

STRESS AND BURNOUT IN
THE METHODIST MINISTRY
– TOWARDS A HOLISTIC
HELPING MODEL

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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations were used in the writing of this dissertation:

MCSA The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

CPSA Church of the Province of South Africa

L&D Laws and Discipline (of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa)

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DEDICATION

This Dissertation is dedicated to my wife

AVRIL

Many of the articles and books consulted for this dissertation are dedicated to the wives of the authors. I often wondered about this and sometimes felt it was even a little 'contrived'. This was before I saw how much work and effort my wife put into this dissertation.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The hypothesis that underpins this dissertation is that a holistic helping model relevant to addressing Burnout in the ministry needs to have as its major focus, the prevention of Burnout. Adequate internal and external supports need to be in place to act as buffers and mitigate against the unique stressors of ministry. A reactive response, seeking to address the consequences of Burnout is considered an inadequate response. Preventative measures are viewed as far more effective and desirable.

Recently the writer's car engine overheated. The problem began in an insignificant way, a rubber hosepipe began to perish, nobody noticed. Eventually under constant and intense pressure from superheated water flowing powerfully through the engine's cooling system, the hosepipe burst. It only took a few moments for the engine to overheat, causing serious damage. The cost of replacing the rubber hose would have been under one hundred rand. The labour time would have been under a half an hour. To repair the damaged engine after the pipe had burst and the engine had overheated cost thousands and the labour took several days.

To repair or heal a person is far more complex and not always possible. When the stressors build up and nobody appears to notice or care, when the person is unable to diagnose for themselves, that they are near to breakdown or Burnout. When the person does not know who, what or where to turn to, and when the person has inadequate internal and external coping mechanisms - this type of emotional breakdown is far more serious than any burst pipe. Unlike in the example above some things cannot be repaired. Therefore the emphasis needs to be on preventing the 'hosepipe from ever perishing'.

In the writer's opinion the many stressors that are common to ministry can become so overwhelming that breakdown or Burnout become a real possibility. Adequate internal and external coping mechanisms can be effective buffers to prevent such stressors becoming catastrophic.

To ascertain how serious the problem of stress is and its main consequence in the context of this dissertation, Burnout, twenty of the fifty active Methodist ministers in the Natal West District were asked to participate in a study. All twenty received the Burnout Inventory found in Appendix B of this document. The ministers approached were selected in order to adequately represent a cross – section of the Methodist Ministers in the District. A fair representation of gender, race and age were key considerations. The respondents were however, all white ministers, men and women, many of whom had worked in cross – cultural contexts. The available experts in the field, the woman psychologist, the professor and the minister with a history of successful cross – cultural work, were also white. In the writer's opinion black academics in the Methodist Church have focused more upon social issues and issues of social justice, than intrapersonal or psychological stresses within the ministers themselves. This dissertation is therefore the outcome of mainly the experiences and insights of white ministers and therefore its response to the impact of Burnout among black Methodist ministers is limited.

The ministers were asked to indicate which, if any of the twenty four responses that make up the Burnout Inventory, they agreed with. The respondents were also asked to indicate their gender, age and race, but not to record their names to ensure confidentiality. The limited number of twenty was important as all who responded were given the opportunity, if they chose to, of discussing their responses with the writer in a confidential environment. Some of these responses, with the permission of the

respondents, provide the personal insights on Burnout recorded in Chapter One (p13).

Chapter One deals with the nature of stress and the unique stressors of ministry. Chapters Two and Three are in the writer's opinion vital, in that in addition to the unique stressors common to all who minister, the specific stress of cross – cultural ministry is considered in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three the complexities of being a woman in ministry are discussed with reference to facing the sin of patriarchy. Both Chapter Two and Chapter Three have suggested Models presented at the end of each to address the very specific stressors people who engage in cross – cultural ministry and women who minister encounter.

In Chapter Four the Burnout of the Prophet Elijah is discussed and a Holistic model towards the prevention of Burnout in the ministry is proposed. This model is called the Tripod model.

Six in – depth interviews are recorded. In Chapter Two an Indian pastor suggests insights into the traps and pitfalls associated with cross – cultural ministry. Two women ministers in Chapter Three, express their thoughts and experiences of being a woman in ministry and in Chapter Four three experts in the field of ministry Burnout are interviewed, whose thoughts and ideas are integrated in order to develop the Tripod Model and the additional suggestions associated with a holistic model towards the prevention of Burnout in the ministry.

What of the responses received? Is stress and Burnout really such a big issue? Is the ministry really so stressful?

Five of the black ministers approached failed to respond. Fourteen of the fifteen responses received indicated that it really is a serious issue. Eight out of the fifteen indicated more than six areas of concern in the Burnout

Inventory. Six out of the remaining seven indicated between two and five of the statements/questions were relevant to them and their experience of ministry. Only one, a woman minister who was later interviewed in – depth and whose interview is recorded in Chapter Three, indicated none of the statements/questions as relevant to her life. The reason for this response is most surprising and totally unexpected.

This dissertation focuses on a preventative model in relation to Burnout in the ministry. What of those who are experiencing or who have already Burned out? Is there hope? At the end of Chapter Four God's response to the prophet Elijah is considered and how God ministered to him to facilitate healing. This however is far from the ideal. When it comes to the concept of deep wounds to the human soul, prevention is most definitely preferable to cure.

CHAPTER ONE

THE UNIQUE STRESSORS OF **THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

THE UNIQUE STRESSORS OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

In the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) there is a saying among the clergy that goes ' During the first year of an invitation you can do no wrong, during the second year you can do no right!'

Vignette.

It was toward the end of serving that second year, of a five-year appointment, in a coastal town. Ministry was not as bad as some made it out – but it could have been better. Fortunately I had a Christian friend outside of my congregation who shared my interest in sport. Spending time with him was a great way for me to unwind and simply have fun and fellowship. As we would drive to play golf, he listened to my frustrations, as he did for many other people, as he was the local pharmacist. In turn, he was able to share with me the problems he experienced, something he was unable to do with others; often focusing on his wife who suffered from severe depression and was regularly admitted to mental hospitals for treatment, leaving him responsible for the care of their three-year old daughter, as well as a more than fulltime commitment to the Pharmacy. I thought that we had an honest, mutually beneficial relationship. We were able to share on a level that men rarely do.

On returning from a staff meeting one Tuesday morning I encountered a crowd outside the Pharmacy, with emergency personnel, a doctor friend of mine, and various curious lookers-on gathered all around the building. Someone approached me with the reason – Bruce had shot himself. They felt I should be the one to go and tell his wife. Nobody would go with me, not even another friend of his who was present; they were afraid of how she was going to react. I walked slowly to the house and when I entered she

appeared preoccupied. As gently as I could I broke the news to her. 'Oh really?' was her only response and she continued to fiddle with something. She appeared to be heavily drugged, as she often was. Her eyes were almost completely dilated and she hardly reacted at all. I spent what felt like an eternity with her, and when her family eventually arrived, I left.

That night was the opening game of the 1991 Rugby World Cup and as I watched I lined up some tranquilisers and a couple of drinks. My wife tried to be understanding and supportive but I guess I pushed her away. I watched the game in a daze. After a while I realised that I needed to talk, but to who? I picked up a book containing the details of six hundred of my colleagues in Southern Africa. I was halfway through when I gave up. I thought about calling the Bishop, but Bishops have too much power and one doesn't always feel comfortable opening up to them, and unsure of what they will do with the information you may give them. Even though they were supposed to be the pastor-to-the-pastors they were often chosen more for their administrative ability than their pastoral skills. I thought about calling my Superintendent but he was not especially noted for his compassion – in fact his African name is 'the rhinoceros'. There was nobody and nowhere for me to turn to. A few days later I conducted the graveside portion of Bruce's funeral and some well intentioned soul ran up to me and whispered that I must remember to mention his little girl as nobody had done so in the Church service! That little girl, the same age as my own, no longer had a daddy. I am sure that that woman meant well, but things like that break you inside.

Still there was no one to turn to and nowhere to go. The stress of a difficult year in the ministry, my wife who was in the midst of a difficult pregnancy, a racially mixed congregation with all of its complexities, the specific stress of my friend's suicide, the feelings of having somehow failed him, and the feelings of emptiness and loneliness all seemed so overwhelming. I knew I needed support, somebody, something and it begged the same question

over and over again...' Who pastors the pastors? ...How do we stand by the wounded healer?' When we in ministry are overwhelmed, overstressed and overextended, bordering on exhaustion, where or to whom do we turn? Where is the support structure? If it had happened to someone in the congregation, as it had before, I knew that I would be there for them, as draining and traumatic as it was, often feeling helpless but at the same time knowing that simply being there was crucial. However, even the helpless/useless being there does not often happen when the minister is the one with stressors pushing in from all sides and the emptiness threatens to drown one. It is not surprising that Burnout claims so many of our ministers. Stress and Burnout is a reality in ministry that is not going away, and we need to take it seriously and seek to address the issues in a proactive way.

Introduction.

This Chapter is one of four that deal with the subject of stress and Burnout in the ministry.

- Chapter One deals with the nature of stress and the unique stressors of ministry.
- Chapter Two reviews cross - cultural aspects affecting stress in ministry
- Chapter Three considers the unique stress of women in ministry
- Chapter Four seeks to go beyond present coping strategies, towards a holistic model to prevent Burnout in the ministry
- Concluding comments – practical implementation of the preventative model

According to Sue, Sue and Sue, a stressor is an external event or situation that places a physical or psychological demand upon a person, stress is an internal response to a stressor (1997 :191). When the stressors build up and when the subject has limited coping skills, either internally or else externally (i.e. social support) the end result can be the experience of Burnout.

Psychologist Hubert Freudenberger , who claims credit for the term 'Burnout', explains that it is 'a depletion of energy and a feeling of being overwhelmed by others' problems' (Minerth, Hawkins, Meier and Flournoy, 1986:14). Too much stress affects the whole person, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Early research on stress focused primarily on the physiological processes involved. Cannon developed his 'fight - or - flight' theory of stress. (Bishop 1994:127) A basic understanding of this theory would be that the Sympathetic and Endocrine systems are activated to help the individual either fight off or else flee the situation. Selye took this theory and

developed it further. He postulated the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) in which three phases were involved in the stress response; alarm, resistance and exhaustion. Selye felt GAS was non – specific, therefore the body has the same response to any kind of threat. This is questionable as different stressors may produce different physiological responses (Bishop 1994:127-131). Lazarus attempted to better represent the physiological processes involved in stress. He and his colleagues developed a transactional model of stress. This model emphasizes the key factors in stress as being appraisal and coping. Primary appraisal involves assessing the challenge posed by the situation, and secondary appraisal assesses the measures available for coping and dealing with the challenge. Coping would involve the individual's cognitive and behavioural efforts to deal with the situation (1997:131-133).

The writer prefers the last of these models. There would seem to be an interaction between the stress I experience, the number of stressors, the severity of stressors and my ability to address the challenges effectively and apply whatever coping measures I have, be they internal or external. The problem is that many of us in ministry have not been trained adequately on how to effectively address many of the stressors we experience. Secondly we often have little or no external support. We are trained in effectively putting a sermon together, how to exegete a Bible passage, and our understanding of Systematic Theology is about as sound as it can be for a newly graduated student. We have role - played on counselling techniques, and we may even have received a good grounding in Pastoral Theology, possibly we have even been taught (although often not) how to practically lead a funeral service...but we have no training in who to turn to when we break down. If one had the option we may have done some Psychology training and may even know some of the above models of stress. But never have we been trained to recognise when the stressors in our own lives have become insurmountable. After all, we are meant to be helping others in need. How can we be helping others when we are struggling ourselves? Or

perhaps the question should be 'How can we help others when we have not learned to face our own stressors by harnessing internal and external resources?'

Returning to the concept of Burnout, what does it mean?

Sanford explains how the word has developed an additional meaning over the past few decades recorded in Webster's New International Dictionary (1982:3-4). Its original context can be illustrated with these three examples.

Firstly it can refer to the burning out of either the contents or the interior of a building. Secondly in the field of electricity it can refer to the breaking down of a circuit, related to combustion caused by high temperatures. Thirdly in the context of forestry where the intensity of the heat from the forest fire is so severe that the '...vital humus of the forest floor has been destroyed leaving the forest denuded' (1982:3).

The late 1970s and early 1980s then were not using Burnout to refer to a human condition, rather reference would have been made to mental breakdown, covering a wide variety of symptoms. It can then be surmised that the word as used in relation to human beings refers to a relatively recent social and psychological phenomenon. That is not to say the experience of Burnout is strictly a late twentieth century phenomenon. The prophet Elijah's Burnout experience will be examined later indicating that Burnout has been part of the human experience for millennia. What is significant, though, is that the cases of Burnout over the past two decades have become so numerous that a specific name has been assigned to describe this condition.

Applying the above three descriptions of Burnout to human beings, the following picture is created.

1. A person who has been consumed from within by fiery energy until there is nothing left, just an empty shell.
2. A person who once carried a charge of Divine energy but who now is unable to empower others or themselves.
3. The experience of someone who like the burned out forest, can no longer renew or restore themselves.

After the writer had distributed the fifteen Burnout Inventory Questionnaires referred to in the Introduction, several of those ministers who responded asked if they could discuss their experiences. These discussions revealed that many of their stories reflected some of the above descriptions of Burnout.

Most of the ministers felt a deep sense of spiritual exhaustion. Physical and emotional exhaustion were very common experiences also. The picture began to emerge that mental, physical and spiritual energy are all interlinked and a draining of one of the energies was almost always associated with the draining of the other two. The problem of de-personalisation was also a common theme in the interviews. This entails a feeling of losing one's own identity within the functions and roles of being a minister.

For some of the ministers there was a feeling of despair and even depression, a profound sense of having failed at what they set out to do and in extreme cases, leading to the question 'Was I ever really Called to this in the first place, or did I imagine a Call?' As indicated by this question, this feeling of having failed did not only apply to having failed those they wanted

to minister to, but also implied a sense of having failed God, a vocational crisis.

The other issue that repeatedly surfaced was that of feeling utterly alone. Some were in the process of moving away from whatever emotional, physical or spiritual structure they had. For others they appeared not to have developed any support structures at all. Even God seemed a very distant figure. The picture of the loving and caring father as displayed by the parable of the Prodigal Son (Bible Luke 15 v11-27) was far from the minds of those interviewed. In its place was the dominant picture of a hard and judgmental God, Who they had failed.

It is interesting to note from a Psychological perspective that all who exhibited the more serious signs of Burnout were also those who demonstrated 'Type A' personality traits.

...excessive competitive drive, a sense of always being pressured for time, impatience, incredible amounts of energy that may show up in accelerated speech and motor activity, and angry outbursts
(Barlow and Durand 1995:352).

Some of these traits, such as incredible amounts of energy were obviously now no longer present, but had clearly been characteristic throughout their ministry, prior to them experiencing Burnout.

The external factors of never - ending working hours, often receiving little if any feedback, and often only negative feedback, impacted heavily on these ministers. For many the internal factors including the need for approval, so often not forthcoming, and developing from this, a low sense of self - worth, in addition to the 'Type A' personality described above, all contributed to an experience of ministry far below what they had expected or hoped for. These were disillusioned men and women of God, empty, tired depressed and feeling utterly alone.

Background.

Over the last ten years the Church has lost many of its ministers; some through stress – related illness, cancer, heart attacks etc. But many others who did not physically die but rather simply burnt out. (The Methodist Church of Southern Africa 2002 Directory). It would seem that it is not the 'lazy rubbish' that burns out, but rather the good, caring, sensitive, hard – working ministers who have so much to give, who impact Church and society in a really positive way, who risk Burnout.

One of the tragic paradoxes of Burnout is that the people who tend to be the most dedicated, devoted, committed, responsible, highly motivated, better educated, enthusiastic, promising and energetic suffer from Burnout (Minerth et al 1986:170).

This is not referring to the workaholic, those who have an insatiable appetite for their own glory, sort of mini - messiahs. Jesus saw them, recognised their focus on themselves and on winning men's praise and reckoned they had bargained on men's praise and had therefore received their reward (Bible: Matt 6 v2-18). These are sincere men and women of God who simply get overwhelmed by the pressures of ministry. Often they recognise they have a need for help, do not know where to turn, who to turn to and eventually, desperately saddened and broken, walk away an empty shell. Referring again to the comments of Dr Herbert Freudenberger on the person who has burnt out he says that they are

...someone in a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by a devotion to a course, a way of life, or a relationship that failed to produce the expected reward. The man or woman who does not reach for the top will never suffer from Burnout, it is a condition found only among those who want the best (Smith 1995:11).

