Flourishing In Ministry

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- Stress
- Exhaustion
- Family Strain
- Burnout
- Depression
Daily wellbeing accumulates
Everyday Happiness  Resilience

Self-Integrity  Thriving

Connections to others
Connection to meaning
Connection to transcendence

Spiritual Vitality
**Wesleyan Clergy Thriving**

- Overall Thriving is in a good range - an area of strength!
- Thriving is the highest of the four dimensions.
  - Beliefs and Meaning in Life were highest sub-dimensions
    - Female pastors have a deeper sense of meaning in life and ministry, and faith gives more meaning to life
- Finding meaning in work
- Social support
- Connection to God
The Stages of Ministry:
Relationships Every Pastor Needs to Flourish

Ministry Self-Care

- **Front Stage**: Does your congregation support you as a *person*?
  - Boundaries: Understand ‘Confidants’ versus ‘Allies’
  - Model appropriate vulnerability and transparency

- **Backstage**: Who shares your backstage?
  - Pastoral Staff
  - Denominational Leaders
  - Mentor
  - Community of Practice: Clergy Peers

- **Off Stage**: Are you able to relate deeply in truly reciprocal, intimate relationships, outside of your pastoral role?
  - Make Your Family a Priority
  - Personal Friendships outside of your ministry context
Flourishing in Ministry

- Pastoral Identity: The key to long-term clergy well-being
  - Pastors with strong, stable, and positive identities do well over the long term
  - Pastors with weak, variable, or negative identities are more susceptible to low levels of well-being
  - Initial Enactment (early years) sets the trajectory
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<td>Identity clarity &amp; strength</td>
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<td>Authentic engagement</td>
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**Capabilities**

**Characteristics**

**Convictions**
Clergy Role Complexity

- Key dimensions of Pastoral Ministry
  - Preaching/Worship
  - Sacraments
  - Fellowship
  - Caregiving
  - Teaching/Spiritual Formation
  - Leadership
  - Management
  - Communication/Evangelism
  - Denominational Service
  - Self-Development
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**Wesleyan Clergy Self-Integrity**

- Overall Self-Integrity is an area of strength!
  - Growth at work, experiencing work as a calling, authenticity at work, and goodness of fit are all in a good range
  - Female pastors in the sample feel a stronger sense of authenticity in their work (women are able to separate their identity from their job more easily than men)

- Area for special focus:
  - Self-concept clarity and core self-evaluations are lower than the optimal range
  - Bi-vocational and part-time pastors
Ministry Self-Care

- Cultivate Self-Acceptance
- Job Crafting
  - Clarify your role around your strengths and context at least 60% of the time
  - End your workday with at least 15 minutes of something that brings you joy, really matters to your ministry context, and that you excel at doing
  - Expect the unexpected - leave margin in your week
- Build a team around you with complementary strengths
- Develop Financial Literacy

Everyday Happiness  Resilience

Self-Integrity  Thriving
Self-integrity
Everyday happiness
Thriving
Resilience
Subjective wellbeing
Physical health
Stress
Emotional dynamics
Calm, peaceful, cheerful, amused, interested, grateful, engaged, excited, enthusiastic, awed, joyful, inspired,…
Unhappiness: boredom, apathy, frustration, irritation, sadness, anger, grief, anxiety, pain, fear, ...

Everyday Happiness
Sustained positivity
Resilience
Thriving
WHAT IS STRESS?

- Being stretched beyond your limits
- Extending yourself without adequate time for recovery
- The body is designed for “Camel travel”
- Over arousal of your adrenal system
- Accelerated dying!

Four effects of chronic stress:

- Increase in pain (reduced endorphins)
- Increased anxiety (reduced natural tranquilizers)
- Increased risk for illness (reduced immune system)
- Increased fatigue and depression (reduced adrenaline resources)
Clergy Physical health

A group of risk factors that raise your risk for heart disease and other health problems, such as diabetes, kidney disease, and stroke.

Clergy Health Risk: Metabolic Syndrome

A large abdominal circumference + 2 of the risk factors below:

- High blood pressure
- A high triglyceride level
- A low HDL (“good”) cholesterol
- High fasting blood sugar

What qualifies you for Metabolic Syndrome?

