



McMaster Divinity College

MS 3XS3/6XS6 - Self Care in Ministry

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Tuesdays
Sept 12 to Dec 12, 2017
8:30 to 10:20 am

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Whether in a counselling setting or in a church ministry, the challenges and obligations of the Christian helping professions are demanding and exacting. Ministering persons experience daunting challenges in the use of emotional resources, setting boundaries for ministry, and establishing livable routines that will sustain and nurture their lives while engaging in the tasks of Christian ministry. This course will explore strategies for self-care, resources to endure ministry for the long-haul, and a careful examination of threats to personal, professional, and ministry success. Participants will be exposed to literature that will aid them in the development of a personal plan that addresses areas of concern, depletion, and emotional fatigue. Furthermore, the course will explore a theology of self that enables a holistic concern for the well-being of those who invest in full-time counselling, pastoral care, and other pastoral activities that demand soulful engagement.

Course Format: The course objectives will be met through a combination of lectures, research and personal reflection.

Specializations: Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS), Christian Worldview (CW), and Pastoral Studies (PS).

Doctor of Practical Theology students who wish to apply for this course as an Advanced Elective for their degree program must consult with the Program Director of the DPT and the course instructor in order to develop an Advanced Elective approach to the course that fulfills the specific elements required by the DPT program. Once the elements of the Advanced Elective have been agreed upon by the student, the Program Director, and the instructor, a formal application can be made for an Advanced Elective in connection with this course. Once the application is accepted, DPT students can proceed with the course as part of their degree program.

2. REQUIRED READING:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3 : phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Textbooks:

Burns, Bob, et al. *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us about Surviving and Thriving*. Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2013 (**All Students**).

Capps, Donald. *The Depleted Self*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993 (**All Students**).

Richardson, Ronald. *Becoming a Healthier Pastor*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004 (**Pastoral Studies Specialization**).

Wicks, Robert J. *The Resilient Clinician*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. (**Counselling and Spiritual Care Specialization**).

Textbooks – MA/PhD Students:

MA and PhD students who enroll in this course will be required to read 5000-6000 pages of written text that is relevant to the practice of chaplaincy and spiritual care and to give evidence of this reading in their written work.

Textbooks – DPT Students:

Doctor of Practical Theology students who enroll in this course will consult with the course instructor to develop a supplemental reading list. It is expected that DPT students will give evidence of this reading in their written work.

3. LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Through required and optional reading, lectures, class discussion and exercises, and the completion of assignments, the student should fulfill the following course objectives:

Knowing

- To explore a theological understanding of the human person and human capabilities/limitations.
- To gain facility with current research and literature on self care in the helping professions.

Being

- To nurture spiritual self-care practices that will enable long-term engagement in helping ministries.
- To develop spiritual habits that will support the on-going demands of Christian life and ministry.

Doing

- To formulate a self-care plan for the next five years of one's helping profession.
- To cultivate practices for self-care and ministry.
- To enact a ministry resource plan.

4. PROFESSOR:

Biography: Dr. Kelvin Mutter is an Associate Professor (part-time) at McMaster Divinity College, Dr. Mutter is a Registered Psychotherapist (CRPO); an OAMFT/AAMFT Clinical Fellow & Approved Supervisor; and, a Certified Psycho-Spiritual Therapist & Certified Psycho-Spiritual Therapist Supervisor- Educator (CASC/ACSS). Dr. Mutter's ministry and counselling

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experience includes both his current work as an individual, couple and family therapist as well as over twelve years in pastoral leadership. Dr. Mutter is married and has three adult children.

Availability: Dr. Mutter will be available for one-on-one consultation after class and during breaks on the days class is scheduled. Otherwise, students may contact him at mutterk@mcmaster.ca.

5. COURSE SCHEDULE:

Date	Class Topic / Theme	Readings & Assignments
Sept 12/17	Review of syllabus Introductory Matters:	
	Ethical interviewing practices	
Sept 19/17	Theology of the Self and the Spirituality of Self-Care	
Sept 26/17	Spiritual Formation & the Care of the Self	Read: Burns et al. chs. 3–4.
Oct 3/17	Distress (Pain) and Resilience	<i>DUE: Book Review</i>
Oct 10/17	READING WEEK	
Oct 17/17	The Depleted Self: Burnout	Read: Burns et al. ch. 5; Capps ch. 6.
Oct 24/17	Thriving vs. Surviving	Read: Capps ch. 7. <i>DUE: Self-Care Interview Assignment</i>
Oct 31/17	Emotional-Psychological Health & Self-Care	Read: Burns et al. chs. 7–8
Nov 7/17	Socio-Cultural Wellbeing & Self-Care	Read: Burns et al. chs. 9–10
Nov 14/17	Who’s Minding Your Trampoline?	<i>DUE: Essay</i>
Nov 21/17	Marriage / Family & Self-Care	Read: Burns et al. chs. 11–12
Nov 28/17	Self-Awareness & Self-Care: Work & Ministry	Read: Burns et al. chs. 13–14
Dec 5/15	Conflict And Self-Care	<i>Due: Book Response essays.</i>
Dec 12/17	Keeping Watch	<i>Due: Self-Care Plan</i>

6. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assignments	Due Date	MTS/MDiv	MA/PhD
Book Review (MTS & MDiv)	Oct 3, 2017	15 %	---
Self-Care Interview Assignment (All)	Oct 24, 2017	25 %	20 %
Essay (All)	Nov 14, 2017	35 %	35 %
Book Response (MTS & MDiv)	Dec 5, 2017	15 %	---
Supplemental Reading (MA & PhD)	Dec 5, 2017	---	35 %
Self-Care Plan (All)	Dec 12, 2017	10 %	10 %

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A. Reading

1. **Book Review (MTS & MDiv)**

Due: Oct 3, 2017

Pastoral Studies (PS) and Christian Worldview (CW) Specializations

Students in the Pastoral Studies and Christian Worldview (CW) Specializations are required to read Ronald Richardson's book *Becoming a Healthier Pastor* and to submit a summative reflection of 1500 words (6 pages, double spaced) which includes references to Richardson's text. Students will identify how this text has contributed to their understanding of the importance of self-care in ministry (i.e., Knowing), and highlight how the themes and emphases of this book have contributed to their self-awareness of the stresses, etc. that might interfere with their ability to practice self-care (i.e., Knowing & Being).

Assignment Instructions:

To obtain maximum benefit from this assignment, students are encouraged to keep a reading journal and to ask themselves the following questions.

- What do I find appealing and challenging about this book?
- What does this book tell me about the practice of self-care?
- How has this book assisted the development of my own theory and theology of self-care?
- What questions does this book raise for me?

Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS) Specialization

Students in the Counselling and Spiritual Care specialization are required to read Robert Wicks' book *The Resilient Clinician* and to submit a summative reflection of 1500 words (6 pages, double spaced) which includes references to Wicks' text. Students will identify how this text has contributed to their understanding of the importance of self-care in the work of counselling and spiritual care (i.e., Knowing), and highlight how the themes and emphases of this book have contributed to their self-awareness of the stresses, etc. that might interfere with their ability to practice self-care (i.e., Knowing & Being).

Assignment Instructions:

To obtain maximum benefit from this assignment, students are encouraged to keep a reading journal and to ask themselves the following questions.

- What do I find appealing and challenging about this book?
- What does this book tell me about the practice of self-care?
- How has this book assisted the development of my own theory and theology of self-care?
- What questions does this book raise for me?

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2. Book Response (MTS & MDiv)

Due: Dec 5, 2017

Instructions

Part 1: Students are required to read the Burns text *Resilient Ministry* and reflect on the “Questions to Ponder” included in each chapter.

Part 2: At the end of the semester, each student will submit a brief response essay (1000 words, 4 pages) that describes how this book has contributed to their understanding of the following.

- Your awareness of the factors and processes that contribute to people experiencing (dis)stress and living resiliently (general knowledge).
NOTE: This paper is not the place to identify or discuss the maladaptive ways in which people chose to cope with these stresses.
- Your personal awareness of the factors and processes that contribute to you experiencing (dis)stress and living resiliently (personal knowledge, i.e., “being”).
NOTE: This paper is not the place to identify or discuss the maladaptive ways in which you cope with these stresses.

3. Supplemental Reading (MA & PhD students):

Due: Dec 5, 2017

MA and PhD students are required to read 5000-6000 pages of supplemental material (i.e., articles, books, book chapters) that is representative of the historical (e.g., patristic, medieval, Reformation, post-Reformation; Orthodox, Catholic, & Protestant) as well as contemporary writings on the practice of self-care in ministry. It is expected that advanced degree students will write an integrated literature review essay (6000 words, 25 pages) in which they identify and discuss key themes that emerge from the literature.

B. Self-Care Interview Assignment (all students)

Due: Oct 24, 2017

An application has been submitted to the McMaster University Research Ethics Board for approval of this course-based research assignment.

Degree Program Expectations:

1. MTS/MDiv Students – Pastoral Studies (PS), Christian Worldview (CW), and Counselling & Spiritual Care Specializations

MTS and MDiv students are to interview an individual in their area of ministry specialization (e.g., pastoral care, chaplaincy, pastoral counselling, etc.). Take notes on your conversation. Summarize the lessons learned from this interview (max. 1000 words; 4 pages, double-spaced) and how these lessons may contribute to the development of your own self-care plan.

2. Advanced Degree Students (MA/PhD) & Doctor of Practical Theology Students (DPT)

Advanced degree and DPT students are expected to interview two or three individuals currently involved in the student’s field (e.g., academic, pastor, Christian professional). Take notes on your conversation. Summarize the lessons learned from these interviews

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(max. 2000 words; 6 – 8 pages, double-spaced) noting key differences as well common themes / similarities and your observations and lessons from these interviews may contribute to the development of your own self-care plan.

