

SUGGESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Listed below are some suggested topics which may be discussed during weekly sessions with your supervisee. These are only suggested topics and should not supersede immediate concerns of ministry in your situation.

Initiating: This describes the supervisee's ability to take the lead to solve problems and develop relationships.

Sex roles: The supervisee will need to become aware and comfortable with his/her appropriate sex role and how he/she relates to others and their appropriate or inappropriate perceived or actual sex roles.

Theologize: This is the process of starting with experience and finding the theological themes inherent in and appropriate to that experience. This process would examine the supervisee's confessed theology and the theological presuppositions inherent in the supervisee's actions.

Investments: Ministry involves the conscious recognition of the emotional and personal investments which persons have caused in ideas or memories and how these must be consciously considered when working with persons for whatever reason.

Power structures: The supervisee needs to be able to recognize formal and informal structures, the powers inherent in them and the ability of the supervisee to be a change agent.

Conflict: The supervisee should be aware of elements of conflict and methods for creatively dealing with conflict, including handling anger of persons ministered to.

Time management: Focus on the supervisee's need to be in charge of his/her time, schedule, energy, and resources.

Self-identity: Each person needs to develop a self-identity and the supervisee needs to integrate his/her identity as a minister with self-identity

Affirmations: The supervisee will need to get hold of his/her source of affirmation and develop the ability to accept healthy affirmation. Supervisees need to "bless" and affirm the others.

Resistance: Resistance to people and ideas should be examined to find its cause, the reality associated with it, and action to bring into the supervisee's conscious control.

Defensiveness: The supervisee needs to become aware of his/her defense mechanisms and why he/she uses them and if he/she needs to eliminate them or minimize their negative effect.

Personal strengths: The supervisee needs proper perception of his/her strengths.

Definition of issues: The supervisee should learn to define the issue or issues in given situations. He/she should be able to articulate the issues in language that is appropriate to the nature of issues as well as in God language and theological verbalizations.

Ability to focus: The ability to focus attention and efforts on issues which need attention without diffusion of energies helps a supervisee to bring his/her powers to bear significantly upon specific areas of ministry.

Functioning in non-structured role situation: While the supervisee may find many opportunities to minister where there is a clear identity of his or her role, the supervisee will have to function in many non-structured situations. His/her effectiveness is often related to the ability to understand what is happening and feeling comfortable in it. The supervisee needs to be able to move from functioning in a professional role (minister of education) to a personal role (friend, husband, wife, etc.). Also, the supervisee needs to be able to function at different levels of intimacy.

Intellectualizing: This is the development of the discipline of a personal devotional life and integrating it with the vocational live he/she follows.

Perception of reality: The Supervisee needs to be able to distinguish between reality and what he/she wishes were true or ought not to be true.

Ability to risk: How does the supervisee deal with risk? The supervisee may avoid risk at all cost, compulsively seek to risk or take appropriately calculated risks. What are the natures of the risks and what will the supervisee take risks for?

Ability to reveal: The supervisee must reveal self to others. This may be done appropriately. If revealing is a problem, what defenses are being used? Why is the supervisee afraid to become vulnerable?

Relation to change: The supervisee should be able to be a change agent without being iconoclastic and also be able to cope with change.

Handling failure: The supervisee can respond to failure by denial, passiveness, blame, self-blame, self-acceptance or challenge. Failure can be highly destructive because the supervisee can't cope or it can be neutralizing because all of the supervisee's energy is going into coping. Failure can be catalytic.

Ability to bring faith to bear appropriately: The supervisee will need to make faith operative in life and not just live through experiences. He/she needs to see the impact that their faith makes in situations.

Personal Integrity: Are you a person of your word? Do you live a principle-centered life or do your principles shift according to the current situation?

Personal faith commitment: Do you have an active and dynamic faith? Is your faith real? Are you able to share your faith in appropriate ways?

Personal spiritual discipline: Do you have an active devotional life, including the use of the Scriptures, prayer, and meditation?

Trustworthiness: Can you be trusted to carry out responsibilities without constant supervision? Are you dependable in completing tasks and assignments? Do you keep confidences?

Honesty and openness in relationships: Do you relate to others in genuine ways? Are you able to reveal yourself to others in appropriate ways? Do you value the worth of other people?

