

**Alliance University**

**Integrative Paper**

**DML811: Spiritual Formation**

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**Spring 2023**

## **Plan of Growth**

When assessing and addressing the state of mind and soul at the start of this class I must say that I have been in touch with an exuberant stage of reality. I can identify with a surface of what I never acknowledge as it being a weakness. Facing one's fears and accepting to do whatever is necessary to overcome them is challenging but definitely rewarding. It is a step-by-step process; no giant leaps are necessary. I believe it is fundamental in any kind of therapy to make me understand and believe how uniquely special, precious, blessed, and how I have been able to build up self-esteem, self-confidence and salvaged integrity and dignity as a phenomenal woman of God. Throughout the years I suffered with sexual abuse, and it was a terrifying situation that produced a deeply embedded phobia that I thought I was over. The two areas of weaknesses I had the opportunity to discover were not allowing myself to cry and let it out, protecting others and not myself. I would address these factors by speaking tactfully and serenely to the person or people in question and exposing them to my true sentiments and perplexities regarding the issue and listening to what the other has to say many a times simply releasing what we have harbored inside for so long is of or can be extremely therapeutic and healing with the help of the Lord. I have accepted making changes that are required and obviously opening to therapy and God more. For a successful family relationship, we must be motivated to help the one in trouble and as a believer have the best interest at heart. I am willing to sympathize or empathize with my mother and help her be fully aware of her responsibility to collaborate, cooperate and follow advice the same way she expects it from me. She should be cognizant of what is expected from her the same way she expects delivery from me. No genuine change comes in life through external pressure. I can surely identify where I need help and the plan of growth in this area of forgiveness is as follows. I have forgiven my mother. However, I do have a cousin that robbed a house from me by lying merits and I was hurting for many years though I forgave him but came to terms that I continue to think about what he has done.

- It is essential for soul care ministers to develop habits that support a personal growth plan of forgiveness not just to say I have the potential but being more connected to God. I also want to

create habits by setting an alarm clock to remind me the consistency of how I can become a leader and the high importance to grow closer to God by being obedient and persevere to move forward by acknowledging and behaving as the best for God and His people. Studying the Bible, praying and meditating are the wonderful keys to gaining deeper understanding. Forgiveness is an act of obedience to please God because He has forgiven me. Is all about traveling light and emptying out my suitcase to live in a better place and state of mind, and not allowing Satan to take control. My personal growth begins when I let go and allow God to bless all those who have sinned against me and change my heart. I will continue to let God heal my wounds with His tender love. I choose not to stay in prison by not forgiving and rob myself from growing closer to Jesus Christ and becoming more like Him. So, I have made a choice to let go give up resentment and not allow the other person to have control over me by letting them off the hook and entrusting them to God. I believe and trust God and as I surrender whole heartily, I will hear His voice and allow the soul care healing for a victorious life. Soul Care is the freedom of getting out of a rut and living a life more than abundant with simplicity the way Jesus Christ planned for us.

- Overcoming Fears by allowing God to be in control and walking by faith and not by sight.
- I can honestly say that one of the fears that is still impacting my life are rodents. I know what is available from God, and I need to address it by fighting the battle so that I may be able to live in victory.
- God tells us that fear is not from God and there are tactics that the enemy will use against us to spiritually paralyze discourage and unarm believers in Christ. Fear is not something that we should allow to motivate our lives and decisions. I realize who is with me and that is the presence of God and Jesus Christ God backs it up by being with us. God promised to always be with me, and he will never let me go or leave me in the shadow of fear no space will ever inhabit the spirit of fear as the same spirit of God. God has given us way more than an empty promises of fear but power love and a self-control to live a life of faith and beloved by God. I will not let fear lie to me or forfeit the greatness of God. I am a child of the most highest God. What I have is far greater

