

International Community Development:
Mentoring Emerging Ministers in a Cross-Cultural World

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I. Introduction

A. Background

Serving in ministry is not easy. Adding a cross-cultural component adds to the strain on the minister. Being isolated and away from one's normal support network can stress a person to their breaking point. In researching the practices and principles in delivering international member care, the stories of many leaders, and emerging leaders, revealed they were not fully prepared when they initially entered the ministry. They had gone through the required training. They had raised their support. They had the enthusiasm. But, there was something each one of them had to face. Like skimming dross from silver, they had to refine their calling within themselves to prove they had what it took to be a cross-cultural minister.

One woman worked as a summer intern at orphanages in Malawi and Uganda. She was seriously considering returning to Africa once she completed her teaching certificate back home. She had been invited to return to the orphanages to teach and run intern programs. It was her dream job and ministry. However, in Malawi, she experienced a bacterial infection and was bit by a dog with rabies, and while in Uganda, got ringworm. Her schedule was upended and her plans came to a screeching halt. She was alone, unconnected to her host teams, experiencing continued setbacks, recovering from sickness, and isolated from her home support network. She became homesick, and eventually, she returned home. Another man worked in northern Africa. He contracted malaria several times. In each of his bouts, his family was with him through his recovery. His immediate support network helped him find his resolve and continue in his mission. What was the difference? Was one person's resolve stronger than the other? Did the second person have more perseverance than first?

A compelling desire drives one to try something bigger than they are and past the fear for the unknown. How does one find out if they can face their fear and succeed? How does one get ready to step into the unknown? Is it as simple as getting prepared, doing the home-work, or reading the manual? What if there was someone who had gone before you? Could they offer some guidance, help, and insight? What if someone were to offer to walk beside you, not leading you by telling you what you should do, but instead asking what you see, what you know, and what look like good options to you?

B. Proposal

This paper is a proposal for a tool to use in mentoring relationships. The tool is a loose structured document that guides a discussion between an emerging minister and a peer, or mentor. The guide offers opportunities for introspection to self-health, growth of intentional support relationships, and influence of self-health in others. The guide will flow like the physical process of maturity: a child grows into adulthood and eventually parenthood. The emerging leader will learn as a child does, apply knowledge as does an adult, and eventually, teach, or reproduce, as a parent. Just as parenthood is universal around the world and unique to each family, the person who ministers is everywhere around the globe but still unique in their local community.

A guide like this can help prepare ministers for the challenges in cross-cultural environments, pressures against personal character traits, and prevent severe symptoms of burnout and depression. The proposed guide is focused on the leadership development process at a church located in Mumbai, India. The church has many good processes in place, has a good pool of emerging leaders, and has a good number of connections into the international workforce. However, they do not have a written process or sustainable program in place to

continue the development of their leadership team. The proposed guide will include the topics observed in their processes to offer a replicable structure while encouraging the personal creativity of each leader in development.

C. Forming a Vision

During the fieldwork for this paper the primary questions revolved around the frustrations the research partners experienced in accomplishing their work, especially early in their development. The research partners included pastors, international aid workers, cross-cultural caregivers, and expatriates. As diverse as they were, common themes emerged: maintaining self-health, initiating supportive relationships, and leading others. In self-health, the topics of identity, acceptance, Sabbath, emotional health, and addictions were prevalent. Relationships and the characteristics of healthy support seemed to be linked quite often. Leading others was a natural progression in the expression of accomplishing ministry, especially building team and developing the skills of others.

The overwhelming message pointed to the minister's character; being consistent with their identity, relating to others to accomplish their mission, and leading others in doing that work. J. Robert Clinton expresses similar concepts:

Ministry flows from being – Throughout a leader's life, God works to deepen character as well as to develop ministry skills... This development does not focus on testing to enter ministry, but on the relationship with God... The qualities of love, compassion, empathy, discernment, and others are deepened... This deepening of character and of the leader's relationship with God overflows into ministry itself. (154-155)

As the research progressed, the terms began to overlap and intermingle. For clarity, here is a short glossary of terms used in this paper:

Minister – the person performing aid work, serving others, or the caregiver (pastor, missionary, etc.).

Ministry – the act of performing aid work, serving, or giving care.

Leader – a minister who influences others to do ministry.

Member care – giving care to the members of a ministry team.

