jesus I Never Knew, Philip Yancey - Getting closer to God through a closer look, or re-look - at Jesus. ISBN - 031021923

Listening for the Soul, Jean Stairs - Through this challenging vision of "soulful pastoral care", the reader is helped to look deeply into his/her own soul. ISBN - 0800632397

A Guide to Prayer, Reuben P. Job & Norman Shawchuck (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1983) ISBN - 0835809994

The Inner Compass - modern 'Ignatius' "Spiritual Exercises"

The Reflective Life, Ken Gire. ISBN - 1564767264

Personal Retreat Centers – Seek out a personal retreat centre in your area. Two options in the Guelph/Southwestern Ontario area are: 1. 'The Hermitage' at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Center near Guelph for day or longer personal retreats at very reasonable rates. Contact Crieff at 1-800-884-1525 or. And 2. Loyola House in Guelph has directed spiritual retreats and has accommodations for personal retreats through out the year. Contact Loyola House at www.loyolahouse.ca

Spiritual Direction – Seek out a spiritual director. Loyola House in Guelph may be able to refer you to trained spiritual directors in your area. www.loyolahouse.ca

Character

Ordering Your Private World, Gordon MacDonald – Our public self may be showing happiness and self-control, but our private self may be growing 'out of control.' Great book to help you prevent serious problems in your character and life. ISBN - 0785263810

Eros Defiled, John White – With understanding and compassion, White speaks to issues like premarital sex, extramarital sex, masturbation, homosexuality, etc. Offering a biblical perspective, hope and how community can provide love and forgiveness. ISBN - 0877847819

Eros Redeemed, John White – Deals with breaking the stranglehold of sexual sin. Looks at root issues, deals with forgiveness, steps to healing and change. ISBN - 0830816976

Boundaries, Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend – Ever feel 'out of control' of life? Are you unable to say 'yes' and 'no' freely – obligation or guilt is often attached? This book will help you develop healthy boundaries to take control of your life. ISBN – 0762421029

Why You Do What You Do, Bobb Biehl – Answers to your most puzzling emotional mysteries. ISBN - 0840791542

The Quest for Character, Charles Swindoll. ISBN – 0310420512

True Faced, Bill Thrall et al – The necessity of living a life of authenticity. ISBN – 1576834468

Who You Are When Nobody's Looking, Bill Hybels. ISBN - 0877849455

See also Appendix F – Employee Assistance Plan

Community - Family Life

The Five Love Languages, Gary Chapman – We need to relate to others the way they best understand. Chapman identifies five unique ways that people understand love – helping us to love people in their specific love language. Good for marriage relationships. ISBN - 1881273156

How To Be A Hero To Your Kids, Josh McDowell – Practice these principles for parenting and you will develop a strong foundation for your child and your relationship with them. These principles are transferable to all relationships too. Written by a faithful and committed Dad. ISBN - 0849938260

Raising Great Kids, Dr. Henry Cloud – A comprehensive guide to parenting with the balance of grace and truth. Shares practical guidelines for parenting objectives for all ages. ISBN - 0310225698

See also Appendix F – Employee Assistance Plan

Life Management – Mission Statements (see also Appendix D)

Masterplanning, Bobb Biehl – A step-by-step guide for building a strategic plan for your church, organization or business. ISBN - 0805460969

First Things First, Stephen Covey – Keys to finding balance, control, purpose and even more productive time. ISBN - 0684802031

Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey. ISBN - 0671708636

Ordering Your Private World, Gordon MacDonald – Chapters 6-7 – How to recapture your time. ISBN - 0785263810

Ministry Direction

The Call, Os Guinness – A big picture approach – looking at God's call by Him, to Him and for Him. ISBN – 0849912911

LifeKeys – Discovering Who You Are, Why You're Here and What You Do Best, Jane A.G. Kise, David Stark and Sandra Krebs Hirsh – A comprehensive guide to

discovering your talents, spiritual gifts, passions, values and personality. ISBN - 1556618719

Knowing God's Will, M. Blaine Smith – A more detailed and practical focus to recognize God's guidance in your life...with practical and biblical answers. ISBN – 083081308X

Experiencing God, Henry T. Blackaby and Claude V. King – A popular workbook designed to help you discover how to know and do the will of God. ISBN - 0805461396

Ministry Leadership

The Wounded Healer, Henri Nouwen – A very short but very deep classic book. Always ahead of his time, Nouwen shares with leaders how to effectively minister in our culture. ISBN - 0385148038

In The Name of Jesus, Henri Nouwen – Again, very short but very deep book. Easier to read. Outlines 3 common pitfalls in ministry and the Christian life and reminds us to love people. ISBN - 0824512596

Spiritual Leadership, Oswald Sanders – Looks at a biblical definition of leadership and provides practical and biblical advice for developing as a spiritual leader. Each chapter stands alone – you can pick-up and read it anytime. ISBN - 0802467997

Transforming Leadership, Leighton Ford – A book on the leader of leaders – Jesus. A harder read with lots of biblical support – but, you will see Jesus as a leader above all others by the time you finish. ISBN - 0830816526

