

**Love the Lord with your Mind or “Head” in Mutual Theological Reflection:**  
REFLECT Worksheet Developed by John McNally for Mentored Ministry Peer Groups

With insights from several sources (see explanatory document), I developed a practical worksheet and discussion tool for theological reflection on ministry experiences. ***The lines in italics give directions for writing up the process and key questions.*** Reflections are broadened and deepened as students discuss a case with peer mentors and pastoral mentors.

**1. Recollections: *What were the significant details in this stretching situation?***

DESCRIBE THE EVENT...Look for those situations where you were called on to stretch or to develop new learnings or where you struggled or experienced pain...With this situation in mind, play the role of a good investigative reporter in describing the scene in as much detail as possible. Give a detailed, factual, specific, and concrete description of what took place...<sup>1</sup>

*The first case is from a course text and the second is a challenging situation from your context.*

**2. Emotions: *What range of specific feelings were evident in others and stirring in you?***

IDENTIFY YOUR EMOTIONS...Emotional self-awareness is the ability to both recognize a feeling as it is happening and to be able to name that feeling...Taking the time to name your emotions in a situation helps sort out what is going on internally as you reflect on a specific event...<sup>2</sup>

*In several sentences, note the range of specific emotions evident in the various people involved in the case and arising in you as you reflect on it. Try to convey the relative intensity of emotions and any underlying needs. See resources on feelings and needs in Transforming Church Conflict.<sup>3</sup>*

**3. Foundations: *What biblical, theological, historical, and cultural principles relate to this situation (you can draw on sources in other courses)?* **Biblical: What specific Scripture passages come to mind with this case? Theological: What doctrinal concepts or theological principles might connect with the case? Historical: What past precedents, movements or factors might be contributing to the case? Cultural: What societal trends, influences, idols, etc., might relate to this case?****

LISTEN TO THE RESOURCES...When faced with a decision or when trying to reconcile your actions, the first place to look is a scriptural foundation...In theological reflection, you put your own experiences, both personal and cultural, into a “genuine conversation” with the norm of religious heritage from the biblical message and Christian tradition.<sup>4</sup>

**4. Listen in Prayer: *What might the Lord be revealing about your response as you pray?***

*In a few sentences, note what comes up as you prayerfully listen for the Lord’s perspective about this case and a wise approach. These lines may be a written prayer or themes arising in prayer.*

**5. Encourage:<sup>5</sup> *With specific compliments, statements of encouragement, or words of affirmation, how can we celebrate values and victories as we recognize what went well?***

*In a few sentences, note areas of affirmation that you would share with various people (you too).*

**6. Challenge: *With evocative questions, how can we seek ways to grow and improve?***

*In a few sentences, note the areas for tentatively sharing invitations for everyone to change, grow or improve. These invitations are primarily framed as evocative questions (see SELAH process). If questions are not emerging, then frame a tentative suggestion. Be constructive, not critical.*

**7. Tailor in a Team: *How can we collaborate in cooperative action adapted to this setting?***

*In a few sentences, note some possible next steps or actions to deepen, strengthen, or broaden ministry in this setting. Remember that you are working on proposing a path forward and collaboratively contextualizing those steps, so clarify the role of others.*

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<sup>1</sup> George Hillman, Jr., *Ministry Greenhouse: Cultivating Environments for Practical Learning*. (Herndon: Alban Institute, 2008), 106-107. With insights from this author and others, I created an acronym to summarize steps.

<sup>2</sup> Hillman, 108.

<sup>3</sup> Deborah Van Deusen Hunsinger and Theresa Latini. *Transforming Church Conflict: Compassionate Leadership in Action*. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013). See especially chapter 3 and Appendices 1 and 2.

<sup>4</sup> Hillman, 110, 113, 117. His books gives questions to broaden such a “conversation” and move toward application.

<sup>5</sup> Steps 5-7 draw from 5 exemplary leadership practices: “model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart”. Kouzes and Posner, eds., *Christian Reflections of The Leadership Challenge*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 38. See latest research: <https://www.leadershipchallenge.com/research/five-practices.aspx>.