

Pastoral Care & Supporting Survivors

Exercise 1 – Pastoral care

What is distinctive about Christian pastoral care?



Exercise 2 – Safeguarding implications

Many churches are involving their wider congregations more fully in an 'every member' model of pastoral care.

What are the safeguarding implications?

Exercise 3 – Healthy Boundaries

What are the characteristics of healthy boundaries in pastoral relationships?

Case Study - Part 1



Read **Part 1** of the case study below:

St Margaret's is a moderate sized church, which serves a congregation that spans all generations. Angela, a young woman in her late 20's has begun to attend the evening services. She says very little about her previous church experience but it is clear that she is not new to church or the Christian faith. A number of people seek to make her welcome and offer friendship. Angela makes friends with Hilary, a church member who is a counsellor, and reveals to her that she suffers from high levels of anxiety and takes medication. Sometimes when she gets anxious, she has to leave the services. Hilary suggests they refer Angela for a course of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) with an independent counsellor or therapist and asks the vicar, Robert if the church will pay for 10 sessions. He agrees and leaves things to Hilary, as he believes she knows best. They keep this completely confidential and no one else is informed of any concerns regarding Angela. Meanwhile Angela has told a number of people about her anxiety and they have all given Angela their phone numbers and tell her she can call them anytime at all.

What are your concerns at this stage?

Case Study - Part 2



Read **Part 2** of the case study below:

Angela completes the CBT and this together with the medication prescribed by her doctor is helping. She does a Freedom in Christ course and is confident that she can now manage her condition with prayer and support. She joins a small group that is led by Graham and Ruth and she attends the meetings that are held in their home regularly. Ruth is a member of the church staff team, is very caring and realizes that Angela still has some issues with anxiety. She also tells Angela she can call her any time at all.

Is there anything that should have been done differently at this stage?

Case Study – Part 3



Read **Part 3** of the case study below:

Twelve months later Hilary has moved away and a new vicar, James, is in post. There are no records about Angela, and no one has spoken to him about her needs. Angela's attendance at church has been rather sporadic but she still attends the small group because Ruth is so supportive. She attends church for the first time in a while and collapses following a panic attack. Heather has recently been given responsibility for adult safeguarding and spends some time with Angela after the service, piecing together her story, which she records. On learning that Angela is in Graham and Ruth's small group Heather checks whether they need any support. She learns that Angela's anxiety levels are rising again, and Ruth has gone with her to her GP who has referred her for further counselling. Heather makes sure the new vicar is aware of all this and asks Ruth to keep her informed.

James becomes concerned that Ruth is not observing safe boundaries and advises her that she must do so. However, Ruth feels that Angela trusts her and believes she must not let her down. She continues to make herself constantly available and Angela often calls her late at night. Angela's attitude towards the church starts to change. She stops attending church services or the small group but continues to send emails to Ruth and starts to make accusations against her and the church. These are becoming increasingly unpleasant and Ruth is

becoming distressed and also frustrated that she has not been able to help Angela.

James decides this cannot continue and arranges to speak with Angela, in the hope of raising issues of her perceptions and actions. He meets her at the Vicarage, alone. Angela becomes distressed during the meeting and leaves, complaining he has bullied her. Heather is concerned that he may face an allegation, but James assures her that he can handle this.

What should Heather do now?

Case Study – Part 4



Finally read **Part 4** of the case study below:

Heather tries to contact Angela to offer support. As a result, Angela writes a letter of complaint about Heather to the Bishop and the Archdeacon. The emails to Ruth increase and are also directed against Heather, James and the wider church. Sometimes Angela waits for Ruth outside her house which is upsetting for Ruth's family. Heather and James are concerned that Angela may be exhibiting mental health problems of a more serious nature and are concerned that she is at risk of harm.

What could Heather and James do now?

Exercise 4 – Care vs Co-dependency

What's the difference between care vs co-dependency?



Exercise 5 – Responding well to survivors of past abuse

Watch the videos and consider:

If these stories of lived experience of abuse [recent or non-recent] were shared directly with you, how would you try to respond well?

Reflect:

What do you find challenging in these stories?

Are there any emotions or approaches that the church values over others?

How can we respond well to all expressions of experience?

Exercise 6 – Types of ministries

Consider all the activities in your church that involve any kind of pastoral care.

Exercise 7 – Next Steps



Consider any areas below that you think need to be in the action plan for your church or organisation.

My Action Plan:

What do I need to do?

Who needs to be involved?

What is the timescale?

How will I know it's been achieved?

Links commonly used throughout the webinar

Please note: As above, these links are accurate at the time of course preparation. Thirtyone:eight don't recommend organisations, but you may find these links useful when looking for support and guidance.

These are shared in the order they're likely to be mentioned during our webinar. Some of these are also included in our signposting section.

Sexual offences Act 2003:

[Sexual Offences Act 2003 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse:

www.iicsa.org.uk

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry:

<https://www.childabuseinquiry.scot/>

Truth Project:

[Truth Project | IICSA Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse](#)

Stop It Now – Preventing Sexual Abuse of Children:

[Stop It Now! UK and Ireland | Preventing child sexual abuse](#)

[Stop It Now | Stop It Now](#)

Hub of hope (signposting resource- services by postcode):

[Mental Health Support Network provided by Chasing the Stigma | Hub of hope](#)

A Church Called Tov (Book):

[A Church Called Tov](#)

[Church Called Tov by Scot McKnight; Laura Barringer | Free Delivery \(eden.co.uk\)](#)