It would be fair to say Burnout' impacts the whole person. All key areas of their lives are affected. Mental, physical and spiritual aspects of the minister's life are all negatively affected. Psychologically/ emotionally

speaking symptoms such as self – doubt, guilt, disillusionment, cynicism, negativity, depression and hopelessness may all manifest themselves. Physically a greater propensity for illness, sleep disorders, appetite changes (eating too much or too little), alcohol and/or drug abuse (as opposed to normal usage), high blood pressure, digestive problems, heart attacks and strokes are all within the scope. Spiritually the minister may feel like God simply does not care. There is a 'spiritual vacuum' - maybe even God seems powerless. Possibly they begin to play God themselves as God is not doing a good enough job! Personal devotions go out the window as does Bible reading and they feel like Solomon of old who wrote in Ecclesiastes that 'all of it is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. I hated all the things I had toiled for...' (Bible: Ecc2 v17-18).

For anyone who works in the helping professions there will be a great deal of stress. People are demanding. But there are unique aspects of ministry that make it all the more stressful and so make those who minister more vulnerable to Burnout. We now consider some of the unique stressors of ministry, a mixture of personal insight and the common themes of Sanford (1980) and Smith (1995).

The work is never finished.

It is a fact that this chapter will soon be completed. It will be evaluated and a mark assigned. Adjustments and corrections will be made and essentially the task will be finished. In ministry it rarely is. Sunday services happen every week, weddings, funerals, Bible studies, confirmation classes, sick people to see, crisis counselling, marriage preparation counselling, visiting all the members just in time to start from the top of the list again. The minister is like Sisyphus of Greek mythology, whose fate it was to push a great stone up a mountain, only to have it roll down again just before it

reaches the top (Sanford 1982:6). The feeling that the job is never done can be exhausting and demoralising.

The work is repetitive.

One sick person is simply replaced by another, how many times can the Christmas message be told in a fresh and unique way? The lectionary readings repeat themselves year in and year out, unless you are fortunate enough for the readings to only be repeated every third year. (The Methodist Church of Southern Africa 2002 Yearbook) Good Friday, Easter Sunday, begin the confirmation programme for the second and third terms, don't change it too much otherwise the leadership feels uncomfortable – 'we are Methodists you know...it was good enough for me and it should be good enough for my grandson!' Yes, but fifty years ago there was no such thing as HIV/AIDS . It should be in the syllabus but the response comes back full of fear and ignorance 'should the Church really be talking about sex?' Not only then is the work repetitive, but when one tries to bring in changes one is often met with resistance by those who are threatened by change and unfortunately are also in positions of power.

What about results?

Repetition and not seeing the work finish can be frustrating and draining, but what when we are not sure of any results at all? We understand that God works in mysterious ways, but it would be good to sometimes see Him at work to see things change in a positive way. Sometimes it is difficult not to secretly envy those who are called to be evangelists as opposed to those who are pastors. The evangelists get to walk into a new town, speak to people they do not know, present the gospel of Salvation, have people

respond in whatever way is appropriate, and are able to walk away and say 'fifty souls were saved tonight' At the end of the year they are able to tell how many missions they engaged in and how many people met Jesus. They do not see the struggles that these people later go through and they do not get to pick up the pieces, that is left to the local pastors. They have results books that never need to be reviewed or updated. Possibly that is why building projects are so popular – you often cannot see spiritual growth in people's lives, you cannot see the Fruits of the Spirit gradually impacting a congregation member over a five or ten year period (although his or her partner might). However a Church building you can see being built. It is far easier to raise support for a building project than for almost any other programme in the Church. Buildings get completed, God's work in people's lives never seems to. Sometimes you see no results at all, sometimes people simply walk away, and 'who has failed' remains the unasked, unanswered question.

The minister constantly has to deal with people's expectations.

Within our Church we seem to expect every minister to be capable of running a successful Church. One of the greatest dangers in this is that we can tend toward ignoring Gifting. 1 Corinthians 12 speaks of the Body of Christ. In many of our Churches it is just too much of a one - man - show. The Church has sometimes been referred to as a football match with 22 players desperately needing rest being watched by 50 000 people desperately needing exercise, and still expecting a decent show to be put on (Gumble 1993:129-130). It shouldn't be a performance anyway. The expectations are high, but sometimes it is only the minister on his own, possibly with some limited assistance, trying to live up to all of these expectations. People's expectations vary enormously too. Some people expect the minister to be a financial wizard, others require a great preacher, teaching is highly regarded in certain fields, and it is very important the

minister is always available to counsel. What about the youth, are their needs being met, after all 'the youth are the Church of tomorrow!' Old traditions must be upheld yet at the same time it is obvious the minister must be at the cutting edge of new, often contentious, issues.

Is the above realistic? Can anyone fulfil so many diverse expectations? Probably not, but many are prepared to burn out trying. The above concept of ministry is not even Biblical. God does not call for this, but the congregation and leadership sometimes do. Perhaps the minister should be more aware of God's expectations, they are far more achievable. 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 speak of both the concept of the Body of Christ and of the different Gifts given to all of God's followers, not only to ministers, in order to make the Church an effective agent of God in society. The word of God would be far better place to build one's foundation for a ministry less vulnerable to Burnout.

The minister works with the same people year after year.

Some of the people are very draining. Gordon McDonald picks up this concept in an enlightening way speaking of the different people who cross the path of the minister in need of aid and support. Two of his classifications are very important people (VIP's) and very draining people (VDP's). He illustrates how crucial it is to take time with VIP's as although they may require much time and energy at the moment, they will eventually become or may already be, vitally important members of the Church who are able to fulfil necessary roles. The time and energy invested in these people will bring it's own rewards, as this type of person eventually gives back in a positive, creative and meaningful way (McDonald 1986:82-88).

On the other hand he speaks of the VDP's – the Very Draining People who do just that. To be fair to both the Church and self the minister needs to be realistic about investing time and energy in VDP's. It is not that these people do not count, as that would be an incredibly arrogant and insensitive way of viewing them, that hardly links up with the Christian calling to reach out to the needy. What McDonald is saying is that the minister needs to be aware of the drain that these members place on the minister's own spiritual and emotional resources and to ensure that these members do not take up the bulk of the minister's time and energy. Suggestions would include not scheduling too many VDP's too close together for counselling, possibly making sure the time of the appointment is limited or maybe even referring the member to someone else.

An example to illustrate follows: Recently I have been dealing with a family who fit into this category. At the last session the husband complained bitterly that he finds it difficult making his budget especially since he has to pay back the credit card debt incurred on the family's holiday to Mauritius. He thinks it is unfair – after all the holiday was three years ago. His wife moved out after he kept wearing her underwear and he does not know why she does not understand him. He says she obviously has a problem. Both the children are over 25 but live at home and have never had partners. He finished the counselling saying that he likes talking to me, because when he sees a psychologist he has to pay! He suggested I see each member once a week. I have seen that family four or five times already and the situation never changes. I feel used, more importantly, I feel emotionally and spiritually exhausted every time I have seen them.

Are we really equipped or trained to deal with these very draining people? At what point do we say 'ENOUGH'? Every congregation inevitably attracts a certain number of difficult personalities who cling to it year after year for their own reasons (Sanford 1982:9). The Church has a responsibility to care

for all members. But is it realistic to take on so many difficult people that there is no time to build relationships with those who would give as well as receive? What if these people are not prepared to change and not prepared to take any action themselves? The result will in all likelihood be Burnout.

Speaking to a psychologist friend recently I posed the question of those who simply want someone to listen to them with no actual interest in addressing the real issues. Her wise response was that she views it is important to simply let them know that they have been heard. However, she has the advantage of being able to schedule difficult people for limited times, or of terminating therapy. Would she be as positive and understanding if she had to see these people repeatedly, without any form of resolution in sight and no probability of ending the sessions, with unlimited twenty four hour availability being expected from the minister? Scheduling limited counselling time and knowing when we are out of our depth, recognising when to refer, are places to begin when trying to respond creatively to the problem of VDP's. We must be aware that energy, mental, physical or spiritual, is used up when we minister to those in need – even those we like and enjoy – how much more so if the person is difficult, demanding or clinging. We must know our limits and honour them. The only way for any minister to establish limits is by practical experience.

Dealing with other people's agendas.

Linked to the above point is the idea that many who approach the minister for counselling and guidance do not really want spiritual nourishment but rather to have their egos patted (Sanford 1982:10-11). It is not necessarily what they need but rather what they want. Paul picked it up in Corinthians – 'what I fed you with was milk, not solid food, for **you** were not ready for it' (Bible: 1Cor 3 v2). People who seek to have their egos patted demand a great deal of attention. It is their right or so they suppose. If they do not

receive it they can become resentful and even vindictive. Constantly patting egos can be exhausting; failing to do so also has a price to be paid, as one might then have to deal with a resentful person. The minister who gives out pats may also benefit in return by receiving approval, but might then become what Fritz Kingel called a 'white giant.' A 'giant' because people in ministry are sometimes elevated to a special status. White 'giants' give out the pats when necessary, but they must be careful, for if one stops giving the pats, one runs the risk of becoming the 'black giant', who is viewed as refusing to make people feel better. The ministering person may now become the object of aggression and even hatred (Sanford 1982:11).

Masks.

'One day about a year ago I realised just how sick I was of the empty religious lives of my congregation, sick of the masks we all wore...myself included' (Smith, 1995:9), the words of one burnt out minister. The problem is that for so much of the time we need to function in our persona, the front or mask we wear in order to relate to the world of other people. This persona helps us to project our personality out into the outside world, and also protects us by enabling us to assume a certain posture but keep aspects of ourselves hidden from others. Sometimes it is useful and necessary, sometimes it is not.

Vignette.

It was just after midnight. Avril and I awoke to a bashing on the windows and the front door. Our four and six – year old children awoke frightened and crying. While Avril tried to comfort them, I went to the front door. Outside were a black lady and a teenage girl who turned out to be her daughter. It looked as though the mother had been assaulted, her eyes were

very swollen. Though upset myself, I put on my 'minister's mask', opened the door and set about helping them. Eventually they, or more specifically the mother, calmed down. The daughter had been calm throughout. Gradually the story came out. The mother had not been assaulted but had been crying about an argument she had been having with her daughter. It made her so upset that she was unable to sleep. She decided to take her daughter to the minister there and then, to resolve the dispute, otherwise she might not sleep at all!

I was under the impression that ministers were not supposed to get angry. I listened and tried to help the mother and daughter. But sometimes anger is justified and healthy, yet to keep the mask in place we try not to show it, even denying it to ourselves. But inside it really eats us up, and that takes energy. To complicate matters even further the South African socio – political environment means that you definitely may not get angry with someone from another racial group. This subject will be dealt with in Chapter 2:25-26 and 29.

Ideally we should be genuine in all situations and in all relationships. That is how Jesus was. But sometimes the mask is necessary. When a wedding is being conducted on a Saturday afternoon directly after a funeral service, it would be unfair on the bridal couple to allow the sadness of the funeral overlap the joy of the wedding. It is almost a matter of 'changing hats' which is something the minister has to do regularly. Feelings have to be suppressed for the 'greater good.' It is simply being responsible. On the other hand it is being untrue to the way one feels – is it then being deceptive? This issue is complex and there are no easy answers. The fact is that we, of necessity, wear masks (Sanford 1982:12).

How does this relate to the minister as counsellor? For some of us our counselling is based (unless of course we are Christian Fundamentalists) on certain counselling techniques or methods. The writer tends towards Roger's

Person – Centred Therapy. This method presupposes 'genuineness', 'empathy' and 'unconditional positive regard' (Hjelle and Ziegler 1986:402-418).

Unconditional Positive Regard

Rogers feels it is possible to give or receive positive regard irrespective of the worth placed on specific aspects of a person's behaviour. This means a person is accepted and respected for what he or she is – without any ifs, ands, buts. Such unconditional positive regard is strikingly evident in a mother's love for her child when – regardless of the child's actions thoughts and feelings – he or she is genuinely loved and respected.

Hjelle and Ziegler (1986:412).

Genuineness

...without front or façade, openly being the feelings and attitudes, which at the moment are flowing in him...the element of self – awareness, meaning that the feelings the therapist is experiencing are available to him, available to his awareness, and also that he is able to live these feelings, to be them in the relationship, and able to communicate them if appropriate...being himself, not denying himself
Roger (1967:101).

Empathy

The ability to get inside the other person, look at the world through the perspective or frame of reference of the other person, get a feeling for what the other person's world is all about. It is also important to communicate that understanding to the other person. The person being helped needs to realise the counsellor has picked up both the feelings and the behaviour and experience underlying these feelings
Egan (1975:76).

As an ex - lecturer of the writer once said 'empathy allows us to feel with, not feel for the person who comes to us seeking help... feeling for is sympathy, not empathy'.

Empathy is key to most successful counselling and unconditional positive regard not always easy. But what of the concept of 'genuineness'? Surely genuineness and wearing masks are dialectically opposed concepts?

Masks may be necessary, if not ideal. At the same time to wear a mask means to pay a price. It burns mental, emotional and spiritual energy to wear a mask. Does it compromise the counselling relationship? Perhaps not if one has the 'genuine' desire to be there for the person and the 'genuine' interest in the person and their problem. However the side of being genuine to oneself must be compromised. It costs.

Failure.

The final stressor to be discussed is not only unique to ministry but common to many aspects of work and service, especially in the lives of those who strive to make a real difference in other's lives. The exhaustion caused by failure. What happens when you fail or feel as though you have failed, again and again? What happens when you fail those who need you most? For many years the writer was haunted by the question 'could I have done more for my friend?' Could the writer have somehow seen his desperation and hopelessness, said or done something to stop him from committing suicide. Was there no way his life could have been spared? Theoretically he was in the ideal position to help.

Somehow a building project can fail, yet we get past it. The expansion can take place later. The addition of an evening service to an evening programme does not have to work, if people don't support it maybe they

don't want it. Those types of failures we can get beyond, as long as we are sure we have done our part to facilitate success. These can be viewed as temporary setbacks.

However when we fail people, that is different. Sometimes there is no second chance. A recent incident illustrating this point follows: A Christian friend of ours chose not to come home immediately when his wife called him in a desperately confused and panicked state, he chose to finish doing something that was not really important. Though she was hysterical, he felt she could wait. He returned home a couple of minutes after she had shot herself, and she died that afternoon apologising for having hurt those she loved. He still lives with the guilt of not having responded when she cried out. He feels as though he failed her when she needed him most. Some situations you simply cannot put back together.

That is the problem with 'people work'. It is rumored doctors bury their mistakes – not so with ministry. The feeling of having failed people tends to follow you wherever you go, unless you can learn to forgive yourself.

Roland Croucher has an interesting point to make regarding the above comments on failure. He believes we need

an adequate failure concept. Most equate failure with sin. Christians generally have not developed an adequate theology of failure. God is in the refining, rather than the success business. If we believe God is always committed to 'success' in our terms, failure will always be a negative experience. God's primary purpose is our growth and development, whether we succeed in human terms or not
Rogers (1967:4).

This is difficult to internalise when the minister takes the failure personally. On the other hand there is always the risk of trying to 'play' God.

In such a situation the doctor (minister?) becomes the great helper. He is the source of all hope, feared, respected, hated and

admired, he seems at times an almost God Like redeemer (Guggenbuhl-Craig 1971:83).

What a vain, self - absorbed, un - Christlike view. As mentioned earlier this wanting to act 'on behalf of God' – almost as God, is a characteristic of 'Burnout,' after all Ecclesiastes says there's a time for all things, including a time to die...(Bible: Ecclesiastes 3 v 2).

Projects collapse, groups cease to meet, ministries fail as do ministers, and people we love die. But does that mean we failed? Not if we can learn from the experiences and through these lessons become more understanding, caring and compassionate in the ministry to which we are called. The bumper sticker 'Please be patient – God has not finished with me yet' comes to mind. Or perhaps even better the misprinted poster ' Pobody's Nerfect.' Failure remains though a drain on spiritual, emotional and mental resources.

Conclusion.

