



WORLDWIDE  
CHURCH OF GOD

*Living and Sharing the Gospel*

# GC2 equipper

[www.wcg.org/mindev/](http://www.wcg.org/mindev/)

November 2008  
Volume 3 Issue 11

The monthly ministry development newsletter of WCG-USA Church Administration and Development.

*Equipping for active sharing with Jesus in his Great Commandment – Great Commission ministry.*

Dear friends and family in Christ,

Advent begins this year on November 30. During this season of hope and joy, we celebrate the advent (coming) of Jesus to be “God with us.” We look *forward* to his bodily return in glory at the end of the age; we look *around* to his continuing earthly ministry through the Holy Spirit; and we look *back* to celebrate his birth in Nazareth. Jesus *will* come, *is* coming and *has* come.



RANDY BLOOM



In all these ways, Advent is a powerful reminder that Jesus is fully engaged in his Father’s mission on earth—and Jesus enables us to participate actively with him in that mission. However, there is the need that our participation be tempered with wisdom. *Burnout* is a real possibility for all who are “on-mission” with Jesus.

In our last issue of GC2 equipper, we began a series on managing burnout (see [www.wcg.org/MinDev/Web%20Documents/GC2%203.10.pdf](http://www.wcg.org/MinDev/Web%20Documents/GC2%203.10.pdf)). We examined burnout’s symptoms, effects and causes; and we began defining a burnout management strategy. We continue now with that strategy. Our goal is helping ministers participate actively over the long term in Jesus’ joy-filled, yet challenging mission.

If you would like to learn more about managing burnout, we invite you to schedule in your congregation or district network our training workshop titled *Managing Pastoral Burnout*. Just contact your district pastoral leader or the Ministry Development Team member nearest you (see [www.wcg.org/MinDev/events.htm#Contacts](http://www.wcg.org/MinDev/events.htm#Contacts)).

All of us in Church Administration and Development love you and pray for you regularly. We are here to help you live out your unique calling in Jesus. Please let us know how we may help. Feel free to call at any time - even just to talk.

Thank you for your loving and faithful service to our Lord and his dear people,

Randy Bloom (CAD ministry developer and director of WCG Church Multiplication Ministries)

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**1** Ministers and burnout

**2-4** Managing pastoral  
burnout, part 2

## Strategies for managing burnout

Last issue we began to examine a *burnout management plan* with nine elements:

1. Clarifying theology
2. Clarifying priorities
3. Clarifying expectations
4. Maintaining perspective
5. Evaluating and adjusting workload and schedule
6. Scheduling diversions
7. Establishing boundaries
8. Developing accountability systems
9. Education and training

Last issue we examined the first four elements

(see [www.wcg.org/MinDev/Web%20Documents/GC2%203.10.pdf](http://www.wcg.org/MinDev/Web%20Documents/GC2%203.10.pdf)).

Now we examine the last five.



### 5. Evaluating and adjusting workload and schedule

After clarifying priorities (element #3) and expectations (element #4), it's time to *evaluate* and *adjust* your workload and schedule.

#### Evaluate

This step involves conducting a thorough audit of your schedule. This enables you to evaluate whether or not you are functioning according to priorities and expectations.

To conduct this audit, keep track of all your activities during a “typical” week. Since most of us do not have “typical” weeks, you may want to conduct a time audit over a longer period of time. Keep track of your activities by 30-minute blocks of time. At the end of the audit, add up the time you spend in various activities.

Now evaluate the results of your audit, asking the following questions:

- Which activities do or do not reflect my priorities and expectations?
- What do I enjoy doing most? (These activities typically reflect your strengths)
- What do I least enjoy doing? (These activities typically do not reflect strengths)
- Which activities must I continue to do?
- Which activities can/must others do?

For various reasons there may be some things you are now doing that do not correspond to your strengths and priorities; yet you must continue to do them. These are the activities that you need to begin to find others to take over from you as soon as possible. Of course, you probably cannot afford the luxury of doing only those things that you enjoy. So try to focus your time on those things that you enjoy most.

We recommend that you share your schedule audit with your spouse, other family members, key congregational leaders, and your DPL. Doing so will help to communicate to these key people your understanding of your priorities and job expectations. Ask them for their suggestions concerning how you might adjust your schedule to make it even more effective and appropriate.

## Adjust

Now it's time for some "surgery" on your Day-Timer. If you do not have the habit of carefully managing your time using a daily, weekly, monthly and annual schedule, now is a good time to start. The key is to adjust your schedule in ways that are faithful to your established priorities and job expectations.