Well-being – “the state of overall contentment with one’s physical/mental health, self-esteem, sense of belonging, personal and economic security, and with one’s opportunities for self-determination, meaningful occupation, maintenance of valued roles, and ability to contribute to others” (Hammell 108).

II. Identifying the Need

Ministry is often expressed as doing something for someone else. Rarely is the development of the being, or character, of the minister addressed. Most training guides are prepared to train a person into a role, to accomplish a set of tasks, or to perform procedures. These are all actions the person will be doing. When a person enters ministry, they are taught what to do by someone who does the role and their performance is measured by the response of others. They are trained to *do* ministry, not necessarily how to *be* a minister.

In a 2014 article, C.A. Camp, and team, states the “[as] awareness of diverse needs of missionaries has increased, a call for tremendous improvement in member care has prompted mission-sending agencies to take more responsibility for the physical and psychological needs of their missionaries over the last 20 years” (Camp et al. 361). Even as the sending organizations recognize the need to improve their efforts to support those who are sent, there is a need for the missionary and minister to improve their self-care efforts.

Providing care is a broad subject, but lessons can be learned from other care industries. For example, from the medical field, Chiara Catania, Vittorina Zagonel, and their team offer:

As physicians, we learn that caring for oneself is reinforced by the care we are able to provide to others. It is through caring that one discovers his or her own unique worth. The circle we propose of care-relationship-communication-more care represents a form of exponential growth. It reveals the unique opportunities of our profession: It states that good medical care originated in and is fed by good personal care. (82)

Again, a call for healthy character in the caregiver is necessary to provide care in a healthy manner. The minister must be healthy to give good ministry. The missionary must be healthy to perform their mission.

Another example comes from the childcare industry, where ethnic differences in burnout, coping, and intervention were the focus. This study states:

As providers become more stressed, they often lose idealism for the workplace and sympathy for the care recipients... The professional suffering from burnout also becomes less effective in coping with the overpowering emotional stress of the job, feeling helpless and inadequate... Perceptions of competence and recognition of one's achievements in the workplace decline. (Evans et al. 350)

This study provides insight to the stressors and reactions to care givers. The study introduced the following tools to measure the effects of burnout, coping behaviors, and intervention methods:

- Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), to measure the burnout areas of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.
- Coping Orientations to Problems Experienced (COPE), to measure coping behaviors in stressful situations.

- Intervention Acceptability Questionnaire, listing stress management interventions (Evans et al. 355).

In general, stress increases with low compensation, lack of clarity in function or purpose, poor communication, and lower self-esteem. Stress is multiplied with ethnic, status/class, and gender discrimination that may be prevalent in cross cultural work. In the ethnic and childcare study, the results indicated African American participants expressed higher levels of depersonalization, marginally higher levels of emotional exhaustion, and were more willing to try stress management interventions than the Caucasian American participants (Evans et al. 359).

One more study showed a tie between burnout and work-family interface within working mothers. This study suggested sole mothers have a greater risk of socio-economic disadvantages than mothers with partners. The limited research available shows employed mothers have a greater risk of burnout compared to employed men or women who are not mothers (Robinson et al. 32-33). The idea of this study indicates that sole mothers are more at risk because they have less support and resources than partnered parents. The study concludes “High conflict levels were associated with high-burnout levels in mothers, and high-enrichment levels were associated with low-burnout levels. Therefore, adopting strategies to facilitate enrichment may be a worthwhile approach to managing burnout in organizations” (Robinson et al. 42).

Creating a list of coping skills might be advantageous for some. One literature review produced an article that asked 10,441 Swedish citizens between the age of 20-64 the open-ended question, “what kind of self-care strategies do you use to improve or maintain your psychological well-being?” (Hansson et al. 134). The responses of 871 participants were considered valid to establish the findings: physical activity (running, cycling, and walking), physical health (food, sleep, etc.), engaging pleasurable activities, relaxation, and planning and

setting limits were the top five replies (Hansson et al. 134-135). What if a similar model was used to establish goals and accountability for leaders? What if leaders were asked open-ended questions to find their preferable methods of stress management and coping, then were asked about their progress by an objective peer or mentor?

Summarizing the findings from these studies, caregiving is important, stress in the caregiver is normal, ethnic differences increase the stressors, and enrichments, support, and mitigations can reduce the caregiver's stress levels. If not addressed, stress can cause problems in the person who gives care to others, which leads to a lower quality of care provided. Stress has the potential of damaging the character of a cross cultural caregiver. Finding inappropriate coping mechanisms can short circuit the minister's ability to deal effectively with the strain of giving care.