Clergy Mental health

Coping with Depression in the Ministry

- Normalize depression in ministry, for yourself and others
- Gender Differences:
  - Women tend to “feel” their depression, men “act out” their depression.
  - Male depression is less sadness and more irritability and aggression or addiction...better diagnosed from its behaviors.
- **Treatment**: Best approach is holistic: chronic medical issues, psychotherapy, medication, and lifestyle changes
Clergy Stress: Physiological Overarousal

- Chronic interpersonal stress
- Chronic time stress
  - Long work week with unpredictable schedule
  - Frequent Crisis Response
- Eustress: Leading worship/preaching
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Neglect of self-care
  - Underdeveloped theology of the body
  - Caring for the needs of others (codependency)

Wesleyan Clergy Everyday Happiness

- Overall Everyday Happiness is low-moderate
  - General Happiness, Work Engagement, and Work Satisfaction in good range
  - Female pastors in the sample have higher job satisfaction (but feel more overwhelmed)

- Areas for Special Focus
  - Life Satisfaction
  - Work Experiences
    - 27% of entire sample reported a lot of ministry-related stress
    - Work/Life Dynamics (role demands, lack of family time, etc.)
Wesleyan Clergy Everyday Happiness

- Areas for Special Focus
  - Physical Health difficulties
    - 21% of entire sample reported none or very little satisfaction with their health
    - 27% of sample reported none or very little satisfaction with physical energy level
  - Financial Strain/Worry (lowest rated sub-dimension in entire survey)
    - 30% of entire sample often worry about finances
    - 20% feel they cannot financially provide for their families
    - 66% cannot make it financially on ministry income alone

Ministry Self-Care

- Cultivate Sabbath
  - Contemplative Spiritual Disciplines
  - Detachment
    - Develop a “niche” activity
- Take Care of Your Body
  - Eat, Rest, Exercise
- Embrace Your Limits
  - Boundaries - time management
  - Manage Your Adrenaline
Self-Integrity

Everyday Happiness

Resilience

Thriving
Resilience

Factors that hinder a positive pastoral identity include:

- Complaints from parishioners
- Negative challenges from lay members
- Churches that demand the pastor conform to their expectations
- Isolation

Pastoral Identity
Everyday Experience
Thriving

Resilience
Self-Integrity
Capacity to adapt & grow

Burnout
• Physical, emotional and mental exhaustion
• Reduced adaptability and competency
• Despondency or cynicism

Self-regulating capacities
Experience

Resilience
Self-Integrity
Thriving
Wesleyan Clergy Resilience

- Overall Resilience level is low
- Resilience is the lowest of the four key dimensions
  - Resilience sub-scale, Emotional Regulation, and Proactivity are in good range
    - Female pastors in the sample have a stronger sense of self-efficacy than male pastors

- Areas of concern
  - Pastors going through life/career transitions
  - Burnout
    - 39% of entire survey often feels emotionally exhausted by ministry work (typical result for clergy groups)
Wesleyan Clergy Resilience

- Work Control: Doubting ability to influence and make things happen in ministry leadership
  - 26% of sample reported doubting their own competence
  - 25% of sample reported not feeling in control of their own career

- Religious Coping
  - 52% of sample attempts to ‘make sense of the situation and decide what to do without relying on God’ at least some of the time
  - Female pastors give greater importance to spiritual disciplines

- Self-Control (healthy habits)
  - 34% of sample reported having difficulty breaking bad habits
  - 65% of sample reported wishing for more self-discipline
Ministry Self-Care

- **Self-Awareness:** Learn to identify your emotions
  - Practice Christian Meditation
  - Use a list of secondary and primary emotions

- **Self-Reflection:** Learn to identify the sources of your primary emotions
  - Ask yourself some key reflection questions
  - Revisit your family of origin
  - Acknowledge hidden losses
  - Take time to process your feelings through practices such as Journaling or Christian Mindfulness

- **Self-Control:** Learn to develop emotional competencies
  - Anger Management Skills
  - Conflict Resolution Skills
  - Assertiveness Training

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**Everyday Happiness**  
**Resilience**

**Self-Integrity**  
**Thriving**

**Flourishing**
Flourishing in Ministry: 
Online Feedback Tool Instructions

- Click on or cut/paste this link into your browser: https://flourishinginministry.com
- Click on ‘Join Our Study’
- Fill in your email address, password of your choice, and the referral code: WESLEYAN
- Click ‘SignUp’
- You will receive a confirmation email.
- Follow the instructions in the email and complete the feedback tool in approximately 20-30 minutes.
- You will automatically and immediately be able to view your personalized feedback report upon completion.