Flexibility: Are you flexible in dealing with your own life and the lives of others around you? Are you flexible to the point of having no firm convictions? Are you rigid and unbending? Can you be spontaneous?

Ability to relate with warmth and interest: Do you communicate to others that you are interested in them as persons and not just as objects of your ministry?

Sensitivity to the gifts of others: Do you need to be the center of attention or can you truly find joy in the gifts of other people? Does your sensitivity to the gifts and abilities of others mean that you find little worth in your own gifts and abilities?

Self-discipline: Are you a disciplined person in the good sense of the word? Are you punctual in completing your tasks? Do you value the time of other people? Are you able to provide personal initiative for your ministry or must you be prodded and reminded by others? Are you able to exercise appropriate control of yourself, your emotions, your use of time, money management, etc.?

Criticism: Are you able to give constructive feedback to others? How do you respond to constructive criticism? How do you respond when others criticize you harshly?

Listening: Do you listen to others with your ears, your eyes, and your heart? Do you talk too much or do you spend your listening time shaping your own responses while others are talking to you?

Decision-making skills: Do you make decisions easily? Do you rely on other people to make decisions so that you will not have to take responsibility for the outcomes of those decisions? Are you too quick to make decisions without considering all of the consequences of your decisions?

Stress: How do you react to stress in your life? Do you work well under pressure? If so, what effect does this have on your other relationships? How does the presence of stress

manifest itself in your life B irritability, overeating, procrastination, task-oriented approach to work, etc.?

Conflict: Can you identify various forms of conflict? Do you know different ways of confronting and dealing with conflict? What is your personal style of conflict management? Do you enjoy conflict? Do you avoid conflict?

Anger: How do you handle the anger of others? Do you recognize the presence of anger in your own life? What kinds of people or situations cause you to become angry? How do you deal with your anger?

Self-awareness: How open are you with yourself about your strengths and weaknesses, your likes and dislikes, the way your past has influenced the way you behave in the present?

Self-concept: How do you view and value yourself? Are you able to receive the affirmation of others without discounting their compliments, or are you always seeking praise from others?

Encouragement: Are you able to offer words of encouragement to others in appropriate ways? Are you too critical? Do you offer empty words of praise?

Collegiality: Do you work well with others? Do you always need to be in control? Do you share in group processes or do you tend to be passive in group situations?

Sensitivity to diversity: Are you open to the diversity among other peoples and beliefs? Are you aware of areas where you need to broaden your understanding of cultures and perspectives different from your own?

Personal care: Do you take good care of yourself - emotionally, physically, and spiritually? Do you have an appropriate self-esteem? Are you well-groomed and neatly dressed?

Sense of humor: Are you able to use humor effectively in relating to others? Do you laugh with others or at others? Are you able to laugh at yourself?

Authority: Do you have a healthy sense of personal authority? How do you react to those in authority over you? Does the gender, race, age, socio-economic background of the person in authority affect the way you respond?

Sexuality: Are you comfortable with your own sexuality? How well do you relate with persons of the opposite gender? How do you relate with persons of the same gender?

Leadership skills: Do you have an understanding of the various styles of leadership? Do you provide leadership that is manipulative, controlling, passive, aggressive, etc.? Are you able to enlist and motivate others to assist you in ministry?

Organizational skills: Are you able to plan your ministry and implement your plans easily? Are you able to prioritize your work, giving appropriate attention to important matters and not getting caught up in minutia? Are you able to delegate tasks to others, equipping them to do the necessary work, trusting them to do what you asked, and accepting their work even if it is accomplished in a different manner than you would have?

Caring skills: Are you able to provide care for others in a variety of contexts such as: crisis intervention, hospital visitation, grief ministry, marriage counseling, social ministry, pastoral care, and counseling?

Worship leadership skills: Can you plan and lead meaningful worship experiences?

Teaching skills: Are you able to teach others utilizing a variety of teaching methodologies based on the various learning styles?

Integration of theory and practice: Are you able to put together the things you have learned in the classroom and through reading with the practice of ministry with real people?

Communication skills: Are you able to communicate effectively with others through verbal and written means? Are you able to articulate ideas on a variety of levels so that people of differing ages and backgrounds might understand you on their own levels?

Understanding of structures: Do you understand the formal and informal power structures at work in your place of ministry? Are you able to work within these structures?

Source: Pyle, William T. and Mary Alice Seals, Experiencing Ministry Supervision