III. Exploring the Need

Research partners also provided some insight into the need of a support network. One young woman, who assists the rescue of human trafficking in Mumbai, India, suggested her family and upbringing contributed to her sense of individual support. She would be considered very resilient, even with a limited support network. As she grew up, her family resided in many countries. At the time of the interview, she lived in a different country than her parents because she was interning with the International Justice Mission (IJM). She specified she never really fit anywhere growing up, the current community often reminded her that she does not fit there and as a maturing adult, she felt she would not fit in at her parent's house anymore. She described lacking cultural identity as normative for her (O'Farrell). One of her co-workers interjected that they find comfort in the small groups and the church in the area (Naber). The resilience of these two young women is reflected in the statement from the book *Cultures and Organizations*,

“Every person carries within him- or herself patterns of thinking, feeling, and potential acting that were learned throughout a person’s lifetime” (Hofstede et al. 4). These women have been taught to be comfortable and alone in cross-cultural settings.

These two young women attend a church with an international feel. Many expatriates, mission workers, and foreign people congregate in this church. Within this congregation, there is a high level of support, understanding, and comfort. Many of the research partners from this collection of people exhibited a high sense of identity, acceptance, calling, connectedness, accountability, and challenge. When asked, the leadership members of the group indicated they had been specifically intentional in cultivating such traits in their community’s culture. Mark Davidson, the Pastor of Avatar, a New Life Fellowship Church, indicated he leads the church in theological vision with a mix of culture and belief. He integrates members of the local community and the global traveler with intentional investments to get others as part of the Avatar community (M. Davidson). Avatar utilizes a volunteer staff from the area, both nationals and expatriates. The estimated average age of the congregation is thirty-five years old, but with a good mix of older, mentoring type adults, young adults, and children. Mark’s intentionality to develop others in their leadership is a shared responsibility among the staff. Though nothing is written, there are only intentional mentoring relationships. The sustainability of this system is reliant on a leader who continues to personally invest and influence the leaders on the staff. If they would write a loosely structured document, detailing the beliefs, visions, and strategies, they could continue the development process long after the current leadership is gone.

What works well at Avatar in India may not work as well in other settings or with other leadership styles. An insecure or controlling leader would stifle the sense of empowerment. A disorganized leader would lack the needed structure, fail to cast vision properly, and possibly

withhold delegation. The Avatar group demonstrates a good example for setting, and living, value-based priorities, scheduling leadership planning sessions, and delegating, allowing the team to move beyond the abilities of the leader. Judith Rodin encourages personal and community resiliency in her book, *The Resilience Dividend*. She states that “Resilience is not only about responding to shock and stress but also about learning and continuing to adapt and grow because of the experience” (58). The steps to build resilience are often unseen, crucial, and intentional. As community leaders, ministers can set an example to build resilience, or maintain the status quo. The Avatar leadership demonstrates a pattern of developing good resilient strategies within the group. The leadership structure is not based on one person who gives permission for all the functions happening, though the key leader is responsible to carry the weight of the decisions in the group. Each department leader carries the burden of responsibility for their department, and the communication is usually inclusive of all the stakeholders within that department.

A. Contributing Factors

Poor coping skills and a sub-par reputation will create obstacles for any minister. Personal activities can set a reputation for a person in a public or sensitive role. Without a vision or purpose, one might feel aimless, or in times of personal difficulty, flounder to find a sense of success or persistence. Having a good work ethic, being financially responsible, and having a good sense of purpose, values, and mission contribute to the reputation of a minister. Having a goal, a focus, or an objective helps motivate action, improves discipline, and creates vision. Simon Sinek calls this vision our “WHY” and describes it as the ability of a company to innovate, and is invaluable for navigating struggle (101). People with a higher sense of purpose find it easier to weather hard times and find opportunity in the hard times. The higher cause is

understood because their clear sense of “WHY” motivates them through failures. Adopting a vision consistent with our passion and vocation will help us continue through trying and difficult times, when nothing seems to be going right, or results are not easily identified. When a vision is adopted, a person begins to fashion their activities around those things valued in the vision. Over time, their actions, and the results of their actions, provide a ground work for reputation and people can see what that person values.

