

Baptist Registration Priority Learning 2026

Leading from a Healthy Place: Cultivating Sustainable Leadership through Self-Care

Self-care is important for leaders because it sustains their spiritual, emotional, and physical health, enabling them to lead others with wisdom, compassion, and endurance.

This learning module aims to equip leaders with a comprehensive understanding of self-care and its significance. It guides them in evaluating their current self-care practices and utilises this insight to create a tailored maintenance plan for their well-being.

The module is divided into three parts:

1. **Part One:** understanding self-care and why it is important
2. **Part Two:** completing a self-care assessment. This includes looking at stress and burnout indicators
3. **Part Three:** developing a self-care maintenance plan

We recommend discussing your results with your supervisor. They will be a good sounding board as well as a self-care maintenance accountability partner.

Te Whare Tapa Whā, as referenced in the Baptist Registration manual, describes health and wellbeing as a wharenuī/meeting house with four walls. This model is anchored in the context of Aotearoa, nurturing and strengthening our wellbeing. Resource is available to engage with this model if you so choose as a part of your ministry journey and this self-care assessment. Contact Luke Kaa-Morgan for access to these resources.

PART ONE: WHAT IS SELF-CARE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Engage with **one or more** of the following:

- **Podcast**

Listen to [For Pastors Podcast: Episode 7 – Doing Well](#)

In this episode, NZ pastor Vic Francis interviews Fran Francis and Glenn Melville, looking at what pastors need to do to "do well" in their lives, marriages and ministries.

- **Reading**

- *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us about Surviving and Thriving*, Burns et al. 2013 – 2 chapters on self-care
[Burning on, Not Burning Out](#) | [Pacing our Lifestyles](#)
- *Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries* - [Session 7: Self-Care](#)



PART TWO: SELF-CARE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this assessment is to help you reflect honestly on your spiritual, relational, emotional, physical, financial and vocational health — and to create a practical, grace-filled plan for ongoing renewal in ministry.

Please assess the following self-care/well-being domains based on your current performance. Note that not all examples may apply to you, and some may be new considerations. Feel free to include any additional aspects under "Other."

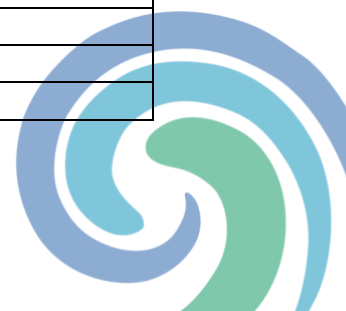
Scoring

Score each activity with one of the following. Please note the point is not the total score but taking note of whether or not you are making time for self-care, how frequently you do so, and what new things you could try. Having said that, the higher the score the better!

- ?? This never occurred to me
- 0 I never do this
- 1 I rarely do this
- 2 I do this occasionally
- 3 I do this frequently
- NA Not applicable

Score	SPIRITUAL SELF-CARE
	Make time to read and study Scripture for personal refreshment
	Schedule time for regular Sabbath and rest
	Make time for prayer and reflection
	Be open to inspiration and gratitude e.g. consider how you receive inspiration and gratitude
	Be open to the mystery of the Triune God
	Find creative ways to worship e.g. listen to sacred music; sing; dance; art
	Attend a discipleship group
	Try at times to not be in charge; be open to receive, listen, and look for something new
	Have a spiritual mentor/supervisor or accountability partner
	Spend time in nature with a focus on God as Creator
	Regular attendance at church services
	Other -

Score	RELATIONAL SELF CARE
	If married, schedule regular dates with my spouse
	If a parent, schedule regular activities with my children
	Spend time with friends
	Call, check in, or see my relatives
	Spend time with my pets
	Maintain healthy boundaries with others
	Allow others to care for and serve me

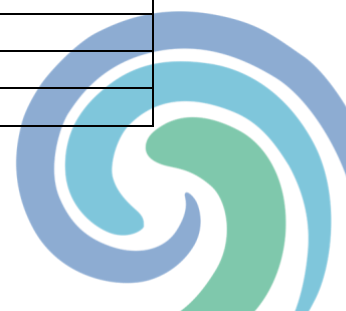


	Grow my social circle & connections
	Ask for help when I need it
	Share fears and hopes with someone I trust
	Join a non-work-related club or hobby
	Other -