The first third of this chapter dealt with the nature of stress itself and the establishment of a relationship between stress and 'Burnout.' The latter two thirds have been dedicated to a description of some of the key stressors unique to ministry. This chapter does not purport to supply all the answers, although adequate internal resources such as a growth – orientated spiritual life, and external resources such as meaningful social support for the minister, do play a role and will be addressed in subsequent chapters, as mentioned in the introduction. Chapter one is more a statement of the problem. As one of the four chapters it's purpose is to provide a foundation upon which to build an adequate holistic response, to the very real problem of both stress and it's consequence, Burnout in the ministry.

CHAPTER TWO

CROSS – CULTURAL

ASPECTS AFFECTING

STRESS IN MINISTRY

CROSS – CULTURAL ASPECTS AFFECTING STRESS IN MINISTRY

This chapter illustrates the journey of a newly qualified white middle - class Methodist minister from his own, culturally exclusive understanding of bereavement ministry to a more culturally inclusive understanding.

Throughout this chapter the stress of cross - cultural ministry is evident as the minister struggles to understand grief and bereavement in a cultural context different from his own. Though bereavement is only one example, much of the stress and stressors he experiences are common to cross - cultural ministry. Over the past four or five years the Methodist Church of Southern Africa has attempted to implement a more culturally competent training programme for the ministers entering training. Within the first year or two the Probationer minister is stationed in a cultural context different from his/her home and background for a period of one year. The idea behind this, being to facilitate a greater cross - cultural awareness and sensitivity. Whether this works or not is debatable.

The format of this discussion will consist of :

1. A brief academic and cultural background of the minister
2. A description of a (Christian) Indian funeral
3. A verbatim discussion with an Indian pastor
4. An academic reflection upon the verbatim
5. A brief attempt to formulate a model for ethnic competency drawn from the above discussion and reflection
6. Concluding comments on our present approach to training

Academic and Cultural background of the minister.

The minister was the son of a white couple who had immigrated to South Africa in 1975. After completion of his schooling he had completed a Degree in Theology. The university he attended was predominantly white. Though challenged by the thinking of Liberation Theology at university, it was a challenge he chose to ignore. He found more satisfaction in his Pastoral Theology and Psychology studies. Bereavement work challenged him in a very different way than Liberation Theology ever had and he began to read in the area. Kübler-Ross, Ruth Kopp and even Helmut Thielicke were studied. In this way his middle - class, white experience, based upon the care for individuals and immediate family members going through the bereavement process became more and more entrenched. Two years in white middle class Churches did nothing to change his ideas, neither did two years as a Defence Force Chaplain. Then came his first cross - cultural appointment.

The predominantly white congregation and the exclusively Indian congregation just did not seem to work in the same way. Things that worked in the one did not seem to work in the other, specifically what seemed to work in the white congregation did not seem to work in the Indian congregation. Then came the first death in the Indian Church. This was an area in which the minister initially felt totally competent. Already the local Hospice Chaplain, and with a fair amount of academic training behind him, he felt he would surely be well equipped for this situation. He would go and see the family, spend a while with them, and encourage the wife to share what she thought would be important at the funeral itself such as favourite Bible readings and hymns. The wife and children would be the major focus of the minister's attention and his sermon, along with an emphasis on Eternal life and Jesus the Healer. The bereaved family were now the minister's number one priority – he would see them immediately.

A case study of an Indian funeral.

The man had died at about midday on Thursday. The minister found out a few hours later and hurried to the low - cost housing where the family resided. Upon arrival he was surprised to see what appeared to be the whole Church crowded into the tiny two - roomed building. Almost before being able to express his condolences he was pulled aside by the Church's lay - leader, a very wealthy and successful businessman, and was informed that it was necessary to hold a service there and then. The minister wanted to spend time with the wife and children, but it seemed as though this service was more important. Muslim and Hindu friends of the family were also present in the house. After this impromptu service the minister was informed that the service would take place on Saturday. The lay - leader also told the minister that there would be a viewing of the body at the home, before the service at the Church. From the Church they would all go to the graveside. The minister must preach at each venue – something to which he was not at all accustomed – nor to having the lay - leader directing everything and everyone.

That Saturday the minister had prepared his main address for the Church service. God's never - ending love, His abiding presence, comfort to the broken - hearted and eternal life were the main themes. Shortly after 9am the lay - leader arrived at the minister's home. He informed the minister that his address would not be about those themes, but rather the judgement of God, damnation for all who fail to accept Jesus; as there would be Muslims and Hindus present at the Church service and they needed to be saved. Evangelism was to be the thrust of what was said – the minister felt very uncomfortable.

At eleven o'clock the minister arrived at the home. A large tent had been set up outside and filled with chairs. Large cooking pots were on open fires and

the tent was crowded. 'You must preach to the people after the viewing of the body' was the instruction handed down by the lay - leader - he was in charge again. The undertaker opened the coffin and the friends and relatives filed past, they seemed hysterical. After all had viewed the body the minister was told to begin preaching. With all the moaning and wailing he felt he would never be heard, it was all so foreign to him. 'They will stop as soon as you begin to preach' the lay - leader told him. That seemed impossible as they were all so terribly upset. He began to preach and instantly the wailing stopped.

After the service they proceeded to the Church. Throughout the service people came in and went out, calling to each other across the aisles. Even during their prayers the noise continued. Nobody seemed phased by the unorthodox behaviour of the mourners. The minister spoke of God's judgement and the Indian Christians in the congregation nodded their approval. Yet it did not feel right - where was God's love in all of this?

The procession then moved to the graveside. Christian graves were on the far side of the cemetery, Muslim and Hindu graves on the near side, though also separated from one another. Various important people spoke at the graveside and finally so did the minister. It felt to him as though it was more of a 'production' than a funeral. By 2:30pm the funeral was over. The minister wished to go home but was told that the family had prepared a meal and he was to attend or else he would cause great offence.

At the meal the men ate first, being served by the women. The minister found this uncomfortable. Why were the women not permitted to join in the meal? He was told that there would be another service at the house the next Thursday and another again after forty days, and finally another on the first anniversary of the death. At 5pm the minister finally arrived home, physically exhausted and emotionally and spiritually confused. He decided to go and see an Indian minister (pastor) he knew.

Verbatim.

Note: all names have been changed to protect identity.

Trevor Naidoo is a pastor from a traditional Protestant Church who had converted from Hinduism fifteen years previously. An approachable man, he is well equipped to answer the young minister's questions. For simplicity Trevor will be referred to as P and the minister as M.

P1 Good morning, welcome to my home. I understand you had a rough time last weekend with brother Pillay's funeral (Trevor smiles as he speaks).

M1 You're telling me! Even when I think I know what I am doing, I still burn my fingers. I was hoping you could give me some insights. I find cross-cultural ministry to have many pitfalls.

P2 Tell me what happened and I will try to explain to you what was really going on.

M2 I got the phone call about brother Pillay (the word 'brother' does not roll off the minister's lips as easily as it does from Pastor Naidoo) on Thursday. I immediately went to see the family. I wanted to spend time with the immediate family. When I got there the whole Church and all the neighbours were squeezed into the tiny house. There was no chance of being alone with the family.

P3 Our Indian communities are like that. We draw together when things get tough, and not only then either. Whether it be death or life, say a wedding, you will invariably see the whole community gathering together. It is part of our cultural heritage. You must understand that Indian communities have had to pull together while standing alone as a community for a very long time now. Under the old apartheid system we, like the

coloured people, were not white enough. Under the new government we are not black enough. Though we differ religiously i.e. Muslims, Christians and Hindus; our common ground is still quite strong – we are all Indian. The community is therefore viewed as vital.

M3 Why did we have to have to have a service immediately?

P4 Again it comes down to culture. Look at it this way. If brother Pillay were a Muslim he would have had to have been buried before the sun had set. Christian Indians have modified this view slightly, but do still want a service to be held the same night the person has died. Just not an actual burial service. You will also be required to hold a service in forty day's time, symbolic of the time between the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Another service is to be held in a year's time, which is related to our cultural heritage. Indians, whether Muslim, Hindu or Christian all have that anniversary service. Though the service will be Christian its origin is definitely in our Indian heritage.

M4 Culture and Christianity seem very entwined?

P5 They certainly are. Our Christianity is not just a pure form that landed in our lap, uncorrupted by mortal design. It is based upon our cultural experience.

M5 I have never really thought about that. Based on what you are saying, does that mean that there is no room for individual care?

P6 Care of the community comes first. If afterward there is a need for individual or family care, go to them then; but always prioritise the community. The family will expect that and you will not offend them.

M6 Another thing that I found disconcerting was when the body was viewed the women began to wail hysterically. The men did not do this. In two years of ministering to this congregation I have never experienced this and they have always seemed to be quite in control of their emotions. As soon as I began to preach they stopped immediately, almost as though it had been under their control all the time. I had a sense that somehow it was allowed or even expected to occur then, but not a few minutes later when I began to speak. I am not able to control my emotions that well. If I am crying you don't stop me by simply talking to me; it takes a while to bring my emotions under control.

P7 Again it is a clash of cultures. The other Indians at the viewing would expect the wailing from the close female relatives, men would never do it. Women are expected to express their grief in such a way. On the other hand they have been taught that when the pastor speaks they must listen and silence is appropriate. All that they are doing is fulfilling what certain prescribed rules expect of them.

M7 Why then, if they knew silence was expected, was there so much noise during the Church service?

P8 If you looked closely you would have seen that it was not the Christian Indians making all the noise. I was in a Hindu service recently where one of our congregation members married a Hindu man. It sounded more like a cattle sale than a marriage service. The priest' just puts his head down and goes for it. He ignores all the noise and it would be best if you did too. The Christian Indians understand.

M8 I found Bala's involvement quite distracting, even threatening. He seemed to take over complete control of the whole situation even though he was not the bereaved party. What gave him the right and why did the family

permit this? Surely they would have wanted a say in what was happening? I know that he is a competent man, perhaps they were only relying on him for that moment?

P9 The whole community knows Bala. There are various factors that make him the most important figure at any community event in his home area. All the factors interact and essentially come up with the same message – ‘listen to Bala’. He is a male in his senior years in a society that values the role of the patriarch. He is wealthy. I wonder how your Church would manage without his financial contribution? He is also most likely the most highly educated person in the general geographic vicinity and in the community. And lastly, if you know anything about the ‘caste’ system in India, you would rightly guess that he is a member of the Upper Caste. In contrast to the rest of the congregation who are from the Lower Caste, sometimes referred to as ‘coolies’ or even the ‘untouchables’. All these factors interact to ensure that Bala will have centre - stage at any meeting and will always have the final say. Remember that one day you will leave, Bala will still be there. They must remain loyal to him or else he may leave. What will happen to the Church if he and his money were to leave? He is in an incredibly powerful position.

M9 It is strange; all my academic training and my reading up until recently have focused on the ‘commonness’ of the human experience. Yet so much over the past few weeks has been so different from what I was expecting. I thought that working with the bereaved would at least, be similar.

P10 Cross - cultural ministry is never going to be easy. Try not to stress too much about the differences, rather try to appreciate them. Different does not mean wrong. I wish more people would learn to celebrate one another’s differences rather than fighting or fearing them.

M10 Thanks Trevor; you have given me a starting point. I have a great deal to think about and a lot to learn. It is almost like being back at university again, only everything has a different slant or approach. I appreciate your help.

Academic insights.

Some academic reflection upon the interview with Pastor Naidoo can be an enriching experience. The bulk of the discussion will now be analysed. By far the greatest information that can be gleaned from the verbatim is found in the role of the lay - leader. It is in understanding his role and what makes him such an imposing and impressive figure that one really gains insight not only into cross - cultural ministry but also all the other social factors that interact to make pastoral ministry such a challenging, yet fulfilling field of ministry.

In M2 the minister clearly had certain expectations of appropriate care for the family, specifically individual care. The Community did not feature too highly on his agenda. Kim would point out that the minister's background and his founding ideology are from Classical Liberalism; how the minister acts in ministry is clearly linked to his ideological milieu (1999:607). This article, having examined speeches and other messages from as broad a range as politicians to ordinary people on the streets of America finds the underlying ideology constantly impacting not only on the person's address, but also on the way they think. A key emphasis in this thinking is laid on the individual. The individual is so often the focus of attention. Couture and Hunter draw an extremely similar conclusion, only in this case the more 'political' term Classical Liberalism is replaced by the more 'religious' term, Protestant Liberalism (1997:32-33). The emphasis remains the same – the individual comes first. Both are Western concepts. The Indian community that the minister was working with has an Eastern ideology underlying their

Christian experience, where the needs of the community come before those of the individual. This is not unique to the Indian community. This concept of the needs of the community surpassing those of the individual is also found in the thinking of Black African Theology. With specific reference to bereavement work Buyo addresses this theme powerfully in his article addressing death and care for the dying in the African context. (1992:127). Protestant Liberalism has underpinned the whole of the minister's training. His ideology and the ideology of the congregation he is serving are literally worlds apart. The same would be true if he were serving a black African congregation.

Daniels, D'Andrea, Kim and Soo offer further insight into this issue. In an article describing the way an Asian American trainee related to a European American supervisor many problems emerged including divergent cultural values impacting interpersonal communication; and cultural differences reflected in their different expectations of the goals of counselling and different expectations of supervision (1999:195-196). Applying this to the problem between minister and bereaved community one can see the problem every bit as clearly. He came into the situation with certain goals and expectations. They on the other hand, expected something quite different. It is not so much a question of who was right and who was wrong, rather a question of compatibility.

In M6 the question of wailing was raised. The Indian Christians, though having an Eastern background, have for the past couple of generations, been part of a Western Church. Yet certain expectations remain. Porter and Samovar discuss how much of emotional display is universal, but at the same time how much is mediated by culture (1998:451). The wailing at the funeral is a classic example of this discussion. The wailing is expected of the Indian women (Christian, Muslim or Hindu); crying at a loss is almost a universal experience, but a specific type or style of wailing is expected at an

Indian funeral. Culture plays a pivotal role in that men are not expected to wail. At the same time Christianity expects silence when the minister preaches. Hanson, Lynch and Wayman would probably describe the degree of Transcultural Identification of the Indians as Bi - Cultural not Mainstreamers (those who have totally assimilated Western standards), nor Culturally Contained (1990:128). Somewhere in between lie those who are Bi - Cultural. This Bi - Culturalism can lead to such apparent inconsistencies as the one moment hysterically wailing and the next appearing calm and focused upon the speaker. It would be difficult for the casual observer to understand.

M8 and M9 contain the most important information. Before dealing with this crucial discussion we deal briefly with M7. Couture and Hunter pick up on the important issue of the 'commonness' of the human experience (1997:36). Possibly the greatest problem with the young minister's training was his assumption that the 'common human experience' was that of his own white, middle class, liberal Protestant background. To view all cultural experiences as valid but to essentially underpin this with the assumption, consciously or unconsciously, that one's own is actually, or should actually be the norm, is a recipe for disaster. It shows a disrespect and lack of sensitivity for cultural differences that can ultimately corrupt the effectiveness of ministry itself. It is based on an arrogance that can only impede effective pastoral care.

The lay - leader clearly intimidates the young minister. What makes him so powerful? As Pastor Naidoo said, the Indian community values the role of the patriarch. Bala is the oldest man in the Church who is still mentally competent. Economically and educationally he is very much at an advantage. Add to this his being of the Upper Caste, and one is dealing with a very powerful man. All this explains his position of power over fellow Indians in the community. Mak, Westwood, Ishiyama and Barker would add to this the very nature of interpersonal cross - cultural anxiety, making the

relationship between White minister and Indian lay - leader a very stressful one, especially when the relationship finds itself in the Indian context where Bala is naturally at home and comfortable (1999:77).

Let us return to the lay - leader's relationship with his fellow Indians. Couture and Hunter pick up a comment attributed to Cotton Mather 1690 '...both reason and Scripture attribute honour to old age...' (1997:86). Unlike the changes in our Western society over the past few decades, the Indian community still holds the patriarch in high regard. Bala had recognition purely because he was older than most of the congregation; his gender was naturally an advantage in a community that holds males in higher regard than females. Unfortunately as Couture and Hunter point out, those gender differences have continually been associated with inferiority, especially where females are concerned (1997:58). Bala's role was also one of control in that he was often the link between the white minister's cultural background and the Indian congregation. Erkut, Alarcon, Coll, Tropp and Garcia point out how this linking role, being part of both communities (white minister representing white community and cultural values) and the Indian Christian community, facilitates being an important agent of communication (1999:216).