A person without a personal or ministry vision will have a difficult time sorting out priorities and important activities. This person is driven by the requests and events planned by others, never having time to accomplish their own agenda. A timid minister is one who does not enforce their own convictions and lets others walk all over them. Young ministers and leaders are often focused, or directed to focus, on the outcomes of their efforts. Schedules are full of planning, activities, and production. Success is measured by how many people attended, how much money was raised, or how many buildings were built. The outward manifestations of ministry are emphasized over the quiet disciplines of study, rest, friendship, recreation, health, resiliency, and influence. Having a mentor who is fully prepared to hold a conversation about the principles of identity, sense of success, holistic health, and coping skills would benefit the emerging leader by setting the ground work for effective, long-term ministry.

Establishing personal boundaries is vital for self-leading and influencing others. The book *Boundaries* describes proper boundaries that indicate areas of responsibility, give clear guidance as to what is inside a person’s area of responsibility, and specify where that person’s responsibility ends. The authors state, “Without proper boundaries, life can be overwhelming and confusing” (Cloud and Townsend 29). Angie Shea also suggests that self-care is more about our being than what we are doing. Finding value in times of quiet, rest, and connection to loved ones

is important to our emotional well-being, rather than finding value in our accomplishments and activity (133). A caregiver, or minister, should not be more committed to another individual's health than that individual is.

Peter Scazzero writes, "As emotionally mature Christian adults, we recognize that loving well is the essence of true spirituality. This requires that we experience connection with God, with ourselves, and with other people" (179-180). A contemplative time with God will let a person experience love and express it to others. A person in ministry is unique in their calling, as they are aware of health in themselves and others, but are also subject to similar and varying stressors as the people they are trying to help. J. Oswald Sanders offers a long list of health indicators for a leader: dealing with bad habits, independent thinking, handling criticism, gaining cooperation and respect from others, peacemaking, trusting others, making and keeping friends, having steady confidence, accepting and exercising authority, being sympathetic and friendly, being un-prejudicial, having focus, and being responsible (34-36). In each of these cases, a missionary and a leader may struggle with the external pressures or may need a strategic planning partner to reassure them they are on the right track in fulfilling their vision. A caregiver can walk with the leader or missionary through the turmoil and chaos they are experiencing.

Young missionaries, ministers, and leaders are often shown to be strong and hide weaknesses. It is communicated that they are not allowed to fraternize with their followers. Even though these words may not be spoken, the message is loud and clear. They are not shown how close relationships can be a vital part of their personal health. The new leader falls prey to busyness and allows their schedule to be filled with distractions. Personal boundaries are reduced for sake of urgent requests. With a mentor to help them filter the noise and distraction, the leader moves toward effective productivity.

A minister with an unhealthy sense of self, an exaggerated ego, or excessive pride, will overpower everyone around them leaving little room for others to minister. A person with a high sense of personal rights will avoid a position of honoring others. Needing to be right is an unhealthy focus on self, equal to arrogance. Inviting relationship honors the other person and places a high value on *their* needs.

Key relationships feed the health of the person in cross cultural work. Three main areas are the relationship to God, to self, and to others. The relationship to one's self filters the messages from all others. How a person sees her or his self is important in carrying out one's purpose. David and Joyce Huggett describe care giving as being rooted in relationships, rhythm, rest, and a realistic lifestyle. They describe an unhealthy cycle where a person's achievement sets their status, which provides limited sustenance because they are confirmed only in success, and left with an empty sense of acceptance when things are not going well. If a minister had a mentor in the healthy sense of acceptance, the minister could know they are accepted as a person, which creates sustenance and provides our healthy sense of status and achievement (210-11, 213). The Huggetts describe a healthy mother-child relationship as a place where the nurtured child provides healthy nurturing to others and finds their sense of achievement from a root of being accepted.

A leader can operate in humility or arrogance, from a position of influence or a place of power. Stephen Macchia says of humility,

Being ostracized, bullied, or mistreated are yet more forms of meanness among people... it's become epidemic today... Outright meanness and malevolence can bring forth unkindness in return... the only way kindness can be restored is through the love of God, specifically the kind love of God. (30-31)

Humility is developed through difficult circumstances and by others who impose their own will without regard to the best interest of everyone involved. A person expresses humility when they show love in the face of adversity. However, as Seth Holmes points out, this attitude stands in direct contrast to our natural schemata. Oppression tends to be misrecognized because it fits our natural perceptions (157). Holmes uses this as a foundation to explain some basic human tendencies such as symbolic domination, which establishes a false sense of hierarchy. True humility will break through the false perceptions and provide genuine acceptance.