Interview Guidelines:

- Students will explain the purpose of this assignment when recruiting a possible volunteer.
 - It is expected that the student will be transparent as to their reasons for asking an individual for permission to conduct this interview.
 - Students will arrange to meet the interviewee in a location of the interviewee's choosing so that the interviewee will feel comfortable sharing details of their life and work without fear of losing their anonymity and/or creating social or professional risks for themselves or others.
 - It is expected that student work will reflect ethical practice in working with individuals.
 - Students will respect the wishes of any individual who decides to not participate in the interview.
 - ***Students will confine their questions to the list provided by the professor.***
 - Students will respect the wishes of any individual decides to terminate the interview or informs them that the interviewee(s) no longer wishes to withdraw from this assignment.
 - It is understood that respect for the interviewee's decision to withdraw includes, but is not limited to, making a note on the informed consent form that the interviewee decided not to participate, refraining from any attempt to ask the interviewee to reconsider their decision to withdraw, destroying all recordings and/or field notes relating to this interviewee, and ensuring that the final project does not refer to this interviewee or employ any information derived solely from this individual.
 - Students will safeguard both the interviewee's identity and any information obtained from the interviewee by storing all material collected (whether digital or hard copy) in a secure location (e.g., a password protected computer in a locked office).
 - It is expected that once the student has submitted their paper that the student will permanently erase and destroy all copies of any material collected (whether digital or hard copy).
 - Students will safeguard the interviewee's identity by using a neutral identifier such as "Participant A" or simply "A" when referring to the interviewee in their written work.
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Expectations of Final Written Assignment:

- This is a formal academic paper (e.g., Introduction with a thesis statement, body or discussion, conclusion, footnotes and bibliography or reference list).
- The discussion section is primarily a report on your interview (qualitative research aspect). Use direct quotes from the interviewee as appropriate.

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- In addition to the interview,
 - MTS/MDiv students are expected to reflect on the interview in light of what they have read in the course texts as well as any other relevant material drawn from the pastoral care, spiritual care, chaplaincy, or counselling literature.
 - Advanced degree students are expected to integrate their supplemental reading with the information provided by the interviewee.
- The conclusion is to include a discussion of what you learned about the practice of self-care from your interviewee(s), including what you will apply to your own ministry and any issues that have been raised for you. Advanced degree students may also reflect on the implications of what they have learned for your career as a teacher or researcher in the field of practical theology.

C. Essay (all students)

MTS / MDiv Students

Due: Nov 14, 2017

Students are to draw on the course texts as well as an **additional 300 pages of reading drawn from chapters of books or journal articles** to engage one of the following themes relevant to the practice of self-care in ministry.

Length: max. 3000 words (12 pages); length includes footnotes and bibliography.

MA / PhD Students

Due: Nov 14, 2017

Students are to draw on the course texts as well as an **additional 1500 pages of reading drawn from their Supplemental Reading** to engage one of the following themes relevant to the practice of self-care in ministry.

Length: max. 5000 words (20 pages); length includes footnotes and bibliography.

Essay Themes/Topics:

- Burnout in Ministry: Prevention and Remedy
- Compassion Fatigue
- Managing or Coping with Stress in Ministry
- Coping with Personal Crises in Ministry
- Work-Place Conflict and Self-Care
- Managing Boundaries in Ministry

Essays will be graded based on the following criteria,

- Evidence of graduate level research
- Evidence of a working knowledge of the theme that demonstrates the student's use of the course texts plus supplemental reading and an ability to discuss the theme in a way that reveals a nuanced understanding of the issues
- Self-knowledge of the student's own issues/needs/patterns
- Self-agency as evidence by identifying strategies the student will use to 'address' their own issues/needs/patterns
- Evidence of theological reflection and integration

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D. Self-Care Plan (all students)

Due: Dec 12, 2017

Over the course of the semester each student is to develop their own self-care plan for your current (or expected) ministry situation. Reflect carefully on what it means to be a bio-psycho-social-spiritual being and develop strategies for each aspect or dimension of your life. While this self-care plan is not a formal essay, students are encouraged to make strategic reference to any texts that have helped shape their thinking on this topic.

Length: max.1500 words (6 pages, double spaced).

7. COURSE ADMINISTRATION:

College Style for Submission of Written Work: All written work—unless informed otherwise by the course instructor—is to be submitted in accordance with the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guide for Essays and Theses*, available on the McMaster Divinity College web-site (<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdcstyleguide.pdf>).

Statement on Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty is a serious offense that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the McMaster University Academic Integrity Policy - <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.

Gender Inclusive Language: McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Submission of Written Work: All assignments are due on the day indicated (by email before 5 p.m. of the day due). ***Late submission of assignments will be deducted one grade point for every late day.*** All written work is to be submitted by email in either MSWord format, "Rich Text Format" (i.e., *.rtf), or as an Open Office document. Graded papers will be returned to the student with comments in pdf format

Length: Students are expected to adhere to the page / word count.

Cell Phone/Computer Policy: Students are to refrain from texting or conducting cell phone conversations while class is in session. Should you need to maintain contact with family members and/or your church or ministry, please turn off the ringer so as to avoid disturbing others; upon receipt of an urgent call, you may discretely excuse yourself from the classroom. The same policy applies to all computer generated sound schemes, pagers, or other electronic annunciation systems.

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