then fear and I will give the potential power God has in me. I will overcome fear by acknowledging God's promises and the steps I need to continue to take are when I wake up in the early morning of the day is pray, meditate read the word and fast three times a week for my own healing process, self-control, and well-being. I will not fear because it does not come from God. I will not allow fear to overcome any negative thoughts on me God is for me and never against me I have more power and self-control to overcome what God has given me. Today's world is full of fear and is not a good thing or from God. First and foremost, we are children of God, and He sees the bigger picture and sometimes we need to go through some battles for growth and I remind myself that I am a child of God, and he is going to always take care of me. As a professional counselor I have learned not to overwhelm myself or take home the problems of my clients or members of the church when they pour out their hearts. To help others with their challenges, barriers I guide them to get to the root of the problem and teach them how to cope with the right set of mental tools and authentic spirituality. As I see God face to face, He will take care of the impossible and heal me in the areas where I need help. Every Friday I fast through Sunday I pray read the word, meditate on the Word of God and I trust God and His Word and God reveals so much to me as I ask the Holy Spirit to help me. In every situation, I look beyond the surface and discern the presence of the almighty God. I learned in Deuteronomy 31:6 "Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will never leave you or forsake you." So, I will face my fears and move forward with courage because I know that God's love is never failing. I choose to stay connected with God knowing that greater is He who lives in me Jesus Christ and I choose to trust God. Fear affects mental health and causes anxiety. God clearly wanted us to understand that fear will destroy our life's and He will uphold us. As I continue to study God's Word, I can attack the lies with the truth and the Word of God that renews my mind and I fight with God's promises He never changes or break His covenant.

## **Rhythm of Life**

A rhythm to support a life with God so that we can see His light and to know that I am loved by God.

How to order or structure our days, hours, monthly, and yearly connection with God the way Jesus came to teach us so that we bear more fruit. The Sabbath is a rhythm of life a 24-hour period of not working a window is made for me as a reminder of my value of production but from the simple facts that I am loved by God and having a relationship with Him. Jesus said that Sabbath was made for human beings not human beings for the sabbath. Self-generated routine rather than a spirit inspires rhythm. An invitation to follow a life with intention to serve God and how He is inviting us, and Jesus leads us day by day it has incremental affects. We need special scheduling with God and Jesus Christ and the choices to follow that with our loving God. As a rule, I wake up every day and pray thank God for a new day, I read the word of God and I meditate. Start simply to build up and to just get me started is so fulfilling in my spiritual life. At this point of my life, I want to satisfy my spiritual growth by spending time with the Lord and listening to the Lord is a process and this is how I grow, and the scriptures help me so that I am not imposing on anything else. There are trials and error, but I know that God will overcome whatever I am going through and help me over the bump.

What better practical steps to take to grow deeper in understanding, spirituality, and intimacy with God than those exemplified by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when He was here on earth. Let us begin with prayer: could He not also address the question "Could you not watch with me for an hour?" to us all? I believe He most certainly could! Thus, fervent, and incessant prayer is the first most fundamental step. Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary to make known to God what we are, but to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings God down to us, but brings us up to Him. The soul care is how to continue to care for my body without being overwhelmed and include sleep and time with my family. I like to practice mindfulness breathing technics and I set a timer I like to meditate to be still and know that God is here in my presence, silence in prayer. Journaling is also a physical guidance and I start a conversation with God and a morning practice

and when life gets messy and complicated and being able to write is helpful and healing. Taking a retreat helps me in a life change and is rewarding for me.

This past year and a half what has enriched my prayer life the most has been praying with the red letters, i.e., the Lord's words and teachings in the red-letter edition of the Bible. I assure you that this makes one hour seem like 10 minutes or less. Let's take for example the Our Father, so I begin with "Our Father Who art in heaven" and I start meditating and reflecting on what it means for God to be my Father, and for me to be his child, and I pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help me walk as a child of light as a child of truth, and to be an imitator of God as his beloved child, etc. and what it implies to be part of the family of God, and how I am to relate to the rest of the Body of Christ, and treat my brothers and sisters in the faith etc.

I then move on to "hallowed be thy name" and I ponder on the seven redemptive names of God, e.g., YHV Shalom, YHVH Jireh, YHVH Rapha, and so on, and I promise you that the Holy Spirit will bring to mind so many of the times that I have experienced God's peace because I trusted in Him and the times He has seen and provided for my needs according to his riches in Christ Jesus, and has healed me psychologically, physically, spiritually, and even financially and I become overwhelmed with thanksgiving and praise offering.