Parker J. Palmer speaks of the spiritual disciplines needed to accept or operate in vocation. Humility is a paradoxical discipline central to our spirituality. The process to develop humility brings us, as Palmer expresses it, “through humiliation, where we are brought low, rendered powerless, stripped of pretense and defenses, and left feeling fraudulent, empty, and useless... brings us down- down to ground on which it is safe to stand, and to fall- eventually, takes us to a firmer and fuller sense of self” (70). Palmer explains how he sees himself as a person of weakness and strength, with liabilities and giftedness, of darkness and of light; all the while, inviting his readers to step into the introspective lens, and see how we fare.

The objective caregiver and leader, assesses the right time to listen and the right time to assert wisdom. Kelly O’Donnell expresses the thought that, “Member care is as much about comfort as it is about challenge” (Going Global 15). The path of relational leadership often establishes options, then reconnects the people with the objectives. The process gives an opportunity to assess past effectiveness and determine future choices.

Bryant Myers offers how God has created human beings in His image. Yet, that image is distorted by an autonomous, self-directed understanding. Myers defends:

Our own individual self can never be itself apart from our being-in-communion with God and other human beings. The Trinitarian nature of God means that we are self-in-community when we are fully human. Our human selves are imbedded in relationships, finding their fullest meaning in just and harmonious relationships or losing meaning and worth when these relationships do not work. (83)

Myers later describes the brokenness a sense of poverty introduces into relationships and how it can disfigure our identity, disempower our thinking, and isolate us from the community.

However, because we are created in the image of God, we are empowered, we are productive, and we contribute well to the communities around us.

Barry Austin asserts that ministry seeks to encourage healthy relationships and draws people closer to Christ. Ministry sets up structures, provides oversight to promote the love and care, and stimulates spiritual growth. He goes on to describe mutual care between missionaries as most beneficial, but cultural differences, interworking relationships, and language barriers can be hindrances. He states, “Missionaries are not to be rugged individualists, committed solely to tasks, devoid of personal needs. Neither are they to be emotionally dependent people who are a drain on others” (60-62). He makes a good point as ministers have heavy expectations on them, but still find ways to create a healthy network for encouragement and accomplishment of the mission. Working together, a network of mutual care challenges each member toward their best efforts, provides accountability to maintain personal health, and gives objective feedback to improve their methods.

B. Other Influences

Cultural ignorance severely hampers the effectiveness of a cross cultural minister. Like arrogance, intentional ignorance sets oneself up as the central point of concern and disregards the

needs of others. This attitude contributes to prejudice and defines who will be liked or disliked based solely on appearance or assumptions. Richard Beck uses the term “sympathetic magic” to describe “the primitive belief about how spiritual or magical artifacts and rituals might have effects on other objects...if two things look similar our mind has trouble separating them” (24). Beck provides several examples of improper identification of objects and people; we trust some and not others based on appearance alone. The best remedy to prejudice is to establish a relationship before judgment is passed. Anthony Marsella acknowledges prejudices and advises:

Excessive reliance on the delivery of mental health services rooted within Western assumptions, knowledge, and practices have pernicious consequences...it is essential that mental health services be responsive to ethnocultural differences in etiological and casual models of health and disorder, patterns of disorder, standards of normality, and treatment alternatives. (284)

Understanding the cultural environment and your personal competence will alleviate some stress in intercultural work, as well as help identify some personal limitations and boundaries.

However, experiencing cross-cultural relations is not reserved for going to a foreign land. With the world getting smaller, immigrants and refugees being relocated, and travel becoming easier, the chances to meet someone from an extremely different culture in your daily routine is getting more probable all the time.

Exhibiting a need for control is also a dangerous characteristic for a minister. Holding the reigns of the operation tightly contributes to disappointment and frustration to those capable teammates who are being held at bay. In a controlling environment, emerging leaders are rarely encouraged to express their creativity. Their personal creativity is often squelched for fear of being nonconforming or difficult to work with. Delegation of project responsibility is withheld

because desired results are unpredictable, the project might become messy, or the weight of the decision is viewed as too much for the other leaders. When a minister is insecure as a leader, they cannot let go of the influence, position, or status, because their identity is incorrectly placed. The new and young leaders are taught how to operate in this mode, and propagate a controlling and positional management style. They are not mentored in the art of saying ‘no’ to someone of influence, discovering differences, or resolving conflict. A relational mentor would encourage their personal style and to lead them in the establishment of boundaries. Ministry would be implemented quicker and without frustration. This mentor would sound much like Tom and David Kelley’s advice, “Every person’s situation is unique. You need to figure out what strategy will work for you. How might you lessen your fear of being judged? How might you better understand the things that hold you back? How might you experiment with different approaches?” (247). Mentoring leaders into ministry includes holding discussions, asking open-ended questions, probing into what people know, instead of leading as a sole knowledge holder. Relational mentoring breaks the mold of the instructor-student model and fits the seasoned and emerging leaders together as partners.