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Steven Covey – Not written from a Christian perspective, but much wisdom for people desiring to take leadership of their own lives and desiring to succeed in relationships. ISBN - 0671708636

The Making of A Leader, Robert Clinton – Ever wonder how leaders develop? Clinton proposes a theory of leadership develop that will help you understand the building blocks of leadership, where you are and how to grow and help others grow too. ISBN - 0891091920

Developing the Leader Within You, John Maxwell. ISBN - 0785266666

Developing the Leaders Around You, John Maxwell. ISBN – 0785261508

Visioneering, Andy Stanley – Based on principles from Nehemiah, this book outlines how to connect with God's vision for what can and should be. ISBN – 157673787X

Good To Great, Jim Collins – Researched principles comparing good to great companies. ISBN – 0066620996

Unstoppable Force, Erwin McManus. ISBN - 0764423061

See also McMaster Divinity College – www.mcmaster.ca/divinity

See also Arrow Leadership Ministries – Assisting young leaders (25-40) with leadership development through shaping values, sharpening skills and sharing ventures. www.arrowleadership.org Note: Arrow can contribute to Masters studies and has a D.Min. option.

See also Appendix E – Credentialing With CBOQ

The Big Small Church Book, David Ray - Along with careful analysis of the small church reality, the author offers many practical suggestions for leadership in small churches. ISBN - 0829809368

The Once and Future Church, Loren Mead - Reinventing the congregation for a new mission frontier. ISBN - 1566990505

Transforming Congregations for the Future, Loren Mead - Re-building the church from the ground up. ISBN - 1566991269

Leading With Soul, Lee Bolman & Terrence Deal (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995). ISBN – 0787955477

Appendix E – Register Your Commitment to Personal Growth

CBOQ would like to encourage you in your commitment to personal growth. So, if you register your commitment to personal growth, you will receive the following:

- \$25 gift certificate to assist you in purchasing personal growth resources at the Read-On Bookstore.

Note that the focus and details of your plan are not disclosed – this is your plan and your private business. CBOQ only asks that you share your written plan with one peer/friend for accountability purposes. The registration card simply helps CBOQ support you on your growth journey.

Choose from 2 ways to register:

1. Fill out this form and fax it to: Personal Growth Plan c/o CBOQ
416-622-2308
2. Fill out this form and mail to: Personal Growth Plan c/o CBOQ
5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, ON, M9W 6H3
3. Email this information to sdycck@baptist.ca.

Yes, I have established a written personal growth plan!

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Date: _____

Yes, I have shared my written plan with a peer/friend.

Peer/Friend Name: _____

Appendix F - Sample Mission Statements

The following personal mission statements can serve as creative examples to help you on the journey of developing your own personal mission statement.

Example 1:

By His strength, I desire to be a child of God,
remaining faithful and available to Him.
I desire to live life most abundantly, lovingly preparing myself, my family
and my communities for eternity.

Example 2:

I will live of life characterized by intimacy, integrity and impact.

I will purposely and creatively sustain an intimate walk with my Lord Jesus Christ.
I will trust Him, and seek to live a life in submission to His guidance and direction.
I will also live a life of intimacy with my family, and friends, sharing deeply, and living all of
life together.

I will live a life of integrity, where my faith and actions are synchronized, and expect to grow
more like Jesus through the seasons of my life. Integrity also means being honest about my
spiritual journey and sharing deeply and honestly with those closest to me.

I will live a life of impact, helping others to become mature apprentices of Jesus Christ.
I will faithfully use my spiritual gifts of apostleship, leadership and exhortation to serve God.
I will be a faithful leader for the church, focusing on the development of Christian leaders
for service across Christ's kingdom.

I desire to be a passionate leader, assisting people to become passionate about impacting
their world. I desire to create, develop and facilitate kingdom movements that help God's
people to move with love into the lives of those who don't know Jesus.

Example 3: Ministry Context

To strategically develop healthy, radical, contagious and lifelong followers of Christ who will
profoundly impact the Church and their communities.

....more on next page:

Appendix F - Sample Mission Statements Cont'd

Example 4:

I choose to *Celebrate* God with my Life... I belong to him and I will learn to dance with the life he has given me. I am grateful for the purpose, meaning and direction he gives to me.

I choose to *Walk* with Grace & Truth... I will forever boast of my personal bankruptcy before God and cling to Christ alone in mind, body and spirit. I commit myself to cultivating an ancient-future faith.

I choose to *Delight* in my family... As God's Gift to me I will seek to create value in each of you. I am proud of who you are and what you are becoming. (Spouse), I will support your dreams with everything I am and everything I have. (Child 1, 2 and 3), I will protect, encourage, challenge, guide, and when the right time comes, release you.

Appendix G - Developing A Mentoring Relationship

There are a number of excellent resources on developing a mentoring relationship. One key resource is Connecting by Paul Stanley and Robert Clinton (Nav Press). The following tips of finding a mentor or being a mentor may be of assistance:

1. Identify Your Specific Needs - How you are trying to grow should significantly influence who you select for your mentor. For example, if you are seeking to grow in intimacy with God, then a mentor experienced with spiritual direction would be ideal. Or, if you are seeking to grow as a communicator, you should seek a mentor who can coach you as a communicator.