Score	EMOTIONAL SELF CARE
	Spend time with family and/or others who I enjoy
	Stay in contact with important people in my life
	Give myself affirmations and praise
	Spend intentional time alone
	Seek out comforting activities/people/objects/places
	Experience things that make me laugh
	Express feelings on social issues and injustices (appropriately)
	Talk with a supervisor/therapist/coach/mentor when the need arises
	Confess my shortcomings to a trusted friend
	Volunteer for a non-profit organisation/group I believe in
	Relax the brain - take mental health days as needed
	Know what things lower stress for me
	Other -

Score	PHYSICAL SELF CARE
	Eat regular and healthy meals
	Get enough sleep
	Exercise regularly
	Have annual physical check-ups
	Seek medical care when needed
	Take time off when sick
	Invest in relaxation (e.g. massages, beach/nature walks)
	Engage fun physical activities
	If married, take time for intimacy
	Schedule and take regular holidays
	Other -

Score	FINANCIAL SELF CARE
	Give finances the care and attention they need
	Prioritise tithing and giving to charity
	Prioritise savings
	Negotiate for my needs (benefits, pay, time-off)
	Live within my means
	Dedicate money to fun and relaxation
	Let go of judgement and comparison on money matters
	If married, talk regularly with spouse on financial matters
	Seek help when money matters become distressing
	Create financial goals and regularly evaluate progress
	Other -



Score	VOCATIONAL SELF CARE
	Feel a deep sense of purpose and joy in my ministry
	Have clarity in my calling
	Create annual ministry goals and objectives
	Complete projects/tasks that are inspiring/rewarding
	Set healthy boundaries with church members/colleagues
	Balance my daily workload and take regular breaks
	Ensure I see my supervisor regularly
	Develop a healthy work life / home life rhythm
	Engage with peers and dedicate time for support and encouragement
	Regularly listen for God's leading in my vocation
	Develop and create a positive work environment
	Ask for advice, feedback, or suggestions from time to time
	Other -

STRESS & BURNOUT INDICATORS

It is important that alongside self-care you also consider stress and burnout indicators. Unaddressed stress can lead to severe personal damage, a decline in ministry effectiveness, and can even cause you to leave the ministry entirely. Recognising these signs early allows for preventative measures and necessary changes to maintain long-term health and a thriving ministry.

Check all that apply:

- I feel drained even after rest
- I have trouble sleeping or switching off my mind
- I feel isolated in my role
- I avoid ministry duties I once enjoyed
- I am more irritable or withdrawn at home
- I rely on caffeine, food, alcohol, addictive practices or screens to cope with fatigue
- I feel detached from the congregation's/organisation's needs
- I rarely take a full day off

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
 — Matthew 11:2

If you checked 3 or more boxes, pause and prayerfully consider adjustments and make sure you discuss this with your supervisor. It may also be appropriate to discuss this with your GP.



PART THREE: MAINTENANCE SELF-CARE PLAN

Review your completed assessment. On this worksheet, list practices you engage in frequently under “current practices” and identify **one** new practice you could incorporate into your maintenance self-care. List your barriers and coping strategies in the spaces on the following page.

Well-being Domains	Current Practices	New Practice
SPIRITUAL		
RELATIONAL		
EMOTIONAL		
PHYSICAL		
FINANCIAL		
VOCATIONAL		

Which domain above especially needs attention right now? Highlight it and start with the new practice in that domain.



<p>What are my barriers to maintaining my self-care practices?</p>	
<p>What healthy coping strategies can I utilise to address these barriers?</p>	

Extra Recommended Resources

1. Read *It Works: Stories of Transformative Spiritual Practices* Halstead et al. This book is being gifted **FREE to all Baptist Registrants**. To receive a copy contact Karen Warner at the National Support Centre or your Regional Leader.
2. Read the BUNZ [Te Wao Tōtara: Code of Ethics and Conduct](#) noting the domains that promote self-care and wellbeing.
3. Read [How to Sabbath Well](#) from the Venn Foundation
4. Peruse the self-care resources on the [Leadership Hub](#)
5. Watch Glenn Melville’s webinar recording (\$40): [7 Keys for Emotional Wellbeing in Ministry](#)
6. Attend the [Thriving in Ministry: 5 Keys for Emotional Wellbeing](#) webinar series commencing in June
7. The Unstuck Church Podcast:
[3 Keys to Soul Care for Pastors with Sandra Stanley – Episode 249](#) (30 mins)
[Burnout – Episode 427](#) (23 mins)

“The condition of a leader’s heart profoundly impacts their ability to lead others effectively. Leaders must prioritise their personal spiritual growth to serve their congregations well.”

The Thriving Church, Barna Research