IV. Meeting the Need

The development of the inner character is not easy to assess. The core identity is the set of characteristics, behaviors, and beliefs that drive a person to be who they are, establish what they prefer, and determine how they respond to others. When a person behaves closely to that identity, there is a peace, comfort, and congruence. The performance persona is the way people act when others are watching, or when they assume a role that is dictated by the expectations of others. Stress is introduced when the performance persona is far from the core identity. That stress increases as the distance increases between the performance persona and core identity. If a

person operates in a prolonged state of difference, anxiety can create a fissure in personal resiliency and the person can experience an imbalance in their personality. For example, choosing to act differently than one's true-identity would be like using a wrench as a hammer. The objective may be accomplished, but not without much stress, consternation, and setback.

The mentor sees the pupil's core identity through relationship. However, the student can cover over character issues in short term settings. The extra stresses of a cross cultural environment will pull on the core identity of the minister, revealing the character flaws, and sometimes magnifying them. Establishing mentoring relationships with close accountability can identify trends of character flaws and give opportunity to correct deficiencies.

The hurry-up culture of the western world is the biggest hurdle to establishing mentoring relationships. It is rare to find someone who will slow down enough to sink into the life of another. The urge to influence as many people as possible in each setting is rampant. Big numbers, big results, and great accolades feed the motivations of many leaders. The return on investment, the reward, and the number of people is weighed over the depth of influence. Yet, the effective mentoring relationship is slow, intentional, and focused. The true mentor understands the process of relationship, that preparation and prevention is greater than recovery, and that serving is the key to leading. The current leadership resources often tell someone what they should do, without assessing where the person is, or what the situation demands.

Young leaders watch the demonstrations of top-down managers who have reached the power seat. The informal message is: when you get to be on top, you'll get to hold the power and make the decisions, but not before. The single decision-maker model demonstrates ultimate power and authority. New policies and practices are handed down with a new director. Conformance is promoted over creativity. Personal needs are subverted to keep the machine

running. Upstart leaders lose heart and drop productivity because they fall into compliance with mediocrity. The deliberate mentoring relationship breaks the drudgery and allows the student to explore their strengths, outside boundaries of the bureaucracy and hierarchal structure. Bud Jefferson gives excellent advice to every leader:

Either I am seeing others straightforwardly as they are – as people like me who have needs and desires as legitimate as my own – or I'm not... One way, I experience myself as *a* person among people. The other way, I see myself as *the* person among objects. One way I am out of the box; the other way, I'm in the box. (The Arbinger 37)

The relational mentor will demonstrate out of the box thinking and encourage the behavior in emerging leaders.

V. Identifying Resources

The proposed manual offers help to novice and emerging ministers in a cross cultural environment by developing their personal health, intentional relationships, and leadership skills. The mentoring relationship is bathed in discussion, grace, challenge, and experimentation. The emerging minister offers suggestions and options while the mentor provides feedback, insight, or challenge to the student minister. The sustainability of the process depends on the student. When a coach or mentor moves on, the emerging leader is encouraged to find another mentor, and with the benefit of the proposed manual a new relationship can be formed, picking up the mentoring process where it left off.

The proposed manual augments the mentoring relationship with a written document that tracks history and plots some next steps. The manual, or Field Guide, has a loose structure with open-ended questions allowing the student to express their creativity and reminding the coach or mentor of pertinent information, questions, or alternate applications. The flow from self to

leading others is a process demonstrated and repeated in the physical realm. The maturity process typically grows from infancy, to adulthood, and then reproduces itself. Since we are created to be in relationship, personal connection has a major emphasis in the guide as the vehicle to promote maturity.