If your identified needs are diverse, you may need to develop multiple mentoring relationships. Otherwise, you may be expecting your mentor to develop you in areas that are too diverse for them or any one person. Note: You probably will not find one person who is an expert or sage on everything. Also, your mentor does not necessarily need to be older spiritually or chronologically. Appropriate boundaries should be in place if your mentor is of the opposite sex.

Conversely, you should only agree to mentor someone in an identified area that is within your experience, abilities or expertise.

Stanley and Clinton identify a number of different types of mentoring. Which from the following list best represents your current need?

Discipleship - Basics of following Christ

Coaching – Motivation and skills needed to meet a task or challenge

Spiritual Guide - Accountability, direction and insights for commitments and decisions affecting spirituality and maturity

Counsellor - Timely advice and correction perspective on viewing self, others, circumstances and ministry

Teacher - Knowledge and understanding of a particular subject
(i.e. studying a certain topic or book)

Sponsor - Ministry guidance and protection within an organization
(i.e. helping someone get established in a ministry position or using their gifts)

2. Pray and Look - With the type of mentoring in mind, start praying and looking for and asking about people who may be able in this mentoring area.
3. Relational Connection – With someone in mind, begin to establish a relational connection by spending some time together – i.e. coffee, etc. For mentoring to work, there needs to be a relational connection on both sides.

4. Share Your Specific Need – Share why you desire a mentor and why you believe this person would do well.
5. Discuss Expectations - Frankly discuss one another’s expectations about mentoring – i.e. how often you would get together, what getting together would look like (i.e. lunch), level of intensity (i.e. homework), duration of mentoring, etc.

NOTE #1: Depending on the type of mentoring, you may not need to get together frequently– maybe just once a month or once per quarter. If you are looking for relationships and community, try a small group or peer cluster.

NOTE #2: The mentoree should expect to take initiative in the mentoring relationship (i.e. calling to confirm meetings, updating mentor on progress, etc.).

6. Agree or Not – If you have different expectations or the mentor cannot commit, it is better to not get started. But, if agreeable to both, establish a regular meeting time and place, agree on a learning plan and agree on an evaluation or ending date. (Don’t leave it open-ended.)

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another”
Proverbs 20:17*

Appendix H - Credentials with CBOQ

With your local church, the Canadian Baptists of Ontario & Quebec have a credentialing process that allows you to

- Obtain official recognition of your calling and gifts for ministry and your connection with a well-established family of churches
- Receive the recognition that you have met the normal set of criteria established for effective ministry
- Gain the affirmation that you are suitably equipped to be invited to a ministry that matches your level and category of credentials
- Be supported by CBOQ during your studies
- Be ordained or commissioned in ministry
- Join the benefits program of CBOQ

Process

The credentials process involves a number of partners – your pastor, your local CBOQ church, the Association Ministry Committee and the CBOQ’s Credentials Committee.

To begin this process, you need to be a member of a CBOQ church, talk with your pastor and obtain a pastor’s and church leader’s reference. Then, your church can recognize you with a Certificate of Recognition. You would then meet with the Association Ministry Committee in your area and arrange an appointment with the Credentials Committee. The goal of this process is to help develop a plan for your growth, recognition, affirmation and support in ministry.

The entire process is outlined in detail in the **Accreditation Manual** found on the CBOQ website: www.baptist.ca.

Appendix I - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Note: Churches subscribing to the benefits package provided through CBOQ have access to EAP.

The “Contact” Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is an employee benefit paid for by your employer. EAPs are intended to help employees deal with work-related and personal problems that may impact their health, well-being and work performance. EAPs are voluntary, confidential short term counselling and referral services. Your Contact program services are provided by Shepell.fgi, one of the largest EAP firms in Canada.

As a member of Contact, you and your eligible family members have access to qualified professionals who provide counselling and a variety of resources to support you when dealing with personal, family, or work-related concerns and conflict. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at no- cost to you. Counselling is available by telephone, in-person, online, and text based self-help. Although not exhaustive, the list below describes the services offered by your EAP:

Family Support Services – professional support and resources to help solve family and personal life issues including finding a childcare service, help with aging parents etc.

Financial Support Services – advice from financial experts: budgeting and cash management, debt management, planning for retirement etc.

Legal Support Services –confidential consultation providing information and clarification concerning how the law applies to a specific situation: landlord and tenant, will and estates, civil litigation, criminal law matters etc. Shepell.fgi will also provide referrals if needed.

Physical Health Support – advice from health care and nutrition experts: weight management, health coaching programs, help with how to navigate health system in Canada etc.

On line Services - stress management program, online games to relieve stress, online smoking cessation program, video conference and chat room counselling with an EAP counsellor.

For more information or to access confidential EAP support call:

- 1 800 387 4765 for service in English,
- 1 800 361 5676 for service in French,
- Or visit www.workhealthlife.com.