His wealth, position in the Christian community (lay - leader), gender in the patriarchal society, and his age, all point to Bala being a highly influential man. One must still deal with his Caste, though. He is a member of the Upper Caste and the rest of the congregation on the whole, is from the Lower Caste. Kagitcibasi and Barry put it this way:

Clearly cultural (or ethnic) effects must be disentangled from the effects of class and status variation...unless relative social class standing is known, differences between samples cannot be attributed to ethnic or cultural differences...culture cannot be assumed to be the main independent variable if social class is not adequately dealt with (1989:496)

Why so much emphasis on the lay - leader? This may be because it is so easy to confuse cultural differences with social differences. When they get confused it becomes easy to lose one's cross - cultural competence; to look in all the wrong places for the answers. Bala is Indian and the minister is white, therefore will be a degree of cross - cultural interpersonal anxiety. It is because of the cultural difference there will be misunderstandings in interpersonal communications and goals for the bereavement work. But if one does not bear in mind his social standing, gender, age and economic power an incorrect picture of two cultural backgrounds interacting will be portrayed. All of the above contribute to the overall picture.

Model for Cross – Cultural ministry.

How then do we move toward a model of Ethnic Competence?

Is cross - cultural ministry a realistic possibility? Ross and Phipps deal specifically with Western ministry to an Indian family and point out the importance of not pushing the family to be too expressive in their grief as emotional expressiveness is not too common in customary Indian culture(1986:262). They also pointed out encouraging the family to deal with the loss in their own way, recognising the family's acquaintance with their own bereavement traditions and rituals. This is a valid starting point. Hanson, Lynch and Wayman propose a more competent model (1990:125-129). In their article dealing with the cultural diversities of families they speak of a four - pronged approach to ministry. Without this it is presumed the ability to provide services to culturally diverse families will be impeded. The needs of the family must be met in a way that reflects the cultural, ethnic and language background of the family. Ethnic competence is essential, acting in ways that are congruent with the behaviour and expectations of the members of a particular culture. This does not mean conducting oneself as though we are members of that particular culture.

FOUR - PRONGED APPROACH TO MINISTRY

A four – pronged approach to cross – cultural ministry is proposed by Hanson, Lynch and Wayman (1990:125-129).

1. Values and Assumptions.

It is essential to clarify one's own values and assumptions. Ministers may hold and will hold certain values and assumptions but it is vital that they do not assume that all families share them. It is also essential to establish to what degree they support cultural pluralism i.e. that extent to which they support assimilation into the dominant culture rather than maintenance of traditional values, customs and beliefs (1990:126).

If the minister is attempting cross – cultural ministry the minister must acknowledge and understand the perspective from which they come, because that perspective shapes the way they observe and perceive that particular situation. Cultural 'spectacles' must be acknowledged. If the minister is white with a Western orientation in his training that will likely mean that thinking will be along individual as opposed to collective lines. If the congregation has a black African or Eastern background, in all likelihood that community will be more highly valued than any one individual. This will effect the way the community understands the role of the minister. If both minister and community maintain their own cultural world – view regarding bereavement ministry, with no respect or attempt to understand the other's values and assumptions, a clash of cultures is inevitable. The attempted bereavement ministry is doomed and stress levels of minister and community rise catastrophically.

On the other hand possibly the group the minister seeks to serve may have adopted many of the ministers own cultural practices and ideologies. In this case ministry from a Western world – view may be well received. The question is to what degree the community have adopted the minister's own world – view and to what extent he has attempted to understand the community's world – view.

2. Ethnographic information.

The minister must ascertain ethnographic information which includes:

i) The ethnic group with whom the family identify

In South Africa there are numerous possibilities. Within the black community ten different languages are represented, if Afrikaans is included. All are official languages. Black South African, as a label, indicates very little culturally. Within the Indian community the caste system is often the way of distinguishing one family from another. Therefore the ethnic group with whom the family identify is not always simple to discern, or obvious.

ii) The social organisation of the ethnic community

Considerations that need to be taken into account include : Who is in authority? Does the family experience matriarchal or patriarchal leadership? Is leadership vested within the young or elders of the community? Is authority exercised from within the family or from some head of the community? Who has an inferior position? Who takes responsibility for raising the children? Who is the provider?

iii) The prevailing belief system

Do the immediate and extended family belong to the Christian faith? What about denominational difference within the Christian faith? Is the prevailing belief system supportive of a minister from another culture assisting the family in their time of need?

iv) Become familiar with the history of the ethnic group

Effective ministry requires relevant knowledge of the culture and traditions of the group being ministered to. In the South African context due consideration must be given to the fact that certain communities were especially impacted by Apartheid policies and how those policies affected the lives of the members of those communities. Without a sensitive knowledge of this history, ministry in this context is severely handicapped.

v) Ascertain the attitude of the group toward seeking help

As commented upon under point iii, not all cultural groups expect or accept help being offered from outside of their own cultural context. Within others the intervention would be welcomed and expected. In the midst of crisis, is the community more or less open to being helped? Do they really want to be assisted in working through the crisis or do they want to rely on familiar coping structures? On an even deeper level, do they want or see a need to change?

3. Transcultural Identification.

The minister must understand the degree of Transcultural Identification. As discussed earlier this refers to those who are Mainstreamers (totally immersed in dominant culture), Bi - cultural individuals and the Culturally Contained. The degree of Transcultural Identification will determine how effective the minister can hope to be and the approach he should take (1990:127).

A humorous illustration of transcultural – identification came to the writers attention recently. An Indian deputy headmaster of a predominantly white school was asked to accompany his colleagues to participate in a panel assessing matric Trials. Upon their arrival at the designated venue the Indian man expressed his surprise and disapproval stating that they should have told him that there would be 'so many Indians' present!

Over the past five years he had become deeply involved within the community that supported the traditionally white school where he worked. He and his family had taken up residence on the school property and both his sons were attending the school. During this period they had become very much part of the community. They worshipped at the all – white Anglican church on the property and he had become a member of the local (white) bowling club, and had recently been elected to the committee of the club. The majority of his extended family had emigrated to England three years previously. He would be viewed as a mainstreamer, having moved away from his cultural roots and become totally immersed in the dominant culture.

On the other hand he and his family could have remained culturally contained even though he had accepted the post at a 'white' school. Instead of joining the Anglican community church he could have traveled the fifteen kilometres into the Indian community to worship with them, at his old home church. Involvement in the Indian Community Chest functions could have been maintained instead of linking up with the bowls club. Though the family could not do much about the emigration of the extended family, the relationships with their Indian friends could have been maintained as opposed to socialising more and more with the white staff at the school.

It is of interest to note that in this particular case it would have cost effort, time and expense to remain culturally contained.

Somewhere between these two poles lie the bi – cultural families and individuals who are able to maintain contact and interaction with both their own culture and the dominant culture they experience. When handled well, this bi – cultural identification can be a beneficial scenario, where the best is gained from both worlds. If handled badly, it can lead to the family being stranded without cultural identity. This was illustrated earlier in the Indian pastor’s comment “ under the old apartheid system we, like the coloured people, were not white enough, under the new government we are not black enough” (P3)

4. Family context.

Family considerations are important. Views of the family toward, in this context, bereavement. Can the minister bring goals and strategies towards bereavement ministry that are in line with the family’s own goals toward overcoming the grief (1990:128)?

It will hinder ministry if the minister’s ideas of bereavement work are in conflict with the family’s ideas and goals of caring. If the minister expects the funeral service to be an hour and then be followed by tea, and seeks to impose this view of how a funeral works on those who have a completely different understanding, it will hinder the grieving process. If the family expects a day – long funeral where a services would be held at the home, church and graveside, followed by a return to the home for a meal and the minister is unwilling to accommodate these expectations, hurt and cultural offence will result. The family’s expectations need to be honoured. This respect of cultural differences must, of course, apply across the board and not be limited to funerals.

This model proposed by Hanson et al, is one which can facilitate cross - cultural ministry and lead to a far greater degree of competency for those called to this difficult yet rewarding ministry (1990:125-129).

A more holistic view of cross - cultural ministry is called for. A view that strives to be non - judgmental and also celebrates differences as opposed to viewing them as either incompetencies or weaknesses on behalf of those who are different; a view that ceases to assume one's own experience as more valid than that of another person; an acceptance that each of us is the sum of our past experiences and culture, but not necessarily limited to the above. This approach would surely serve to reduce the stresses experienced by those who minister in a cross - cultural context. Hunter says:

Cross - cultural pastoral care: Any pastoral ministry in which two or more of the participants, including the minister as helper, represent more than one culture. The key to working across cultures lies in recognising personal bias. Cultural patterns that deviate from our own are neither better nor worse but are simply different. To appreciate differences instead of being disturbed by them lies at the heart of effective pastoral care. Moreover, the appreciation of distinctive differences opens the way to understanding rather than judgement, and so makes communication more possible (1990:251).

This quotation reflects the comments made by the Indian pastor in P10 where reference was made to not stressing the differences between culture. An openness to different cultural experiences is essential to effective cross -cultural ministry (p39).

Conclusion.

This example of bereavement work in a cross - cultural context vividly illustrates the unique stressors of cross - cultural work. Whether sending young trainee ministers of one cultural background into churches of another culture, for a year, actually facilitates cross - cultural competence or not, is one issue. Whether or not they are adequately prepared for the psychological stressors involved, is in the writer's opinion a far more important question.

The policy of the MCSA over the past decade or so has been to deliberately place ministers in the second year of their six year training phase into a pastoral appointment culturally different from that to which they are accustomed. Due to the far greater number of black ministers entering the training for the Methodist church, white ministers will always be placed in black churches but black ministers will only sometimes be placed in white churches. The black ministers who are not appointed to white churches are given a semi cross - cultural experience, for example, a Zulu speaking trainee might be placed into a Xhosa congregation.

During this year of training an attempt is made to develop cross - cultural competencies through both the practical experience of living and working in an unfamiliar culture and through an academic programme that assists this development. This cross - cultural component is only one part of the academic programme for that year of training.

In the writer's opinion this academic training needs to be initiated even earlier, i.e. the first year of training. It also needs to be broader and more in - depth, possibly using the above model of cross - cultural competence to focus and structure the study programming. In addition, prior to this cross -

cultural placement of the trainee, it might be better to allow the ministers in training to explore their own stories and share them together. A deeper understanding even if it is only an intellectual one, of another's context and culture would alleviate many of the frustrations and fears that are later experienced in cross – cultural ministry. Many of the pitfalls could be avoided. This sharing of stories also facilitates the development of cross – cultural friendships without it being a forced experience. When there is no threat openness to another's experience is far more likely.

That does not mean the practical step of engaging in cross – cultural work is avoided. The writer's contention is that it must come later in the minister's training when more adequate skills have been developed. Also adequate care and concerns need to be expressed regarding the probationer minister's family, possibly resulting in a re – evaluation of where the minister should be stationed.

Why do the concepts of 'Call' and 'Gifting' appear to be ignored in the present approach to training of ministers in the Methodist church? For some ministers there is a clear call to cross – cultural ministry in their lives. Bishop Paul Verryin is an excellent example of that calling and he has the relevant gifts to engage in that ministry. 1 Corinthians 12 speaks of the Body of Christ where different roles are exercised by different people who are gifted to perform certain tasks. Is it fair then to expect all ministers to exercise a cross – cultural ministry? The reason that, in the writer's opinion we ignore call and gifting in the training of Methodist ministers, is that we are attempting to create 'model ministers' who fulfil all the traditional roles and functions of ministers, and at the same time trying to be politically correct, when in fact the church should be setting its own agenda that recognises different people, different gifts and different roles.

For those who are called and have the gifts to be effective cross – cultural ministers the training process needs to begin earlier and be more in – depth,

less threatening and developed by people who have actually experienced cross – cultural ministry. Those who do the actual training need to have experienced cross – cultural ministry in a positive way as any negativity will naturally be carried through and hamper the training process. This does not mean that they have only experienced ‘highs’ in cross – cultural ministry rather that they have successfully resolved these complicated issues in a healthy way. The above model could be a starting point to effectively prepare our ministers for cross – cultural work.

CHAPTER THREE

THE UNIQUE STRESS

OF WOMEN IN THE

MINISTRY

THE UNIQUE STRESS OF WOMEN IN THE MINISTRY

Hypothesis: Women in ministry face an additional stressor to those of their male colleagues due to gender discrimination. Patriarchy underpins both secular and religious society. The patriarchal attitudes of congregation members and officials makes ministry for a woman that much harder. Many of those attitudes are negative and often destructive to the function of the woman minister.

What is patriarchy?

'... the legal, economic and social system that validates and enforces the sovereignty of the male head of the family over it's other members...today patriarchy describes the male dominated world we live in' (Ackerman, Draper and Mashinini, 1991:95).

The patriarchal world - view seeks validation even in the writings of God's word, both Old and New Testaments. Women of God have been, and still are discriminated against based solely on their gender. This discrimination has nothing to do with their abilities or lack of abilities, gifts or lack of gifts. Therefore many women in ministry start out at a major disadvantage, having to often do far more than their male colleagues to receive equal or possibly less recognition and appreciation.

It was only ten years ago that the Anglican Church in southern Africa agreed to the ordination of women to the priesthood, after an extremely long and drawn out debate that lasted decades. Though having accepted the ordination of women to the Methodist Church many years earlier, Rev Constance Oosthuisen being the first in 1957(MCSA Directory 2002:208).

The women ministers in the Methodist Church continue to experience discrimination. This issue is highlighted in a questionnaire that is presently (August 2002) being distributed to all women ministers in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to investigate this practice. The results of the questionnaire below will be included in this dissertation if the results are not deemed to be confidential by the Women in Consultation meeting from the 25th to the 28th August 2002. The very fact though of the questions being asked illustrates the problem perceived by the Women in Consultation.

This chapter explores.

1. Patriarchy in the Bible
2. Patriarchy in the writings of the 'fathers' and other male writers
3. Patriarchy in the present as well as the recent controversy surrounding the ordination of women in the Anglican Church and it's impact on women's sense of self worth
4. Two Verbatims
 - The first with an Ordained Anglican woman priest
 - The second with an Ordained Methodist woman minister
5. A reflection upon the verbatims in identifying patriarchy as a hindrance to the ministries of both the women and an assessment of coping methods expressed in the verbatims, adopted by these two ministers to overcome the stress they experience, especially those which are clearly gender specific.

1. Patriarchy in the Bible.

Patriarchal bias is found throughout the Bible, even as early as the first book, Genesis. Genesis 3 vs 1-9, where woman is viewed as the cause of sin

and suffering. Ephesians 5 vs 21-23 and Colossians 3 vs 18-25 complicate the issue even further. Christians need teachings on these contentious issues in order to understand deeper meanings and truths being taught. They need an understanding of context and prevailing cultural practices at the time these books were written. Mpumulwana makes this clear in her essay in 'Women Hold up Half the Sky' (Ackermann, Draper and Mashinini 1991:377).

The lack of focus, certainly in the Old Testament on the role of women in ministry further confuses the issue. With fundamentalists claiming Moses wrote the Pentateuch and the bulk of the remaining 34 books having male authors, it leaves only Ruth and Esther to affirm the importance of a women's role in the fulfilling of God's plan for His chosen people. Texts such as Joel 2 vs 17-18 are far too rare. Applying cultural/material Biblical hermeneutics of struggle Masala even challenges the assertion that Esther is an empowering book for women, viewing this too as a patriarchal text (1988:9).

The balance in the New Testament is no better. However there is a difference, especially regarding the writers of the gospel as opposed to many post - Pauline and post - Petrine writers.

Equality of believers, sisters and brothers, appears to have been a starting point in the gospels. At the same time there did appear to be a hierarchically ordered superiority of ministers versus the Christian congregation (Fiorenza 1984: 285). The gradual development of patriarchal leadership appeared more towards the end of the second and the beginning of the third century, a shift from the house to the Household of God. This would have entailed a shift of authority and influence from wealthy members who could well have been women, as well as men, as the administrative local officers of the Church (Fiorenza 1984:287). The elders, in this case a council or committee

of officers whose membership was based upon seniority and patriarchal status.