As I advance in this specific prayer, the Holy Spirit floods my soul, with relevant verses and experiences. The contemplation and yearning for his kingdom to come, and his will to be done, in my life and that of all those I love and care about, leads me to intercessory prayer where I plead on behalf of my immediate loved ones and family, my church and community government authorities and leaders, etc. and their daily needs. I guarantee you that an hour will not suffice to complete the prayer meditation, thanksgiving, praise, and petitions that arise from it. I suggest doing the same with the Beatitudes and so many other red-letter Scriptures. I would love to learn from my spiritual brethren's prayer experiences. The Lord also said to Peter that prayer was a safeguard to prevent us from falling into temptation, and essential for overcoming the weakness of the flesh (Matthew 26: 40-41). When it becomes the habit of the soul to converse with God, the power of the evil one is broken, God Almighty is invited in and given full

authority to act and perform signs, miracles, and wonders. Hallelujah! The soul flourishes with prayer. Alongside prayer goes praise. Singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. When praising God, we contemplate his magnificence, his majesty, his beauty and all his person and his beautiful works of nature, and in so doing, we can gradually conform to his image, for we become what we behold. Praise benefits us because when we reflect on his character, we yearn and seek to emulate it and reflect it in our daily lives, becoming increasingly more Christlike. The second step is the study of the Bible, which is the Word and Will of God. The Lord Jesus Christ was able to speak with authority, because from an early age He was imparted the knowledge of the Scriptures by Mary and Joseph, and by disciplined self-study, so much so that by the age of 12 the scribes and teachers of the Torah were amazed at his understanding and his answers. Likewise, we are to grow in wisdom by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. Without the nourishment of the Word of God, spirituality simply could not subsist. It is through the grace of Christ and the renewing of the mind that we are transformed into new creatures in Christ and a newness of life is manifested. In addition, by taking captive every thought to the obedience of Christ we work out our sanctification and conduct ourselves as citizens of the kingdom of God, thus becoming epistles of God read by men. What God desires us to know of Him is revealed in His word. The more we know of Him the more we will love Him and love what He loves. We know that faith comes through and is based on the word of God. We also know that without faith, believing and loving obedience to his word, it is impossible to please God. Faith in his abiding presence is essential to intimacy with God. I still want to talk about or write about rather evangelizing/witnessing/under shepherding and establishing relationships where we holistically meet needs until they also are able to stand on their own.

## **Plan for Spiritual Formation Reproduction**

I entered a career of mental health because I have a desire to help people with empathy and compassion. It is essential and congruent to lead people with the love of God a plan to support, organize and identify everyone's culture without being biased. God made us all the same and equal. Is all about supporting others and yielding to the truth of the Word of God and the revelation of Jesus Christ given to Paul, Peter, and John in their epistles. When touching on the discussion of race the doctrines of redemption and creation are of utmost importance. Christ's atoning and reconciling work meant that all men were saved, and none were more saved than others. Christ came to this earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness. He laid the foundation for a Faith by which Jew and Gentile, black and white, free and bond, are linked together in one common brotherhood, recognized as equal in the sight of God. Christ brought men into a new relationship where each was equally related to Him. Christians, therefore, must look on other Christians as equals. But what about those who are not Christians? If they are not within the brotherhood created by Christ's redeeming life, could they properly relate as superior to inferior, master to slave? No! The doctrine of creation prevents it. God wants all of us leaders who relate to all persons to remember their common relationship to us by creation and by redemption and their right to the blessings of freedom. Humans are God's property by creation and redemption. Even if people were unconverted, the doctrine of creation means that all men whether they acknowledge Christ or not, belong to God. Where man's equality and freedom are violated, it is not God acting but man's sinful nature. Prejudices, passions, satanic attributes, have revealed themselves in men as they have exercised their powers against their fellow men. I would like to make a serious statement: the law of God contained in the Ten Commandments reveals to man his duty to love God supremely and his neighbor as himself. Those who transgress this Commandment, miss the mark, and separate themselves from God, allowing themselves, instead, to be moved and impulse by the spirit of the Devil. I look forward to making an impact on others with a high degree of fortitude, patience, and professionalism at all times. As I continue to have a desire and passion to help others with their challenging life experiences it will help me obtain a good emotional balance with empathy which is an asset. I can help them to build healthy habits around the information I

