

The Healthy Minister

1. The minister is a spiritual person. His or her relationship to God forms the foundation for ministerial effectiveness.
 - a. The healthy minister maintains a daily quiet time with God for prayer, personal reflection and spiritual nurture. He or she pursues spiritual growth.
 - b. The healthy minister cultivates spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, Sabbath and worship). He or she may set aside special times for focus on God.
 - c. Spiritual vitality includes intellectual growth. The healthy minister provides time and funds for ongoing interdisciplinary reading and continuing education.
 - d. The healthy minister assumes responsibility for “keeping watch over yourselves” (Acts 20:28) and takes a proactive approach to issues that compromise integrity. When needed, the minister will seek pastoral support and/or professional care to address personal concerns.
 - e. The presbytery, session, and congregation will look for all opportunities to prayerfully provide healing for ministers and their families when spiritual and emotional struggles happen.
2. The minister is a physical person. The minister’s stewardship of his or her body is important for effective service.
 - a. The healthy minister maintains a good relationship with medical providers and gets medical care to address physical problems. He or she follows recommendations from medical providers while looking to God as the source of healing.
 - b. The healthy minister accepts responsibility to manage his or her physical and mental health, using a healthy diet, frequent exercise, and social supports.
 - c. The healthy minister communicates with his or her presbytery and session whenever a medical condition may interfere with his or her ability to carry out his calling.
 - d. The healthy church provides time and finances for the minister to care for physical needs.
 - e. The healthy minister allows time for rest, vacations, hobbies and recreation in order to maintain a balanced lifestyle and avoid protracted stress.
 - f. The healthy minister and congregation are willing to allow for an extended period of rest from ministerial responsibilities (Sabbatical) in order to cultivate longevity and vitality in pastoral leadership.
3. The minister is a social person. The minister’s relationships are essential for his or her effectiveness.
 - a. The minister’s relationship to his or her family is a very high priority and, if married, the healthy minister seeks always to maintain a satisfying and mutually rewarding relationship with his or her spouse.
 - b. The effective congregation implements boundaries that ensure that a minister has time with his or her family.
 - c. The healthy minister has positive and trusting relationships with fellow ministers, community members, friends, and church members.

- d. The healthy minister is proactive in cultivating social networks and is usually involved in a peer support group.
4. Every minister is a unique person with individual physical, psychological, cultural and social characteristics.
- a. The healthy minister understands and embraces his or her personality traits and cultural identity and performs ministry with an awareness and acceptance of self.
 - b. The healthy minister maintains openness and authenticity about his or her strengths, weaknesses, gifts and talents.
 - c. The healthy minister maintains a distinction between ministry and identity so that he or she is able to receive feedback without undue distress or pride.
 - d. The healthy minister is mindful of his or her thoughts and emotions and is able to express them effectively and appropriately.
 - e. The healthy minister manages stress and conflicts without becoming overwhelmed or defensive.
 - f. The healthy minister enjoys ministry but find his or her personal identity, not in the work or role of the minister, but in an enduring relationship with Jesus Christ.
5. A minister has a calling to a particular vocation and location. The minister's understanding of his or her roles and duties is critical to effectiveness and fulfillment in executing his or her mission.
- a. The healthy minister has a "job description" that clarifies his or her duties and responsibilities in ministry. The description provides the basis for congregational expectations and offers a foundation for establishing goals and periodic evaluations.
 - b. The healthy minister is aware of the cultural characteristics of his or her church and community. He or she "serves within" and "speaks to" the culture of his or her ministry.
 - c. The healthy minister understands his or her leadership style and communicates this with the Session with a view toward operational harmony.
 - d. The healthy minister has an effective relationship with the Session of the church. Through honest and caring communication conflicts are addressed in a timely fashion (Matthew 18"15-17).
 - e. The healthy minister will manage time effectively and avoid overextension. The healthy church and Session realize that he or she works "with" and nor "for" the church.
 - f. The healthy minister initiates a relationship with his or her presbytery. He or she is open and willing to receive spiritual support, encouragement and oversight.
 - g. The healthy minister should minister without chronic financial stress. The compensation of a minister should be adequate and reflect community "norms" and job duties. The healthy minister lives within his or her means and communicates with the church and the presbytery when unexpected needs arise.