This resulted in

- the patriarchalisation of local Church and leadership
- the merger of prophetic and apostolic leadership with the patriarchally defined office of Bishop
- the relegation of women's leadership to marginal positions and its restriction to the sphere of women (Fiorenza 1984:288)

The language of 2 Timothy 2 vs 20 makes the patriarchal bias clear when the writer indicates the administrator (Bishop?) should, among other qualities, only have 'one wife'. Subordinate members of the household must in turn, subject themselves to the head of the house, including wives (Titus 2 vs 5). The pastoral epistles continually emphasize obedience and submission to those in authority, invariably men. Age or gender qualifications therefore surpass spiritual and organizational resources or giftedness. The message of 1 Timothy 2vs 11 and Titus 2 vs 3-5 together say women presbyters are to be priestly, but their teaching is to be restricted to women. However, throughout the centuries women's authority as official prophets and teachers could not be totally eroded. This was possibly because of the gospel writer's defense and encouragement of the woman's role in ministry. The Pastorals intent to maintain 'right teaching' and transmission of that teaching by men, and to demand 'good works' of Christian women, would always have to find an answer to the gospel writers insistence of the co - equal discipleship of all Christians.

The writer of 1 Peter and the Pastorals could have been taking his stance in order to avoid causing tension with or giving offence to the dominant society. In contrast the Markan Jesus clearly states that giving offence and

experiencing suffering must not be shunned. True disciples must expect suffering and persecution (Fiorenza 1984:317). Unlike post - Pauline texts urging slaves, children and women into submission, the Markan Jesus urges those who are first to accept fully such persons of low status and to become their servants. Whilst pagan leadership is based upon power and domination of others, among Christians such patriarchal relationships of dominance are forbidden. Leaders must be servants of all. Domination free leadership and experiencing suffering and persecution is part of the Christian lifestyle.

Together with the Roman centurion - who - as witness of the suffering and death of Jesus - confesses Him as the Son of God, the women disciples under the cross signify that the community of Mark, including it's leadership, was open across social, religious, sexual and ethnic lines... (Fiorenza 1984:321).

John's gospel supports this open concept of leadership and the servanthood associated with it. Whereas in the Pastorals the enrolled widows are required to have washed the feet of the saints, Jesus washes His disciple's feet. This action of love He clearly expects to be followed by all His disciples (John 13). All members have received the Spirit and are born again (John 3 vs 3-9).

Because of the accounts portrayed in the gospels of Mark and John, of the women's faithful discipleship, servanthood and leadership, their ministry cannot be ignored. They challenge patriarchal oppression. To ignore this message is to throw away a central theme in two gospels.

The problem though is that most Christians, whether in leadership or not, fail to read so deeply. The focus remains upon the twelve disciples, all male. The Lord's prayer begins 'Our Father....' Whichever gospel you read it in. The New Testament can easily be used to endorse a patriarchal view of Christianity and Christian leadership. Daly expresses this perspective clearly in saying

If God in 'His' heaven is a father ruling 'His' people, then it is in the nature of things and according to divine plan and the order of the universe that society be male - dominated (1973:13).

2. The writings of the Fathers.

The writings of the Church Fathers and subsequent male scribes and authors have not sought to redress this imbalance, tending instead to maintain the inequalities. Some of the statements would seem more appropriate as headlines on the front page of People Magazine or similar non - factual or misleading, even inflammatory newsprint.

Tertullian wrote 'Do you not know that you are Eve?...you are the devil's gateway...how easily you destroy man, the image of God' (Daly 1973:87).

John Damascene remarked 'Woman is a sick she - ass...a hideous tapeworm...the advance post of hell' (Keane 1988:4).

Chrysostoms' description is as degrading, describing women as '...a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a painted ill' (Jewett 1980:6).

The lack of writings presenting an alternate view, a healthy complimentary view of women is a grave concern. There appear to be little, if any, early writings that affirm the value and worth of the partner that God has given man. The articles and works that are in place either degrade, or else ignore, the roles and concerns of women.

Women experience patriarchy both consciously as an affront and unconsciously as a conditioning exercise in the religious exercise of Christian belief...both one's nature as well as the reality in which one lives, is defined for one...the perceivers and definers

are usually from the dominant group...male (Ackerman in Ackerman, Draper and Mashinini, 1991:97).

This hierarchical organization is restrictive and limiting. It is not just limiting to women, in the writer's opinion. Male and female should be in a complimentary relationship. Positions of inferiority or superiority are obstructions to either male or female fulfilling their true potential. Not only do the individuals who practice, or else are the victims of patriarchy, suffer - but so does the Work of God. We fail our God - given task of transforming our world because we are not transformed ourselves. Moltmann-Wendell, quoting a woman psychologist who deals with nervous disorders 'Guilt feelings are the basic problems of a woman's existence' (1986:156). The problem with pervasive feminine guilt is that it militates against experiencing true liberation and forgiveness for actual guilt. This guilt, in the writer's opinion, is not limited to women. For many men there is an awareness of this inequality and injustice. As they become more conscious of these things they realise their own contribution toward this imbalance, whether by compliance or ignorance. The kingdom of God can only really come when men and women work together in a relationship based upon equality not patriarchy; the guilt is shared. Our humanity is compromised, both male and female.

In some recent African women's theologies we can see challenges to the status quo and the desire to bring healing to the Church and the community through men and women coming together on an equal footing (Oduyoyo 2001:45). Justice and human dignity must be for all, male and female (2001:7). One exciting feature within the work of the African women theologians is that their starting point is one of opening dialogue and working together with the male theologians. Unlike the North American Feminist theologians, their approach is not as confrontational or seeking to cause further division between men and women. The God of Creation and the God of Redemption is the same God. All were created equal, all can be equally redeemed (2001:59).

The writings of the second century Greco - Roman world, and the writings of black African women theologians in the twentieth century, are worlds apart. The voices of the gospel writers John and Mark that worked so hard to affirm the value of women, were gradually overwhelmed by the post - Petrine and Pauline writers. Patriarchy gradually gained strength and the voice of women in ministry became less and less acknowledged. However over the past few decades women's voices have again begun to be recognised in North America, Europe and Africa. They seek equality and the opportunity to serve side by side with their male counterparts. When taken seriously, many of the gender specific stressors facing women in the ministry will be removed.

3. The Ministry of Women.

The issue of serving side by side has come into sharp focus in the Church of the Province of South Africa (CPSA) with regard to the ordination of women to the ministry. The position of the Anglican Church on this issue is considered relevant at this point because

1. the issue is fairly recent and is well documented (CPSA Synod reports 1960-1992)
2. because the ordination of women in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) was resolved many years ago (the issue in MCSA is not , in the writer's opinion, one of ordination, but of respect, equality and acceptance regarding women and their ministries)
3. the first verbatim focuses on an Anglican woman priest who was ordained at the ground - breaking Synod of 1992

In 1862 the order of Deaconesses was resumed in England and recognised at Lambeth conference in 1897. Almost 100 years after it's formation the

Provincial Synod of the CPSA issued a resolution calling for the appointment of '...a commission to investigate the theological, ministerial and other considerations involved in the election of women to Provincial Synod...' (Provincial Synod Report 1960:38) The document concluded indicating a duty of the Churches to seek new forms of ministry to respond to new situations in the world today.

In 1970 a report on the ministry of women, commissioned for the CPSA by the Archbishop of Cape Town made its appearance. It addressed a perceived concern that there were two separate roles in the Church, one for men and one for women. An apparent prejudice against widening the scope of women's service was also noted (Ordination of Women 1970:5). The belief was also stated that the Holy Spirit was leading the church toward the acceptance of women in the Priesthood. There were no conclusive theological arguments noted for or against the Ordination of women. A detailed study was recommended on this issue and also the issue of giving woman Church workers full recognition, including them in clergy meetings and decision making and providing them with adequate salaries and pension benefits (Ackerman et al 1991:224).

The 1973 Synod appointed a commission to explore the patterns of ministry developing in the universal Church and the place of women in these patterns. A further resolution stated

that the Synod be aware of and take whatever action is possible into the whole question of the Laws that deprive women of their rights and make them to be perpetual minors (CPSA 1973:48).

The 1976 Synod received the report on the Ordination of women. Many objections were raised. Biblical, psychological and even regarding the Unity issue with the other Catholic and Orthodox Churches. Unity was viewed as more important than the Ordination of women (CPSA: 1976)

Over the next few years many for and against issues were raised regarding the Ordination of women to the Priesthood. The CPSA Synod acknowledged many difficulties with the Ordination issue, yet also recognised women's gifting to serve, including Ordination to the Diaconate, but not to the Priesthood. The decision to Ordain was continually postponed.

In 1982 an attempt by the Swaziland synod to approve a motion for the Ordination of women was defeated. Laity saying yes, clergy split, and the Bishop saying no. In 1985 Bishop of Johannesburg, Desmond Tutu, supported the rights of women by encouraging their liberation and calling for the use of inclusive language (Seek 1985).

In 1989 at the Provincial Synod meeting at St Thomas' in Durban, the Commission on the Ordination of women proposed the following motion:

That this Synod believes that the Ordination of women to the Priesthood is consistent with the gospel of our Lord Jesus, and therefore authorizes the Bishops of the Province to Ordain women who have been duly selected and trained for the Priestly ministry (Ackerman et al 1991:234).

Needing a two thirds majority, this motion also failed. The vote tally was : Bishops 58%, clergy 56% and laity 66% in favour.

Gradually between 1990 and 1992 in all its Diocese, motions approving the Ordination of women (CPSA: 1992). A long, tiring and hurtful journey eventually came to an end. What does it mean in practice? Have the objections really ceased in the CPSA, or the MCSA, regarding women in the ministry? Is patriarchy really dead?

4. Verbatims.

Verbatim One

This interview took place at the office of a white woman Anglican minister in her early sixties, ordained in 1992. To maintain confidentiality she will be referred to as Ann. Prior to the interview Ann had received the questionnaire dealing with stress and Burnout in ministry found in Appendix A of this document. After having greeted Ann I thanked her for being prepared to answer my questions and explained the nature of the research I am engaged in. I asked her whether she thought the questionnaire to be relevant to her own experience.

The designation A refers to the contributions of Ann to the conversation and the designation P to my contributions.

- A1 As you can see from the questionnaire you gave me last week, I have ended up marking several of the items. I am aware that I have been under a great deal of pressure for quite a while now. I am so glad to have James (her new colleague) to assist me. Three services on a Sunday, services during the week, and all the administration of a large Church become quite draining. I have also had a funeral this week. It is not so much the funeral itself, but all the preparation and counselling related to it. This was particularly hard. The man who had died was pretty much anti - Church, his wife a close friend of mine. Some people thought I shouldn't do the funeral.
- P1 It must have been quite difficult trying to comfort your friend and at the same time deal with those objecting to you taking her husband's funeral service.

- A2 It was. How can people object to you taking a funeral? It didn't matter that he was Joan's husband. I would have taken the service anyway. It is an opportunity to show the Church cares.
- P2 You and I have similar views on the Church's role. If the Church doesn't care, who will? You mentioned earlier that you have been under pressure for a while now. I take that to mean not just the immediate pressures of this last, trying week.
- A3 Certainly. I find the questionnaire quite relevant but it starts further back, much further back. My husband and I grew up in Rhodesia. I gradually got more and more involved in the Church and he got more and more involved with 'the boys' (the drinking mates). By 1982 when we moved to South Africa our marriage was all but over. We separated and eventually divorced, I stayed closely involved in the Church throughout this period.
- P3 I suppose there was the one constant in your life with everything else so turbulent.
- A4 I felt I needed a more committed walk with God and to serve Him more fully. I was accepted into the Diaconal order and later Ordained to the Priesthood in 1992. I was part of the first group of five women who were Ordained at the Natal synod of 1992.
- P4 How did your male colleagues respond to your Ordination?
- A5 It was really quite strange. During my In Service Training prior to Ordination there was such a mixed response. Some Priests literally, and I mean literally, turned their backs on me when I entered the room. It was far more apparent with the white and coloured clergy. The black clergy were generally friendly, or at least, weren't verbally

abusive. The Priest who led me through my 'Probation' phase, as you call it in your Church, also did a strange about turn. He was quite supportive until the Natal Diocese accepted the motion to Ordain women to the Priesthood. Then he began to be hostile.

P5 What do you think prompted the radical change in his behaviour?

A6 I think he was comfortable with the theory of Ordination of women, but not the practice. This had been discussed for years in our Church, and constantly postponed for whatever reason. There were many like him who were nice to me before and suddenly changed once Ordination became a reality. I think they felt threatened. It created a great deal of turmoil among the men.

P6 Do you think you said or did anything to make them feel threatened?

A7 No! I am not a feminist. I am not aggressive. My gifting is pastoral. I don't think you should be judged by your gender or trade upon it. Paternalism is a problem. At the end of the funeral I took for Joan's husband a man came up to me and said 'I've never been to a service taken by a woman Priest before, I thought it was quite good, do you know you didn't make a single mistake?'

P7 That must have been hard to swallow.

A8 You get used to it. Sometimes it is really aggressive. The one male Priest who assisted me here for two years actually told me he wanted my job. He used to stand over me when we had meetings, always wanted to dominate me. I wasn't at a very good point then spiritually either. I felt alone.

- P8 It must feel lonely, especially when your colleague turns against you. What support structures do you have to turn to when you feel so down?
- A9 We are encouraged to have a Spiritual Director. You cannot bring any of the congregation too close. It is either worrying about confidentiality or else being accused of having favourites. I think I am still here by pure Grace! My daughter is overseas and has just lost her baby, I can't be there. That is a big price to pay.
- P9 I'm sure it tears you up inside, not being able to be there for your daughter, and at the same time being so under pressure in your work. People don't understand that you also have a private life.
- A10 Sometimes I wish I had support at home. I am sure you are able to go home to a wife – but it is not all bad news. Once a week the congregation bring me a meal and there is life apart from the ministry. I just wish people socially would not treat me as a Priest. I am not that at ease at social functions and I still get introduced, even at a play, as 'our lady Priest!'
- P10 It is hard to escape the role. It is nice to be anonymous sometimes.

Ann and I spoke a while longer. We discussed how a sense of humour is crucial to getting one through the day and also the importance of the annual retreat she attends, Compulsory I understand. She battles to take a day off, though realises it is important. I thanked her again for being so open and honest in our discussion.

Verbatim Two

The second interview was with Jill, a Methodist woman in ministry, white and in her mid fifties. This took place at my office as that was convenient for Jill. She too had received the questionnaire a week or so before the interview, and we used it as a starting point. I admit I had preconceptions. I expected Jill to have marked many of the questions. I knew she had experienced some really tough things in ministry and regarding her own health. Surprisingly she hadn't indicated a single question.

J1 (Jill blushing slightly) I couldn't answer any of the questions positively. I was happy about that but felt a bit afraid. Had I missed the point of the questionnaire? Surely I should fill in something. I hope I don't ruin Philip's research! (we both laughed)

P1 Your blank form was a surprise but I don't think it will ruin the research, so you can relax! Do you think there were reasons why you didn't mark any of the questions? Should I have asked something different? Possibly the specific pressure of being a woman in ministry?

J2 Now there's a point. Not that my own experience will help you too much. I have asked myself a few times whether I compare well with my male colleagues. But deep down I believe God calls you to ministry as a person not as a man or a woman, simply as oneself.

The screening committee asked some of these gender questions. How would I fit into a male dominated world? (referring to the Church) I said there shouldn't be a need to prove yourself just because of your gender. On the other hand I accept that many women's experiences are different from mine. I just don't see a need to look for 'Reds under the beds' where there are none.

- P2 Are you saying that you have never experienced prejudice in ministry because of your gender?
- J3 Not personally. Though I know that that's not what many women in ministry experience. I think, though, that if you focus on the prejudice it gets in the way of your Spiritual thinking. I have a complimentary part to play as a woman in ministry. I have also never been damaged by a man, have a healthy relationship with my colleagues, have a tremendous husband and we work as a team. Some of my female colleagues view me as naïve because I'm not always looking for hidden agendas when it comes to men.
- I think my vulnerability can also be a strength, if that makes sense. Being able to cry with a male colleague, I'm not concerned about letting down the gender, crying is a healing thing. I laugh a lot too. Not too many of my male colleagues experience those outlets, especially crying. I think being able to laugh and cry makes it easier to handle stress.
- P3 You express a great deal of peace yet I know you have had to carry really heavy burdens, especially regarding your health.
- J4 As you know I have been fighting cancer for six years. First one breast, then the other; two mastectomies. Living with cancer teaches you not to live in the future but to live in the present. You cannot cope with things in advance, you cannot project coping. You must deal with the present. Short term goals are fine, but that's about it. You look for God's hand in whatever you are busy with. Don't ask to see the distant shore....
- P4 Living with cancer has really changed your outlook on life....