Effective time scheduling is vital for managing stress and thus avoiding burnout. If you do not control the expenditure of your time, others will. Adjusting your schedule may seem like an impossible, idealistic task. But it is not. Many people do it. To help you in this process you may need help—if so, don't hesitate to ask. And note that following through on these adjustments will, no doubt, mean establishing boundaries and accountability relationships (see #7 and #8, below).

## 6. Scheduling diversions

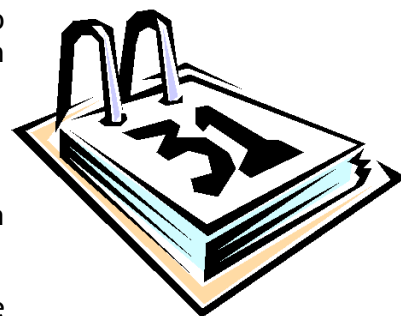
As you adjust your schedule, be sure to include time for diversions away from your normal routine. A recommended pattern of diversion is as follows:

- **Divert daily** - Set aside daily time to pray, study Scripture and meditate in order to gain the perspective that comes through fellowship with God.
- **Withdraw weekly** - Schedule one day each week for physical rest, recreation, family time and spiritual renewal. (Many people recommend pursuing a hobby that has no direct connection to your vocation.)
- **Maintain monthly** - Try to schedule one day a month for times of spiritual renewal and recreation.
- **Abandon annually** - Take a vacation at least once a year. Leave your cell phone and email behind.

Communicate your new schedule, including scheduled diversion time, to others. Let your congregation(s) know when you will be unavailable (though be sure to leave an emergency contact phone number with a key leader in the congregation, with your DPL and with the CAD office). Most people will appreciate knowing that their pastor is taking time off for spiritual renewal, family and personal care.

## Rest in Christ

Diversion from the normal stress of ministry involves more than just taking time off. It also means resting in the sure knowledge that you and your people are always secure in Jesus. Nothing brings peace into a chaotic, unpredictable existence like knowing that, in Jesus, we are completely acceptable to God and are safe in his hands. So take time away, knowing that you and the people you serve are God's dearly loved children. He knows your needs and theirs. You and your loved ones are firmly in his grip and he will never let you go. Rest in the assurance of his loving care.

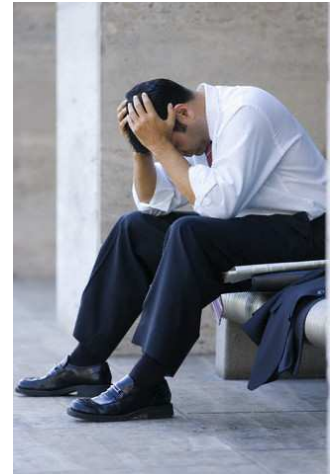


"The Hands of Christ" by Spencer Williams  
used by permission, available at [www.jesuspaintings.com/](http://www.jesuspaintings.com/)

## 7. Establishing boundaries

Boundaries are appropriate limits that we place on outside encroachments on our time and energy. For pastors, appropriate boundaries can include:

- Not receiving non-emergency phone calls during meals, school activities, dates with your spouse and other forms of “time off”
- Learning to say “no” to non-emergency demands that do not align with your priorities or job expectations
- Disconnecting yourself from the computer, cell-phones and other distractions while on vacation (see #6 about providing a means for emergency contact when you’re away)
- Not offering help or advice in areas in which you have little or no experience or education
- Not doing the work of others



Personal boundaries need to be determined and discussed with input from one’s spouse, family, trusted coworkers and your supervisor. The WCG publishes policies and procedures that establish boundaries related to spiritual, ethical and legal standards for pastors (see the WCG Statement of Beliefs, Code of Ethics for Elders, Church Administration Manual and Financial Management Manual).

## 8. Developing accountability systems

Active systems of accountability help us maintain boundaries and protect us morally, legally and ethically. Jim Van Yperen (in *The Shepherd Leader*, p. 113), cites personal accountability as one of three critical factors related to the long-term health of ministers. We all benefit from identifying people with whom we can have an accountability relationship. These people need to be ones we can trust, ones we can be emotionally transparent with, and ones who will maintain appropriate confidentiality. Possible accountability partners include older married couples, mature Christians, other pastors, and your district pastoral leader.

## 9. Education and training

Burnout can occur when we try to do things outside of our experience or training. This is a reason it is important for pastors to fulfill WCG’s continuing education requirement.

Education and training help minimize burnout by helping us develop ministry competence and the confidence that comes with it. WCG education and training opportunities include district network and regional conferences; classes from *Ambassador College for Christian Ministry* (ACCM) and *Grace Communion Seminary* (GCS); and other educational and training programs provided by CAD’s Ministry Development Team.

