Encouraging Well-being and Resilience in Ministry: Bowen Clergy Coaching Group

This six session group coaching course is designed to offer an empowering response to the emotional demands of ministry and draws upon two main ideas: Murray Bowen’s systems theory, which offers a framework for thinking about congregational relationships as reflective of all human relationships and Jesus as an example of individual behaviour.

The group will be formed of eight participants and led by an experienced facilitator, offering a safe forum for processing challenging situations in ministry. There is a mixture of presentation, exploration of basic concepts, facilitated small group work and opportunities for personal reflection in the light of new learning.

The six, monthly sessions each last half a day and every session builds from those that come before. The group work initially focuses on understanding relationships in your own family and then applies these insights to relationships in your ministry context.

Coaching Groups will:

- Engage interactively with Bowen systems concepts
- Reflect upon personal responses to role and relationship challenges
- Incorporate experiential, applied learning drawing on experiences in ministry
- Offer skilled group facilitation and a supportive group environment

Your gain will include:

- Ability to identify and follow the changing emotional climate of the church, its link to congregational behaviour and your wellbeing
- Skills for interacting with dynamic responsiveness to others
- Insight into patterns of emotional functioning
- Personal developmental growth as a person and a minister

Research Participation

This coaching group is one of three running in different dioceses around the country and forms part of a wider research project investigating resources to support clergy well-being and resilience.

In order to understand the impact of this coaching group we will ask the 24 participants (eight in each diocese) to complete an online survey four times: at the start of the coaching group, when you reach the mid point, at the conclusion of the group and then 10 weeks later.

The survey will include questions on your current experiences of ministry, the varieties of pressure and resources you encounter within ministry and your family and relationships systems. It will take up to 30 minutes to complete.

The information you provide in these surveys will be completely confidential and will be treated anonymously.

Quotes from previous clergy participants

“Thought-provoking, challenging, energising, revealing, freeing – I return to work with a renewed and hopeful perspective and commitment.”

“The course offers a very valuable insight into how we function as individuals within our families and churches.”

“The course gives authenticity to who I am / you are and enables a way of growing with integrity and compassion without ‘squashing’ ones identity.”

“I anticipate it will be incredibly helpful and useful in my ongoing ministry.”
Course Timings

The group will meet on the following Thursday afternoons:

- 22 September 2016
- 20 October 2016
- 17 November 2016
- 8 December 2016
- 12 January 2017
- 9 February 2017

The coaching group will start promptly at 1pm and finish at 5pm. The October & November sessions will finish at 5.30.

Refreshments will be provided during the afternoon.

Course Leader Andrew Corsie

Andrew Corsie is an Anglican priest and currently Director of Training and Development for the Willesden Area in the Diocese of London. Andrew carries the diocesan portfolio of mentoring, work consultancy, coaching and conflict mediation and is keen to find fruitful ways of supporting clergy in challenging ministry contexts. He has been using Bowen Family Systems Theory in his work for about 20 years.

Course Material

Bridge Builders is a highly regarded Christian organisation who seeks to transform church culture through training and resourcing those in Christian ministry. They are supporting this research and have generously allowed us to utilise their training manuals.

Joining the Coaching Group

This coaching group is being financially supported by your diocese therefore there is no cost for you to pay.

The learning on this coaching course will be cumulative with each session building from those preceding. Peer support through group work is also a crucial aspect of the learning. In order to benefit fully from the experience and enable your other group members to do likewise, it is important that you are able to attend all six sessions.

Spaces are limited to a maximum of 8, so do apply early.

To book your place on the course please contact Kathryn Kissell at kissellk@roehampton.ac.uk.

Supporting the Research

You can also support this research without attending a coaching group.

We are looking for eight clergy who will complete the same surveys as the group members, but not attend the coaching group. This will enable us to see the impact of the coaching group more clearly.

If you would like to support the research in this way, please contact kissellk@roehampton.ac.uk.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact the investigator:

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Venue

Whitelands College Chapel
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For travel directions: http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/Contact-Us/

Please note there is extremely limited parking onsite. If you are coming by car, please inform Kathryn Kissell in advance.