J5 The doctor said to 'enjoy now...appropriate now' I thank God for today. Faith really helps... The recognition of death gives huge belief in what you are preaching and credibility too! There is a life afterward. Life is so good. Thank you Lord that I have a full diary. I am graduating with my daughter! Another goal achieved! Women live with the fear of cancer. Once you have it you become master, not victim, less afraid not more. You get your priorities right. Cancer can wait, God's work cannot. I need to compact more into the life I have left. Gender issues pale into insignificance. I do have stress but not enough time to seriously worry about it.

Jill and I continued talking for a while. She is such an inspiration. She affirmed again what a wonderful partner she has, using the Biblical term of 'helpmeet' to refer to her husband. She left smiling.

6. Reflection on the Verbatims.

Both Ann and Jill were well aware of the problems women experience in the ministry that are solely gender specific. Ann especially had been the victim of a patriarchal Church system, and prior to that, an abusive patriarchal family life. She had emphasised the opposite of Jill's comment in (J3) having 'never been damaged by a man'. Ann had experienced the negative consequences of patriarchy, her husband drinking with the boys more and more (A3) and male Priests literally turning their backs on her (A5), the betrayal of the male cleric who had led her through her probation (A5), the assistant cleric who had worked with her and would stand over her and tell her how he would be better at her job (A8). There is also the paternalistic attitude shown by the congregant at the funeral stating '... and you didn't make a single mistake' (A7). Much of Ann's life appears to have been lived under the shadow of damaging 'men'.

Jill's experience is something quite different. Though asking herself how well she compares to male ministers, she sees her calling to ministry as that of a person, not a man or a woman, simply as oneself (J2). The screening committee warned her about how she would fit into a 'male dominated' world, and she accepts that many women do experience the burden of patriarchy, even referring to others' experience of this prejudice again at the beginning of (G3).

What coping methods have these two women adopted in dealing with patriarchy in the Church and the additional stressors this places on their ministry?

In Ann's case she has been a victim for a long time. She does have support. In (A9) she speaks of the role of the Spiritual Director. At present she also has the support of her new male colleague (A1) She also made reference in closing to the annual retreat she attends. Though the congregation can be supportive 'once a week the congregation bring me a meal' (A10) yet this is a tricky issue, as she has to beware '...you are accused of having favourites' (A9). I think also in(A9) when she speaks of God's Grace she means it more seriously than the light-hearted way she expressed it. Just before I left she also mentioned the importance of maintaining a sense of humour.

One of Jill's greatest strengths is not viewing her situation too seriously. Not looking for problems where there are none; her reference to not look for 'Reds under the beds' (G2). This is a reference to the paranoia expressed by people during the Cold War and when Russians were referred to as 'Reds', she has an English background, brought up in England. Though accused of naivete by her female colleagues (G3) this approach clearly works for her. Her holistic concept, 'I have a complimentary part to play as a woman in ministry' (G3) is a very healthy approach. She is not viewing herself as being in competition with men. Jill also experiences the support of a man she views as her 'helpmeet' (G3). The support of her husband is again re -

affirmed in our closing conversation. In the second paragraph of (G3) she also speaks of being able to cry and laugh and views these as a healthy approach in dealing with everyday issues, especially the stressful ones.

The greatest strength that I see in Jill's life, that appears to be her main buffer in dealing with the stresses of ministry, including those unique to being a woman in ministry, is her awareness of her own mortality, brought into clear focus by her cancer. She deals with the present, lives life to the full in the service of her Lord (G4). It is not that the prejudice of patriarchy does not touch her, it does. She recognises that it touches other women too. However her overall experience of males is positive, especially in the relationship with her husband and because of the seriousness of her illness she does not have the time to focus on important, though not urgent (certainly for her) issues. Her priorities have become the here and now, her ministry and her family. She appreciates every day as a gift from God. 'Don't ask to see the distant shore...' (G3)

The common ground they share is that both are aware of the problems of patriarchy within the Church but Ann's experience is far more negative. Both expressed the importance of a partner, though only Jill has access to that support. Both recognise the value and importance of humour in dealing with the struggles of life in the ministry. Jill has experienced healthy relationships with male colleagues. Both bring their unique touch to their respective ministries.

Conclusion.

In conclusion a multidimensional strategy towards addressing the sin of patriarchy and the damage it causes to God's Church and His people is suggested by Mpumlwana,

- To educate people (both men and women) on these issues of justice
- To challenge and resist sexist attitudes and structures within the Church
- To help Christians re - read the Bible so as to understand that we are all equal before God
- To use persuasion to win people

(Ackerman et al 1991:382)

Though limited this would at least be a starting point in addressing the sin of patriarchy and alleviating the additional stresses that women in ministry face purely because of their gender.

Material on these issues of justice regarding women in ministry needs to be prepared by the Doctrine Committee and disseminated at local church level with the assistance of the Women in Ministry Consultation. These issues need to be explored through the fellowship groups, Bible study groups and also at leadership level in the society leaders meetings. The results of these discussions, with specific reference to the society leadership meeting, needs to be forwarded for further discussion and reflection at the annual District synods.

For those who are not involved in any of these church structures the ministry from the pulpit can serve to educate and sensitise. As much as we set aside Sunday services to focus on HIV/AIDS, youth, violence, crime and other crucial issues of awareness, we need to set aside time to educate and create awareness for issues relevant to women in ministry.

Finally we need to make use of relevant media, in this case Dimension, the church publication, to disseminate this type of information and heighten awareness of these issues.

Sexist attitudes and behaviour can be challenged through the print media and also through the personal experiences of Bible study discussion and teachings from the pulpit. A reading of the Bible recognising the importance of the role of women and the value that God places in them as people, not viewing them as any less valid because of their gender, must be encouraged. Over a period of time attitudes and prejudices can and must be challenged to change.

CHAPTER FOUR

BEYOND PRESENT COPING

STRATEGIES - TOWARDS A

HOLISTIC MODEL FOR THE

PREVENTION OF BURNOUT

IN THE MINISTRY

BEYOND PRESENT COPING STRATEGIES - TOWARDS A HOLISTIC MODEL FOR THE PREVENTION OF BURNOUT IN THE MINISTRY

This chapter firstly considers three Biblical examples of Burnout, which illustrate how God dealt with these men and met them at their point of need. Secondly three in - depth interviews are conducted with experienced counsellors in the field of Burnout in the ministry. They have developed strategies and models that can be used as preventative measures. The third of these interviews is structured differently in that the questions addressed to the Professor are drawn from the insight gained in the first two interviews, in order to facilitate greater understanding of the ideas, models and strategies presented. Thirdly the model of Burnout prevention suggested in Verbatim one of this chapter is considered. It will be referred to as the *Tripod model*. The role of the Spiritual director will also be considered at this point. Fourthly an additional leg to the Tripod model is suggested, drawing from the concepts of group ministry indicated in all three interviews. Fifthly the role of the Body of Christ is discussed. Sixthly the necessity of a 'day off' and other physiological needs are reviewed. The seventh point looks at the role of the Bishop, the Superintendent and other Lay leadership, what these roles should be and how they should be more clearly defined to facilitate both administrative and pastoral effectiveness. Finally the point is made that this overall model of Burnout prevention needs to be actioned in the Training phase of ministry.

Biblical Models of Burnout.

Burnout, though the word itself has only recently been coined with reference to human beings, has been a reality for those who serve God, since the earliest times (Sanford 1982:3). The classical experience of Burnout in the ministry found in the Bible would probably be the experience of the Prophet Elijah recorded in the first book of Kings, chapters eighteen and nineteen.

King Ahab had ruled Israel at the time, nearly one thousand years before the birth of Christ. Ahab married Jezebel, a princess in the family of the Sidonian king, Ethbaal (Smith 1995:150). Ethbaal was also the high priest of the Baal cult. Baal was worshipped throughout Canaan. When Jezebel married Ahab she brought with her evangelists of the cult which she followed. Baal's god - wife was known as Asherah, the source of fertility. She was accredited with making the crops grow and causing the cattle to multiply. This emphasis on fertility was demonstrated in her temples being filled with male and female temple prostitutes. There was an obsession with sex and in order to worship at the temples, the worshippers engaged in sex with the temple priests and priestesses.

Gradually the Israelite's worship of their own God was replaced by the worship of Baal. Jezebel was a major instigator in this, causing the death of many who chose to be loyal to the God of Israel. Eventually those who did remain loyal to the God of Israel were forced in trepidation and fear, into hiding.

God raised up His prophet Elijah to confront the evil of Baal worship in Israel. Elijah was a walking challenge to Jezebel and her evangelists. Whilst everyone was saying 'Baal is God', Elijah's name literally meant 'the Lord is God' (Smith 1995:151).

The great confrontation between Elijah and the 450 prophets of Baal, and Elijah's subsequent Burnout experience is described in 1 Kings chapters eighteen and nineteen. Elijah met with Obadiah, a servant in the Royal household and sent him to king Ahab, ordering the king to meet with him. Elijah then told king Ahab in no uncertain terms that all of Israel was to gather on Mount Carmel along with the 450 prophets of Baal.

On Mount Carmel Elijah laid down the challenge. Finally he asked the people 'if the Lord is God, follow Him, but if Baal is God, follow Him' (1Kings 18v21). The people remained silent. Secondly he challenged the prophets of Baal. Two sacrifices of oxen would be made, one for the prophets of Baal and one for Elijah. The sacrifice which was consumed by fire would prove who really was God.

For hours the prophets of Baal called upon their God, they grew hysterical, screaming, shouting and cutting themselves. Elijah mocked them and laughed at them. Only by mid – afternoon did he stop them. After having had water poured three times over his sacrifice Elijah prayed to God. Fire came down from the sky and consumed his entire sacrifice. Everyone was amazed and agreed that the Lord is God. In accordance with the justice of the day, Elijah then executed the 450 prophets of Baal personally, for leading the people astray and for the murder of many believers.

Not yet finished Elijah went to the top of Mount Carmel and prayed repeatedly. When he prayed for the seventh time clouds began to form and the rain fell, bringing an end to three years of drought.

Elijah then ran towards Jezreel at such a pace that he outran the king's chariot, what a wonderful blessed day he was having. He was sure all of Israel would now repent of their worship of Baal. The king would surely ensure this after all that he had witnessed and Jezebel would convert to the God of Israel. Elijah was on an emotional high because of the incredible

triumphs of the past few days. His highest hopes had been realised possibly even beyond his expectations.

He was victorious, God was victorious. But in all likelihood Elijah was now bordering on complete mental, physical and spiritual exhaustion. He was extremely vulnerable. At that point Jezebel's note arrives, threatening to take his life just as he had taken the lives of her prophets...and he breaks. The man who had stood for so long as God's prophet, doing miracles and wonders time and again, ran away to find a hiding place. Elijah was Burned out.

Elijah is a classic example of Freudenberger's observation that Burnout is the 'let - down that comes in between crises or directly after "mission accomplished" ' (1980:110).

Elijah exhibited many of the classic Type A personality traits described in Chapter One. A high achiever, successful, full of energy, trying to fit as much activity as he could into as little time as possible. He had expended a great deal of energy in the confrontation with the prophets of Baal, possibly been up throughout the night preceeding this, praying for God's guidance and presence to be very real to Him in the forthcoming conflict. His success had prompted a shift in the religious conviction of the people of Israel and their king. He then exerted more energy to climb Mount Carmel in order to pray for the end of the drought. He then ran the 32km from Mount Carmel to the city of Jezreel (Minerth et al 1986:42).

Then came the unexpected threat, and instead of praying as he had done before so successfully, he rather relied on his own strength and fled. His dependency on God ceased at that point. Making the problem worse he abandoned his servant too and was thus suddenly all alone. He was overwhelmed by feelings of despair and self -pity (Black and Rowley 1962:346).

Minerth et al describe Elijah's Burnout symptoms in the following five points (1986:43-44).

- Egotism – Elijah felt he was indispensable. God did remind him that 7000 people had not worshipped Baal, but at that point Elijah felt that he was the only one left.
- Feelings of resentment and bitterness – he resented the others for abandoning God and his resentment drained him.
- Feelings of paranoia – Elijah believed that they all wanted to kill him even though only Jezebel had sent the note.
- Feelings of self – pity – 'I' comes up regularly throughout Elijah's comments.
- Feelings of resentment and anger toward God.

How similar were Elijah's experiences to that of many who experience Burnout today? Then again is it really so surprising? After all 'Elijah was a man just like us' (Bible James 5 v17).

In the concluding comments of this document we shall return to the prophet Elijah and how God brought healing to His burned out prophet.

The majority of the people of God in the Bible who experienced burnout were eventually able to get back on their feet. All seem to have an awareness of being called to His work, an awareness of the plan He has for them and ultimately a rediscovery of their value in God's sight – that He loves them. In most cases they also discover they are not alone.

A perspective from Experts in the field.

Verbatim 1

The interview was with a white male minister in his fifties with extensive experience in the field of Burnout in ministry and who has developed a model of Burnout prevention that he has successfully applied over a number of years in practice. The interview took place in his office in the morning. He had been given the Burnout Inventory Questionnaire a week before and had also been asked to consider the following two questions:

1. What coping strategies did he believe were presently in place to prevent Burnout in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA)?
2. What did he see as a way forward, in which direction should these coping strategies be developed?

- P1. Thank you for breaking with your busy schedule to see me. I understand you have been closely involved with ministers who have experienced Burnout.
- X1. Too closely. My previous circuit consisted of eight Churches pastored by five ministers. Over a period of five years, eight, yes eight ministers burned out! The ministers were leaving every two years or so, not good for the Church and tragic for the ministers and their families.
- P2. I understood you were the Superintendent at that time. It must have been traumatic for you as well.

X2. It was a very difficult time. I decided to call a meeting of all the Church's lay leaders in the circuit to discuss and try to understand what was happening. I did not want the ministers to attend the meeting. I posed the question 'What is causing the stress of our ministers?' They developed a long list. We read out and explained each stressor so that everyone could understand. It was a turning point. There was a shift from telling the minister what he should be doing, to allowing him to exercise the ministry he felt equipped for. We are not all made the same, you cannot be good at everything.

P3. You had called the meeting. You were under possibly even greater pressure and stress than your colleagues. Were you close to Burnout yourself?

X3. I will never burn out – and I will tell you why.

Firstly I have a supportive family. My children believe in me, and in what I do and my wife stands by me.

Secondly I have a very clear and strong belief in my sense of calling. I know that God wants me here, serving Him.

Thirdly I have a real and alive relationship with the Lord. My private personal devotions are alive and well.

When stresses happen, as they do to all of us in ministry, I share them with my wife, sometimes even my children. I also share them with God. I remind myself I am called to ministry.

P4. That is a powerful response! So your calling, your family support and your faith sustain you personally. What about the Church's role in supporting the minister in stressful times?

X4. The MCSA does little. Yet it could be doing so much.

The role of the Superintendent minister needs to be clearly defined. Not only the administrative function, but also the spiritual/pastoral office. The same can be said of the circuit and society stewards. Laws and Discipline (L&D) is so specific about the administrative functions yet it says nothing regarding the supportive role these leaders can play toward their minister.

P5. My lay leaders have been very supportive. It is as though they saw the need and responded to it.

X5. Therein lies the problem. They saw the need. What would have happened if they did not? It needs to be clearly defined. The Superintendent needs to take the lead. At a previous circuit where I was Superintendent I became aware of the need for positive relationships with colleagues. Ministers are often threatened by each other, afraid to give encouragement or acknowledge one another's successes, because they fear that it belittles their own achievements. We worked actively at breaking down those barriers.

At the beginning of the year the five of us went on a retreat for five days. Each morning one of us shared our conversion, our calling, a little bit about our childhood, our family relationships, the direction we saw our ministry taking, and anything else we needed to discuss. During this time the rest of us were allowed to ask questions only to clarify. Afterwards we would go for a walk together, maybe go fishing, just generally relax. At the end of the retreat, based on our sharing, we put together a list of twenty questions which we felt needed to be asked regularly of one another, such as:

- Do you pray regularly?
- Do you read your Bible for your own spiritual growth – not merely for sermon preparation?