A 2010 study in the United Kingdom proposed a similar research project that measured community-based self-care training. The study proposed “wider aims of building capacity for self-care through local networks” (South et al. 665). The authors reported the beneficial adaptability of the training to different settings, but also emphasized the need for flexible delivery and good facilitation (South et al. 667). They conclude, “Given the challenges of designing, delivering and evaluating lifestyle interventions..., the evidence that self-care skills training is relevant and acceptable to less advantaged groups and those who work with them is a significant finding” (South et al. 669).

A Community Facilitator provides the best example of the needed mix of training, facilitation, and instruction needed for relational mentoring. As described Shelton Davidson, a Community Facilitator leverages the resources and leadership within a community to meet the needs identified by the community members; it is not too much on the over sight or management end of the spectrum, nor is it too passive (S. Davidson). The Community Facilitator offers comfort and insight as they challenge students and apprentices to explore their big dreams, test their theories, and learn new lessons.

VI. The Details

A leader is responsible to care for themselves and their team. Through the cycle presented in the Field Guide, the leader will guide team members in the determination of the best plan of action for all involved. Max DePree suggests, leadership is like parenting, it does not

mean that we have arrived, it simply means the work has begun. Leading is unrewarding, difficult, painful, and it is work (12-13). Parenting concepts are quite universal, but the methods are unique to each family. It is the same with this guide the principles are universal, but the methods are unique to a minister.

Inside the Field Guide, the lessons are easy-to-accomplish steps for development. The sections follow a farming process to indicate preparation, planting, harvest, and the next season. The first section focuses on the person of the minister. The associated picture is a plow; breaking up the hard ground and getting prepared. The discussion elements deal with personal character and include: establishing identity, assessing emotional health, living a lifestyle of Sabbath, Biblical meditation, establishing perseverance and resilience, understanding coping skills, and identifying the initial signs of burnout and depression.

The tools that are listed in the Field Guide are those mentioned by the research partners for personal character development and lead to the effective expression of ministry. The listed tools for this application are intended specifically for a minister in a cross-cultural environment. Some tools were excluded for consideration in the Field Guide for the detail of information to use, or the variations in use, methods, or preference. One example is a Bible reading plan. While it is important for a minister to be familiar with the Bible, the variations of the use, version selection, and duration would overwhelm the simplicity of the Field Guide.

The second section expands on the immediate relationships around the person who is ministering. This section asks the minister to identify how they relate to others. The associated picture here is planting seed; the minister sows influence in the lives of others. The tools include: a discussion on cultural competence, a personal history, key relationships, personal boundaries,

and communications in conflict. This section emphasizes the shaping effect and support relationships have on the minister.

The third section includes the influence the minister earns with peers and teammates. The picture for this section is the harvest and represents the rewards of influence sown in the previous section. The tools and skills presented are: listening deeply, creating a time budget, establishing value-based priorities, identifying personalities, and basic delegation concepts. These tools help a minister to filter distractions, develop effectiveness, and establish a team mentality.

The fourth section widens to leading others, specifically, demonstrating the expressions of leadership to others. The motivation is to show leaders how to lead leaders. Preparing for the next season is the analogy for this section, preparing to hand off leadership to a next generation of leader. The tools in this section are team development stages, creating a life plan, strategic planning, and vision casting.

The fifth section contains scenarios to start discussions and gain insight to how the minister is thinking about leadership. The motivation to this approach is to create a sense of ownership in the young minister. While it sounds odd to start a discussion from a manual, it is useful in reproducing the basic principles and allows individual application to the local environment.

The manual is created in a pdf format, which can be electronically delivered to any device connected to the internet. If preferable, the pdf can be printed and will remain in its original dimensional layout. As people become aware of its usefulness, I trust it will be distributed to other emerging and existing leaders for their personal development.

An email offered as an avenue for feedback. Comments, improvements, and suggestions are invited. Other indications of success will be word of mouth, email ratings, and personal comments. I believe the use of this guide can be universal, yet very localized.

VII. Conclusion

It is my hope relational mentorship will continue to be utilized to prepare emerging ministers at Avatar Church. As the emerging leaders select a mentor to walk with them through the stages of maturity, I am offering the Field Guide as a basic structure to a sustainable process to form a personal leadership style. Angie Shea suggests we all operate best with connection, support, and collaboration. Operating interdependently is healthy and fulfilling, it is where relationships are at their highest potential (169). My vision is to forge a path to progress from developing self-health, to initiating mutually supportive relationships, and then on to reproducing other leaders for the sustainment of leadership development. When we share knowledge, and work together, the members in the community and ministry team will be served well by highly competent and healthy encouragers.

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