have learned while also being patient with any setbacks they may experience. My developmental and methods plan is one that is safe and secure. To help the members of the church speak up about their issues and needs. I will use positive self-regard techniques, and create a non-judgmental environment, and with an open communication to foster a place of trust. These methods will help them express themselves as I show empathy and give encouraging statements. I will also ask non-threatening open questions that allow them room to talk. I will affirm their feelings and walk alongside them by supporting and accepting them for who they are. The plan in 6 months is to encourage them to explore their past, by listening to them as they express their concerns for themselves for the future. This is accomplished by setting achievable goals and working together to achieve and accomplish their targets. This type of teamwork approaches members to feel safe, which allows them to trust me and open up further. Well, I must be completely “authentic”: for me the Source of wisdom is God and His Word. Life’s great principles have been written down in the Holy Scriptures, and they were sent to deliver and heal, therefore they are profoundly therapeutic in every aspect of life. As a Christian counselor, therapist, I am a minister and messenger of God. When someone comes to me for an opinion about a problem, I do not offer my own counsel, nor do I alter God’s word. I conform to these Laws myself; therefore, my experience becomes a witness, a testimony of its effectiveness. I present biblical principle as the foundation on which the counselee can build his life. I carefully use biblical principles, teachings to guide and the Bible as my authority in approaching their problem. I adamantly believe that it is my duty to present Scriptural guidance, though I make it crystal clear that they are under no obligation to believe my interpretation of the principles we find in Scripture or to follow any course of action implied by what I say to them. Their part will be to meditate on the principles and ask God to aid them in applying them to their particular problems. God is their counselor, not I. My role is to present Scriptural principle and explain it as best as I can within the limits of my training, experience, and understanding.

Another appropriate plan that can lead people to grow spiritually and motivate to become leaders are values of developing a sense of humor. Both members counselors, and pastors can enrich a relationship through humor. Oh, who has not heard that a merry heart does like medicine or has not read that it

beautifies the visage? Research has shown and long proven the healing effect of humor, laughter, and gladness. How many suffer today from psychosomatic diseases and maladies because their hearts and spirits are broken and crushed? Hospitals today make use of laughter therapy because they have witnessed its therapeutic effects on the body and mind. Humor, laughter, cheerfulness increases the levels of serotonin and triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals, which promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain. It strengthens the immune system, boosts mood, and protects you from the damaging effects of stress. By seeking out more opportunities for humor and laughter, though, you can improve your emotional health, strength, and your relationships, find greater happiness-and even add years to your life. Laughter is definitely the sweetest medicine for mind and body. It is a powerful antidote to stress, pain, and conflict. Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh.

Humor lightens your burdens, inspires hopes, connects you to others, and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert. It also helps you to release anger and be more forgiving. With so much power to heal and renew, the ability to laugh easily and frequently is a tremendous resource for surmounting problems, enhancing your relationships, and supporting both physical and emotional health.

Laughter adds joy and zest to life, eases anxiety and tension, relieves stress, improves mood, strengthens resilience, strengthens relationships, attracts others to us and enhances teamwork, helps defuse conflict and promotes group bonding. And so very important for our church members is that it makes you feel good and the good feeling that you get when you laugh remains with you even after the laughter subsides.

Humor helps you keep a positive optimistic outlook through difficult situations, disappointments, and loss. Laughter gives you the courage and strength to find new sources of meaning and hope. Even in the most difficult of times, a laugh-or even simply a smile-can go a long way toward making you feel better.

And laughter really is contagious just hearing the laughter primes your brain and readies you to smile and joy in the fun. I must quote when humor is inappropriate "Ecclesiastes 3:1 & 4: to everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;" It pretty much takes commonsense, prudence and wisdom to know when humor is

inappropriate—when a person, when our members, counselee is expressing a painful, hurtful, mournful, delicate situation and circumstance we must be sorrowful and sympathetic with them at that time; It is definitely not the moment for laughter and jest.,