- Does your wife know that you love her?
- Have you got control of your habit (any area of your life that you felt was a barrier between yourself and God)?

Every month at staff meeting these questions would be asked of each minister, by the person on his left. This was not done in a spirit of criticism or judgement, but to facilitate accountability. Then the person who had asked the questions would pray for that minister. The result was that staff meetings deepened both emotionally and spiritually. These meetings became a deeply personal thing. Each one knew that there would be follow - up at the next meeting; it kept us accountable. The friendships that were built up there were cross - cultural and are still in place ten years later, though all of us have moved on. Each one of us felt as though we were part of a team, and did not stand alone. There was no need to feel threatened or constantly on the defensive, no need to break others down. We were gradually able to rejoice in each other's successes.

- P6. Do you think the Church hierarchy needs to be more supportive? Does it have a role to play in preventing Burnout?
- X6. The Bishops certainly do. I understand that Purity Malinga of Natal Coastal District is a pastor to the pastors. That was the original concept behind separating the Bishops, to facilitate them supporting the ministers; pastor first and administrator second. But it does not seem to work. Some Bishops view their appointment as a status issue – 'called' to status as opposed to 'called' to service. I think they have missed the point.

Overall I think we need to be more aware of ministry as a team. The Bishop, the Superintendent, the minister and the congregation sharing the work, sharing the stress and sharing the joy. The recognition of

gifting is essential. We need to recognise our strengths and weaknesses. Standing together we can do a great job whereas standing alone is not so good. Let us rejoice in the successes of our colleagues. Let us get L&D rewritten so that caring roles are made clear, not only administrative functions. We also need to ascertain at the very beginning, in the training phase, whether that candidate for the ministry is called, and to what they are called. Trainees also need to be told that they can have friendships within the congregation. I believe that the old concept of aloofness is outdated, the social support is essential. A real walk with Jesus is even more essential. I would not still be in the ministry without that. Oh yes, one final thing. Nobody is indispensable. The Church will not fall down if you are not there occasionally. Take your day off. Even God rested on the seventh day!

Verbatim Two

This interview was with a white female psychologist, qualified in both Counselling and Educational Psychology. She is an active Christian who has a deep concern for the psychological and emotional health and wellbeing of the priests in her Church. She does pro bono work in this area and is at present the facilitator of a small group of mainly Anglican ministers who meet together every six weeks or so. The interview took place in the early afternoon in her office.

- Y1. I have been working in the field of supporting ministers who are experiencing, or else who are close to Burnout, for a number of years now. Specifically I have been facilitating a group of ministers who get together about twice every three months since 1994.
- P1. What was it that initiated your involvement? Was it a personal desire to make a difference or possibly the prompting of the Church body?
- Y2. I felt a need to make a difference. Prior to 1994 I had been assisting one of our priests, Stuart Mennigke, who also has Psychology training, with an evaluation programme called Industry Management Insight. It picks up on many aspects of a person's coping mechanisms and how they facilitate or hinder the process of dealing with stressors. We were applying it with local priests, helping them to have a bit more insight into themselves, recognising their strengths and weaknesses. The Bishop at that time was very supportive and had a positive attitude towards Psychology.
- P2. It makes sense to me to link the two disciplines. You have the ability to use these tests and models that Psychologists have developed and are still able to pray for the person you are assisting.

- Y3. That is true, but it depends on the attitude that the Church hierarchy takes. The next Bishop who came was anti Psychology and Stuart was forced to move on. The application of Industry Management Insight was scrapped.
- P3. Did it end there?
- Y4. No. Stuart asked me whether I would take the facilitator's role in one of several groups that started as a result of the initial work and evaluations that had been done. The priests had also recognised they had needs and areas they felt needed to be addressed. The groups were started all over the Natal region. Sadly most of them have folded.
- P4. Tell me about the group you are involved with.
- Y5. The group I work with consists of about seven ministers who get together every six or so weeks. The majority are Anglican though over the past few years I have had Methodists too. It is an all white group. We did have a black priest, but he wasn't comfortable. I think it was more who he was and his experiences that made him uncomfortable. I think the idea behind the group should work with people from any race group. What we do though, is try to ensure that those who join the group are at a similar point regarding levels of development in their careers. We wouldn't want a rector and an assistant rector of the same parish to be in one group. The dynamics don't work; there is too much power or lack of power. Three of the ministers have been part of the group since it's inception. Some have come and gone quite quickly, others have chosen to stay. It is important that both the person joining and the present group members are comfortable with one another.

P5. What makes the group unique and how does it function?

Y6. I have called it the 'Supervision Case Study Model'.

Stage one involves case presentation. One member gets to talk about a difficult case or situation they are dealing with. Over the years the ability to talk about tricky situations has developed, as the level of trust has developed. Stage one usually takes about ten minutes.

Stage two is question time. These are asked by the group purely to clarify issues that they did not understand. This process too takes about ten minutes.

Stage three, and this is for me the crucial and unique aspect of the group, involves a discussion period. The member who has presented the case withdraws from the group, (not out of the room!) just sits back and listens without contributing to the discussion. The group then discusses the issue from a two pronged perspective; the case itself and then the presenter's issues. The group discusses possible ways of resolving the issue. Their own experience of similar incidents is alluded to from the perspective of possible answers which they were able to apply. The role of the facilitator is important here as they insure that the discussion maintains an empathic and non - judgmental stance. The group considers ways forward, including possible Biblical answers. This process takes about fifteen minutes.

Stage four is reflection time, no questions, just a quiet reflection on what has been said by all.

Stage five is presenter feedback time. The presenter gets to say what made sense, what was helpful and how they might move forward in

the situation. There is more interaction with all present at this time. The facilitator might also bring in some of his/her own experience if it is necessary. Again this process takes about ten or fifteen minutes.

This approach seems to be proactive in that it often intervenes before stressors become catastrophic. It allows the group to look out for each other in a loving way.

My role as a facilitator is to keep stages two and three apart, and to work towards each member taking an empathic stance. My experience is that group work facilitates deeper therapy. This does not take the place of the Spiritual director – that role is essential. This group is in addition to that role. It is more brotherly, not only spiritual development. This is more relationship orientated and more pragmatic.

Verbatim 3

The third interview took place with a professor in Theology who has an in - depth knowledge of stress and Burnout in the ministry, through his work as vice - chairman of one of the Districts in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Throughout the discussion it was clear that he had taken the initiative in striving to move alongside ministers in stress. He is a white minister in his early sixties. At present he is back in South Africa pastoring a Church after a period of several years spent lecturing in the United States of America. Due to lecturing commitments that he still fulfils in the USA, this interview took place telephonically. For practical reasons a list of six questions were prepared, drawn up with consideration of the comments made by both the previous interviewees, whose expert opinions were reflected in the verbatims earlier in this chapter.

- P1. What present coping strategies are in place in the MCSA to assist ministers who are experiencing, or else are close to experiencing, Burnout?
- Z1. There is nothing in place except possibly the circuit structure we practice. I don't think the other denominations have the same structure whereby a Superintendent has authority to call ministers together to address issues in that particular circuit. This opportunity could be used to draw ministers together and care for one another. Unfortunately I do not think the majority of Superintendents use it this way. It becomes an administrative meeting, nothing more.
- P2. What should the role of the Bishop be?
- Z2. His role is meant to be that of the pastor to the pastors. When the Bishops were separated, taken out of the responsibility of ministering

to their local congregations, the reasoning was to give them more time to be available to the ministers. Over the past few years it has become a more administrative function. Purity Malinga is one exception. Her care of other ministers is well known.

The problem is that the Bishop's role is so tied up with power. They play the key role in stationing. If you attempt to deal with an issue with them, that they don't understand or want to understand, there is the fear of being removed from your local Church and posted somewhere you don't want to go.

There is a great need for the leadership in our Church, not just Bishops, to move toward a better understanding of servant leadership. Bertie Simms is big on that in the USA. When I was vice - chairman (Deputy Bishop) I tried to take that role seriously. I tried to stand by the ministers in my district who were going through crisis. As I indicated earlier, this servant leadership should be throughout the Church. Bishops, Superintendents, ministers, circuit and society stewards, anyone in leadership roles.

- P3. Do you feel that circuit and society stewards have a supportive role to play regarding their ministers, or is it strictly an administrative function?
- Z3. The administrative role is the one laid down in Laws and Discipline (L&D). My experience is that the role is far wider. My own society stewards in particular, have been very supportive both administratively and pastorally. I am not sure though, about legislating that role in L&D? On the other hand, L&D could be clearer in describing the caring role they can fulfil. The opportunity to care is certainly not always used. Perhaps we should ask why society stewards are more caring of some than of other ministers. Possibly we

cause them to be more caring by our attitudes towards them. Or else maybe we push them away. Some ministers like standing all alone, maybe they feel more important that way. I feel the way we relate to our leadership determines how they relate to us.

P4. How important is the concept of being called to the ministry, and relative to that, the importance of the minister's own devotional life in preventing Burnout?

Z4. Being called is relevant to every human being, not just to ministry. I feel we have been called from the day we were born. Being called transforms even the toughest of tasks into an opportunity to be faithful. Ministry is therefore not a job I can switch off to, but a way of life. Feeling called by One who loves us, we respond to the call in love and therefore love His people too. They often then return that love to us.

As for the minister's own devotional life – it is crucial. You can't just keep breathing in nor only breathing out. Devotional life is breathing in. You then work that breath out as you minister in the world. It is an ongoing and continuous process.

P5. Do you see a day off as important?

Z6. Certainly, to simply unwind with my family. I need to have time when I do not feel responsible. Obviously I will respond to a crisis, but as far as possible the time is 'time out' for me – maybe even irresponsible time. (He laughs)

P6. What is your opinion on sleep, diet and exercise as prevention of Burnout?

- Z7. It is part of a holistic approach to Burnout prevention. One of our retired minister's sons, Derek Kotze, has an appointment with a doctor once a year, where all those questions are asked, and others including 'How is the family?' and 'Are you continuing to read?' It's pretty broad but I think it is part of his whole approach to health. One of the other important questions is 'Are you still having fun in your job, at home and in your Church?' It might seem a little strange to some, but it works for him. I have been meaning to get a copy of the questions and get my doctor to check me on them.
- P8. How important is team ministry, the concept of the body of Christ as depicted in 1 Corinthians 12, in preventing Burnout?
- Z8. Team ministry is the opportunity to share not just our work, but ourselves. We need to beware of thinking we are God's answer. Possibly the fact that so often 'the buck stops here' prevents ministers working with others in their congregations. They are afraid that if their approach doesn't work they will be held responsible. The other aspect is feeling that we must succeed through them, a bit like living your dreams through your kids. Both perspectives hinder effective ministry within the body of Christ. It's also a matter of control. We are afraid of letting go in case chaos ensues. But then in the Beginning, chaos came before order. Perhaps the risk is worth the reward. We can't do everything ourselves, it is not humanly possible. If somebody is a better preacher than I am I simply plan him or her more often. The work is more important than the worker.
- P9. How do you feel about the concept of a group of ministers getting together to share their own experiences and possibly helping each other in dealing with the stressors they face before they become overwhelming.

- Z9. Between 1974 and 1982 I was involved with Ernest Baartman in leading a Post Ordination Training Course. At the same time I was involved with the Youth Department and a young American visited us and shared some ideas that eventually resulted in the following approach to group work at the Post Ordination Training Course.

The first day was generally spent in a relaxed and recreational way. On the second day the first stage of the group work really began. Each minister had one hour to tell his/her story. If they spoke for the whole hour that was fine, but they knew that the time was limited to give everyone an opportunity. No interjections were allowed until they were finished. Generally telling the story took about fifteen minutes. The second stage involved the group trying to identify individual issues for example 'too tired' or 'problems at home' or 'complicated counselling situations' and many other situations of life in the ministry. Again this would take about fifteen minutes. Thirdly there was an attempt made to identify the crucial or central theme or issue. Then an attempt was made to unravel it, with full group participation. Fourthly the presenter was encouraged to identify their own truth within the crucial issue. What was this saying to them, about them? Vitally important was the fact that the presenter needed to decide for themselves what they needed to do about the issue. They had to identify a course of action for themselves. Sometimes they didn't get to a point of resolution, but the process itself was more important than the specific outcome. Finally they were prayed for and the laying on of hands often took place. The degree of healing was remarkable. To my knowledge those stories remained confidential and were never discussed outside of the group. In some cases the stories had been buried for years. Eventually the Post Ordination Training Course was discontinued, I don't know why.

- P10. What about the role of the Spiritual Director? Would this type of group replace the role of such a Director?
- Z10. No. I don't think so. The Spiritual Director is an important role in every minister's life, though in our Church it is not something that is pushed at all. I have a Spiritual Director, someone I know listens well and thinks deeply before he speaks. I trust him and know that what I say to him is confidential, I also trust his guidance. Perhaps that's because I have known him for so long. We need to encourage our young ministers and the not so young, to think deeply and pray sincerely that God may lead them to a person they can trust to take their deepest Spiritual issues to. This must of course, be a personal choice, but one I believe must be made. The group and the Spiritual Director are complimentary, both are essential.

The Tripod Model.

Thirdly we consider the model suggested in verbatim one (X3) where the minister stated 'I will never burn out'. This model for Burnout will be referred to as the *Tripod model*.

1. The first leg of the Tripod is that of having a supportive family. This aspect was also mentioned by both the women ministers interviewed in Chapter Three. The difference being that the one did not experience the support of family (A10), while the other was grateful for her family's support (J3). An area of concern regarding this leg of the *Tripod* is that of confidentiality. For ministers who do a great deal of counselling many sessions are not intended to be discussed outside of the counselling situation. That is what makes the session therapeutic and enables the counselee to participate with honesty and confidence. We shall return to this concern shortly.

2. The second leg of the *Tripod* is that of a sense of calling, a belief that it is part of God's plan for the person to be involved in ministry, not merely an opportunistic choice. Therefore even when things become demanding and exhausting the sense of call sustains the minister. Possibly if ministry were a choice made after weighing up the pro's and con's similar to using a scale, if the weight shifts and there were more con's than pro's, the minister would choose to leave ministry. A sense of call is what sustains ministers and keeps them faithful and obedient even when the stress of the present experience is excessive. The third verbatim in this chapter confirms this concept (Z4).

Being called is relevant to every human being... transforms even the toughest tasks...an opportunity to be faithful...we respond in love...love His people too...they often then love us

3. The third leg of the Tripod is the minister's own devotional life (X3). 'I have a very real and alive relationship with the Lord...personal devotions alive and well...when stressors happen I share them with God' and from (Z4) '...devotional life is crucial...devotional life is breathing in, you then work that 'life' out as you minister to the world'.

Richard Foster quotes Donald Coggin, Archbishop of Canterbury,

I go through life as a transient on his way to eternity,
made in the image of God, but with that image debased,
needing to be taught how to meditate, to worship, to think
(Foster 1980:1).

Later Foster himself says

If we are willing to listen to the Heavenly Monitor, we will receive the instruction we need...Leo Tolstoy observed "everybody thinks of changing humanity and nobody thinks of changing themselves" (Foster 1980:9).

Possibly the most powerful comment that Foster makes is 'in contemporary society our adversity majors in three things: noise, hurry and crowds' (Foster 1980:13). In order to be renewed and restored for the task that lies ahead and therefore prepared for those challenges/opportunities the minister must get beyond the noise, hurry and crowds. This can only be done by taking one's personal devotions seriously. Not merely in order to prepare for the next sermon or Bible study, we cannot continue to be the town water - pump of one hundred years ago, always giving out, if we do not also receive through a renewing and restoring personal devotional time with God. We need to be drinking large draughts of living water constantly. Without intimate contact with God each day we will either fall into boredom or Burnout. (<http://www.ocpathfinders.com/perventi.htm>) Possibly when the minister experiences dryness and thirst, he/she is not drinking deeply enough from the Living waters (John 4:13-14).

