

CM-239 Ministry and Self-Care

Wesley Theological Seminary | Summer Term 1, 2016

Dates: M-F, June 27-July 8, 2016 (no class on July 4), 6PM-9:30 PM

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Course Description

How do we balance the demands of ministry with personal well-being, wholeness and spiritual balance? This course explores elements of restorative self-care through reflection and practice in congregational or non-parish ministry settings with four directional themes: awareness, empowerment, relinquishment and paradox.

Required Reading

ISBN-13	Title	Author
978-0802871039	<i>Bearing the Unbearable</i>	Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger
978-1881266143	<i>Self Care</i>	Ray Anderson
978-1566997133	<i>A Center in the Cyclone</i>	Bruce Epperly
978-1893729117	<i>Clergy Table Talk</i>	Kent Ira Groff

Pre-Course Assignments

Much of the reading and writing will be done by the end of our first week together. When we actually meet face-to-face, we will be prepared for some quality conversation and experiential learning as we develop self-care practices.

Reading

Please read the following portions before attending our first class:

Self Care: A Theology of Personal Empowerment & Spiritual Healing by Ray Anderson,
Read pp. 13-53; 121-143.

Clergy Table Talk: Eavesdropping on Ministry Issues in the 21st Century by Kent Groff
Read the entire book.

A Center in the Cyclone: Twenty-first Century Self-Care by Bruce Epperly.
Read pp. 1-50.

As you study the assigned readings, log in to BlackBoard and complete the online reading journal:

1. Write and post at least three, 1-2 paragraph reflections in response to two different questions.
2. Write and post a minimum of three, 1-2 paragraph responses to two other students' reflections. You may, of course, respond to more.

Some of these online conversation threads will become the basis for class discussions. Your participation in both online and classroom discussions will be part of the participation portion of your grade.

This assignment must be completed no later than 11:59 PM, June 25, 2016

Theological Reflection on Self-Care

This assignment must be posted to Blackboard no later than 11:59 PM, June 25, 2016

Jackson Carroll once proposed a view of clergy as “reflective practitioners” who have expertise as meaning definers, as community builders and as managers of the interface between the church and its social context. Using course texts as a guide, write a reflective essay that describes how you understand and make meaning of self care from three different theological poles or angles: History & Tradition, Personal Experience, and Cultural Resources

As you reflect on the interaction of these poles, here are some questions and suggestions to guide your thinking:

1. History and Tradition: What is your theology of well-being? What sources inform your theology (e.g. scripture, creeds, historical writings, theological traditions, religious teachings and/or media)?
2. Cultural Resources: How do racial/ethnic background, socioeconomic and educational levels, gender, cultural practices and norms, geography, and multi-generational expectations influence how you view well-being? In what ways are your views shaped by

dominant culture or multi-cultural contexts? In what ways did your extended family system shape your experience with self-care and well-being?

3. Personal Experience: Identify times and places where you have a prevailing response or a patterned reaction to stress, trauma, and demands. What, if any, self-care practices have you used in response? Where and how might those strategies have been learned? Do you notice that you have one particular self-care practice across the board, or do you have different responses for different roles you play in life? Describe how those roles vary. Are you satisfied with your self-care responses? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Write your reflections in a 7-10 page essay (1750-2500 words). Be prepared to present your learning* to your colleagues in class. ***This assignment must be posted to Blackboard no later than 11:59 PM, June 25, 2016***

*Please note: Because your personal history may be tender, difficult or confidential, students will be focusing on the *learning* from our personal reflections, not the *content* itself. Your submissions will be kept confidential by the instructor. You may choose to share pieces of your personal history with colleagues at your own discretion.

Please Note:

Students are responsible for meeting course deadlines. If you experience technical problems with Blackboard, please exercise one or all of the following options:

- Blackboard Support at blackboardsupport@wesleyseminary.edu
- By phone at (202) 885-6091
- Blackboard/E Support Ticket at <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/MyWesley/eSupport.aspx>