The role of the Spiritual Director must also be seriously considered. Spiritual Direction is

the name given to a personal relationship between two people in which one assists the other to grow in the spiritual life. The concept is not specifically Christian...began in the fourth century...associated with discernment or spiritual insight...direction is a charisma which overflows from a life of serious prayer and discipleship...often not restricted to priests and pastors and is often exercised by lay persons...It is concerned with nourishment of the life of prayer, the inner life (Campbell 1987:265)

Ideally the minister should have someone whom he feels comfortable asking for guidance, sharing successes and failures with and turning to when he feels low. The person who would fulfil this role would need to be someone of Spiritual maturity and whose depth of experience the minister respects. Trust is another key aspect of the relationship between minister and Spiritual Director. In the Methodist Church the role of Mentor or Spiritual Director seems to have been overlooked, as opposed to for example, within the Anglican Church. This concept needs further exploration and further study. We (MCSA) need to be able to draw on the insight and experience of other denominations. The above perspective is confirmed by the professor's comments found in (Z10) and also the Psychologist (Y5).

The Group.

The above three points illustrate the *Tripod model*. Reference was made regarding the first leg of the Tripod, that the support of family might not always stand, due to the confidential nature of much of the minister's work, particularly in the area of counselling. There needs to be a further support in order to make this structure solid. This is where the concept of the 'group' becomes relevant. All three experts in this chapter discussed the function of

the Group as a means of Burnout prevention. People who have worked in the field for a significant period of time recognise the value of a group in order to facilitate the thorough working through of difficult issues in a safe and supportive environment. Is it because of the confidentiality that underpins this Group therapy, that it would be possible to bring to this group (with the aid of pseudonyms) the crises and problems, and be supported in working through the issues. This would therefore be a place to share, without compromising the counselling relationship, without laying the burden on one's family and yet still being able to discuss the problem and gain valuable insights.

The question of which of the group structures should be implemented, whether one should use the existing Circuit structures and the opportunity for Superintendents (X5) and (Z1) to call ministers together, or possibly use an outside agency to act as a facilitator as in the case of the Psychologist (Y5) Supervision Case Study Model or perhaps even the re - introduction of the Post Ordination Training Group (Z9), should not really be in debate. The issue is that there is a need for this role to be fulfilled. The ministers need to be made aware of the importance of the Group. Superintendents who have the right skills and initiative should implement them wherever possible. The process must begin (Z9).

The Body of Christ.

The concept of Collaborative (Team) Ministry must be practised.

Collaboration is defined as 'the identification, release, and union of all the gifts in ministry for the sake of mission'. This definition has three key elements. First, the essence of collaborative ministry is gift. Second, collaboration is never an end in itself: it is a vehicle for ministry. Third, the goal of collaborative ministry is always the mission of Jesus Christ (Sofield 2002:17).

In this scenario, as many of the members of the church as are willing and have competent skills, have specific tasks and responsibilities to fulfil. Examples of this could include Hospital Visitation teams, Finance committees which utilise the financial skills of the congregation and Congregational Care groups who visit people in their homes and form part of the Evangelical outreach of the church. This does not negate the work of the minister, rather it supplements it. 1 Corinthians 12 speaks of the Body of Christ, different members fulfilling different functions. That does not often describe the minister's relationship with the Church. Gumble's illustration of the fifty thousand people desperately in need of exercise, watching twenty - two people desperately in need of rest referred to in chapter one, page nine, sums up the relationship between most congregations and their ministers. Sometimes though, it is the way the minister wants it, it keeps him on centre - stage or else, as the professor said (Z8) 'they are concerned that the buck stops with them' and so they had rather do it themselves. A more healthy perspective can be found in verbatim one of this chapter that deals with being able to rejoice in your colleagues/congregants successes' and not be threatened by them (X5). Scripture challenges us to work as the Body of Christ in order to fulfil His ministry. 'The work is more important than the worker ... if I find someone who preaches better than me I use them more often...' (X8).

A Day Off.

The minister needs to take a day off 'the Church won't fall down, you are not indispensable...take your day off, even God rested on the seventh day' (X6). (Bible Genesis2: 2) 'I need to have some time when I don't feel responsible...time out...' (Z6) the minister owes that day off to himself, his family, his Church and his Maker. Without it he may work effectively for a few years but eventually burn out. On the other hand, taking a day off in

conjunction with some of the other practices suggested in this chapter might facilitate powerful, dynamic ministry for a lifetime.

Other physiological needs must be taken seriously as well. Aspects such as adequate sleep, proper nutrition and healthy exercise need to be adhered to. Whilst individual needs and patterns are different, the point must be made that the minister needs to take care of his own physical health and take responsibility for that aspect of his wellbeing.

(<http://www.nmha.org/infoctr/factsheets/41.cfm>) and

(<http://www.cnn.com/1999/HEALTH/aging/12/09/caregiver.depression.wmd/index.html>)

The Church Hierarchy and Lay Leadership.

Bishops, Superintendents, circuit stewards, society stewards and the ministers themselves need to get on board. Bishops must be chosen not only to fulfil administrative functions. (X6) and (Z2) are far too similar responses to the issue of the Bishops. Neither minister interviewed knew the other well, yet their responses were almost identical. The Bishops were separated in order to be more available to the ministers of their circuits. Yet they are still either over - committed administratively or are unaware of their role as 'pastor to the pastors'. Why do both ministers mention Bishop Purity Malinga, the only woman Bishop in the MCSA, as a good example of a Bishop caring pastorally for the ministers in her district? Does her pastoral care have something to do with her being a woman minister? Does her gender facilitate a nurturing role? These questions cannot be answered now, they are specific issues, which lie beyond the scope of this dissertation.

However they remain serious questions. Are Bishops (or any ministers) called to status or service? What about John 13? (where Jesus washed His disciples' feet). The Superintendent can play a significant role in the pastoral

care of the ministers in his circuit. Circuit and society stewards too, can play an important role in caring for their ministers. Does this role need to be made clearer in L&D (Z3)? The above roles are clearly defined administratively in L&D, but are mainly implied in relation to the caring roles that can be undertaken. This issue needs to be discussed at society and circuit meetings and resolutions dealing with the relevant issues should be forwarded to Synods for consideration.

Implementation.

The above model needs to be discussed, understood and then implemented in the training phase. Relevant to the MCSA that would mean in the first six years of Probation before Ordination. Often once the minister has been Ordained he/she loses the majority of the support that surrounded them in the Training phase. Therefore this model must become an integral part of the Probationer minister's life before Ordination. Large sums of money are spent training the minister over a six year period, to develop a solid Old and New Testament background, to be able to exegete a passage, to be comfortable in the pulpit, to understand Systematic Theology and recall Church History, especially the role of Wesley in changing England because of his heart - warming experience. All of that knowledge is of little value if three years into the ministry the minister burns out.

The most obvious course to implement this model would be in the realm of Pastoral/ Practical Theology training, or possibly taught at our facility for training in Pretoria, where probationers spend a year or two, John Wesley College. As mentioned earlier with regard to the different models of possible groups, it is not so much which means of teaching this model we use, it is rather a matter of getting it going – it must begin somewhere, and soon. It is not easy bringing these concepts across to the older ministers who are

more set in their ways, but for the younger ministers there is a wonderful opportunity. Why lose good men and women who want to serve God simply because they have not been taught a holistic model that can prevent Burnout in ministry?

Conclusion.

In conclusion a summary of the holistic model of Burnout Prevention in the Ministry is presented.

The Tripod

1. A sense of Call
2. A deep personal devotional life
- 3a. A supportive family structure
- 3b. Group support ministry

Additional aspects will include

- The day off
- Ministry within the context of the Body of Christ
- Bishops, Superintendents, circuit and society stewards having their roles adequately defined and explained
- Implementation of this model in the training phase

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Stress will always be the constant companion of those who seek to give of themselves in ministry to their congregations. Whether or not this stress results in Burnout is another question. The experience of stress does not guarantee the minister will or will not burn out. For some ministers who experience relatively minimal stress Burnout can become the reality. For others who experience a great deal of stress there is the ability to continue to function in a healthy and effective way. The relationship between stress and Burnout is therefore not linear. This would mean that the presence of the former (i.e. stress) does not necessarily indicate the presence of the latter (i.e. Burnout). The hypothesis underpinning this dissertation is that adequate internal and external coping mechanisms can prevent the experience of Burnout.

In Chapter One the nature of stress was described with special reference to Burnout in the ministry. Specific stressors unique to ministry were described.

In Chapter Two the additional stresses of Cross – cultural ministry were considered. In line with the preventative focus referred to throughout this dissertation a coping model was suggested that can assist in identifying cross – cultural stressors and assist in the healthy resolution of the feelings and emotions that surface in such ministry. A greater Cross – cultural awareness is developed fostering greater Cross – cultural competence, and so reducing stress levels.

In Chapter Three the additional stresses associated with being a woman in the ministry were considered. Gender bias was discussed, and it's resulting manifestation in the sin of patriarchy. Again a preventative model was suggested focussing upon educating congregations to be more aware of their inherent biases toward women in the ministry and recognising the important role that women have played in the Bible and in the church, co – workers with their male colleagues, as part of God's salvation plan.

In Chapter Four a holistic response to the stressors of ministry was suggested. This model was put forward as applicable to all who minister regardless of gender or context. It is considered holistic in that mental, spiritual and physical aspects of the minister's life were addressed. The foundation of this model is the *Tripod* (Chapter Four : 101).

1. A sense of calling
2. A deep personal devotional life
3. A supportive family structure

The third leg of the *Tripod* was viewed as interchangeable with group ministry or support because the family cannot always be there to support the minister due to the constraints of confidentiality, often associated with ministry and the limited skills possessed by the minister's family, however well meaning they may have been.

Michael Cassidy is an Ordained Anglican priest and founder of African Enterprise. While delivering the key – note address at the fortieth anniversary celebrations of AE in August 2002 he made special mention of the "C's" that had sustained him throughout his ministry. Three of the six bore a great resemblance to the *Tripod* model discussed above. The first of the C's was his Calling. The second C was his Commitment (with reference to his own continuing spiritual growth). The third C was his Carol, a reference to his wife.

Michael Cassidy has developed a relevant ministry both in Africa and America over the past few decades. Hurdles and obstacles to ministry have been repeatedly overcome. Work with output levels as high as this does not happen without high levels of stress. He has not Burned out and continues in his late sixties to exercise a powerful and relevant ministry. His Call,

Commitment and Carol are clearly effective buffers to the stressors of ministry.

At the beginning of Chapter Four we considered the Prophet Elijah. He did suffer from Burnout. The reasons for that were considered in Chapter Four. Is there an answer to the Prophet's Burnout? Or the Burnout of ministers in the twenty - first century? What do we do when the rubber hosepipe does perish and despite all our efforts, the engine does overheat?

The Bible gives us an answer in both Elijah's story and in Jesus' ministry to his twelve Disciples. Addressing the consequences of are not the focus of this dissertation but let us briefly consider these Biblical models.

Minirth, Hawkins, Meier and Flournoy described the ministry of Burnout prevention in relation to Elijah's life (1986:44-45). In Elijah's case God first addressed the prophet's physical needs (1Kings 19 v 5-6). Elijah was allowed to rest and then received nourishment. Secondly Elijah was gradually convinced that God was still in control of the situation even though God appeared, at least to Elijah, as having had deserted him. God was concerned with Elijah and the ongoing discussion with him was evidence of this (1Kings19 v 9-17). Thirdly Elijah was allowed to express the hostile and negative feelings he was experiencing. To have denied them or buried them would have been wrong and only made the situation worse. Bringing these feelings to the surface assisted Elijah in working through them. Only then could Elijah begin to heal (1Kings19 v 4,10 and 14). Fourthly having vented his feelings and begun the painful journey of working through them God gave Elijah tasks that he was quite capable of undertaking. He was sent to anoint two kings and a new prophet. (1Kings19 v 15-16). The successful completion of these tasks began the gradual process of restoring his self - esteem. Finally God provided for Elijah that which every Burnout victim needs, a genuine friend (1Kings19 v 18 and 21). Providing a friend addressed the devastating feeling of loneliness so often associated with the

victim of Burnout. Not only would Elisha be Elijah's friend but would also share the workload with him.

The stressors of active ministry can so easily lead to physical, emotional and spiritual symptoms of Burnout as evident in Elijah's life. However, as was also evident in Elijah's life, God can bring healing and restoration to the Burnout victim. Jesus saw this need for healing and restoration in the lives of the twelve disciples on their return from the first missionary trip he sent them on. The disciples had been sent out in pairs without any additional food or clothing, to bring a message of the necessity of repentance, drive out demons and heal the sick (Mark6 v 8-13). This was obviously an exhausting and daunting task to introduce them to the life of ministry.

Later in the chapter the disciples were eager to describe what they had achieved. People were pressing in from all sides and the demands were so heavy upon them that they did not have time even to eat. Jesus recognised the stressors they were experiencing and said 'come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest' (Mark6 v 31b).

Jesus' ministry to the tired disciples involved a change of location, a change of activity or responsibility and a certain amount of time (Minirth et al 1986:100-102). Jesus called the disciples aside to a secluded and solitary place. They needed to be away from people. The Burnout victim needs to get away from the pressing demands of people clamoring for their presence or their time. All need a change in scenery, they also needed a change in activity. Failure to get proper rest is a guarantee that ministry will become overwhelming. There also needed to be a brief time when ministry was not happening, even if in the case of the disciples, it was the boat trip to the solitary and secluded place. As it turned out the crowds were already at the solitary and secluded place waiting for them (Mark6 v 32). The boat trip itself provided that time, however brief it was, away from the constant demands of the crowd.

In both God's dealing with Elijah and Jesus' dealing with the disciples there is hope for the victim of Burnout. Life can be restored and healed, meaning and purpose re-established. Self-esteem can be rebuilt. God is still in control, if only the Burnout victim will allow God to be. This, however, is far from the ideal – prevention is better than cure.

The final comment in this dissertation was made by our Presiding Bishop Mvume Dandala to the Ordinands as they made their final preparations for Ordination in Swaziland in September 2002. Being well aware of the unique stressors of the ministry, conscious of the challenges that lay ahead and the importance of a deep personal devotional life which is essential for maintaining and sustaining their call to ministry he told them to

'Take care of your soul because the world will want to wrench it from you'.

The world must not succeed. Burnout in the Methodist ministry can and must be prevented.

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APPENDICES

Women In Ministry Questionnaire - August 2002

- 1=strongly agree
- 2=agree
- 3=undecided
- 4=disagree
- 5=strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
My spouse feels acknowledged and cared for					
I feel I am adequately able to meet my childcare responsibilities					
I have investigated alternative forms of ministry to enable me to successfully balance family and church					
I believe the MCSA has fully dealt with the needs of women in ministry					
My marriage has encountered difficulties because of my ministry					
Have you taken Maternity leave while in the ministry?	YES		NO		
I feel the Maternity leave arrangements are satisfactory					

Comments: Please make any comments which will facilitate understanding at Connexional Executive level:

What are your current areas of joy and satisfaction in ministry?

What are your current areas of frustration and pain in ministry?

Is there anything else you would like the Connexional Executive to know about your experience as a woman in ministry?

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BURNOUT INVENTORY

If you believe you are headed for Burnout, here is a way to test yourself for symptoms of a downward spiral ahead.

Check those statements with which you agree.

1	More and more I find that I can hardly wait for quitting time to come so that I can leave work	
2	I feel like I am not doing any good at work these days	
3	I am more irritable than I used to be	
4	I am thinking more about changing jobs	
5	Lately I have become more cynical and negative	
6	I have more headaches(or backaches or other physical symptoms) than usual	
7	Often I feel hopeless, like 'who cares?'	
8	I drink moer now (or take tranquilisers) just to cope with everyday stress	
9	My energy level is not what it used to be,I am tired all the time	
10	I feel a lot of pressure and responsibility at work these days	
11	My memory is not as good as it used to be	
12	I don't seem to concentrate or pay attention like I did in the past	
13	I don't sleep as well	
14	My appetite is decreased these days (or I can't seem to stop eating)	
15	I feel unfulfilled and disillusioned	
16	I am not as enthusiastic as I was about work a year or two ago	
17	I feel like a failure at work. All the work lv'e done hasn't been worth it	
18	I can't seem to make decisions as easily as I once did	
19	I find I am doing fewer things at work that I like or that I do well	
20	I often tell myself 'why bother,it doesn't really matter anyhow'	
21	I don't feel adequately rewarded or noticed for al the work I have done	
22	I feel helpless,as if I can'tee any way out of my problems	
23	People have told me I am too idealistic about my job	
24	I think my career has just about come to a dead end	

Count up your check marks.

If you agree with the majority of those statements then you may be feeling Burnout

And be in need of professional help or counselling, or at least a change in lifestyle.

(1986:37-38)

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