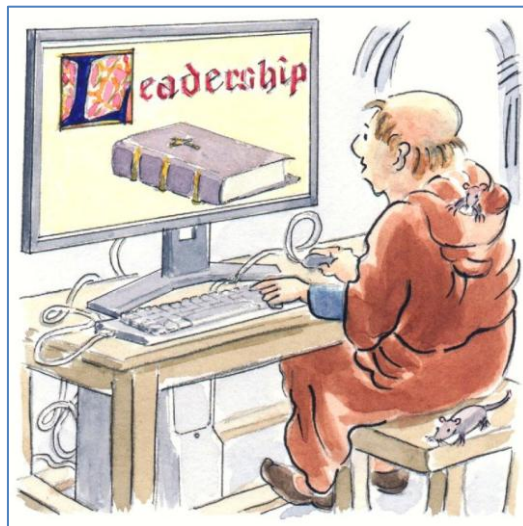


How to manage yourself

A DIY training aid

W5 Workshops series: Leadership



This DIY workshop was first published on the website in May 2025. It is copyright © John Truscott. You may download this file and/or print up to 30 copies without charge provided no part of the heading or text is altered or omitted, or you may adapt the material for local use – see below. There are also hand-out sheets for all participants.

This material for the leader/enabler takes the form of a DIY workshop for any church's leadership body or particular groups of Ministers, but it can also be used for personal training.


Its aim is to offer straightforward advice on managing your own life and leadership ministry. It is based on my own training for Ministers on this theme over many years and incorporates a number of my website Training Notes.

Explanation for leaders and enablers

This material can be used by individuals but it is really designed for a group with a leader/enabler. It may also be used by diocesan or area trainers with groups of clergy.

You may want to adapt what is presented in print here so that it better fits your local context. This write-up gives you a structure and a possible text to work from. It has a Church of England basis but can easily be adapted for wider use.

You are welcome to rework all this for a local event with some reasonable variation and without copyright restriction, other than to acknowledge source, please, and point to my website.

There are a number of practical exercises to take part in throughout. In a training event these form a vital part of the learning process. There are also 15 essential hand-out sheets for everyone to use covering material and these exercises. These come at points marked with this symbol: .

The material here is based on a number of Articles and Training Notes on this website and these are clearly referenced so that you can check those out to give a fuller picture.

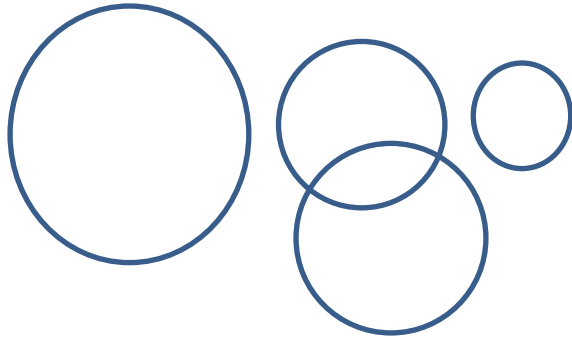
1: Big picture thinking



EXERCISE 1 *Handout 13*

We start with four circles (see Handout 13 for this exercise). Label them

- **Your life** (yourself, your history, your family and friends)
- **Your ministry** (as a priest/Minister)
- **Your discipleship** (as a follower of Jesus Christ)
- **Your employment** (only add a fourth circle if you *also* have a paid job as SSM or other major responsibility outside your main Christian ministry)



Your task is to draw three (or four) circles in a space to represent each of these, choosing appropriate sizes for the circles and an appropriate layout where the circles exist separately, overlap, or fit within each other in some way. What exactly the circles you draw represent is entirely up to you. This is an issue of how you perceive yourself and there is no right answer as such. You might like to return to this at the end of these sessions today.

The pictures on the handout, reproduced below, are of an Ordnance Survey map and a road atlas. Most of us default to living in the detail of today's or this week's agenda. We have meetings to attend, talks to prepare, people to serve, services to plan. That is like an Ordnance Survey map showing roads, footpaths, contours, wooded areas, churches with spires or towers, etc.

That enables us to go for walks on holiday but in its detail fails to show us how to get to that holiday destination. For that we need a road atlas (if we are driving there) – not much detail but a helpful overview of the whole route.

To know you are on the correct holiday you need the road atlas, the big picture approach. If you plan the detail first you run the risk of planning the wrong holiday.

You cannot control your ministry and your life if you have no clear context in which you are working. First, others will control it for you. Secondly, you will have no criteria to enable you to plan the detail. On the following pages we look at two possible approaches to determining a personal 'big picture', one for your life, one for your ministry.



A typical planning process – but for your *life* Handout 1

You may be used to ideas of purpose, values, vision, etc. for an organisation, but what about applying them first to *your life*, and only secondly to your church(es) ministry? Here is a jargon-proof set of questions.

- 1 **What do I long to see happen?**
The 'big picture' vision for my life
- 2* **Why am I here?**
The purpose of my life question – but it is worth including negatives
- 3 **What am I aiming to do, and for whom?**
An alternative for Q2
- 4* **What is the distinctive way I go about things?**
This is a 'values' question for myself
- 5 **What is the story of my life so far?**
The need to 'remember', and the value of a personal 'time-line'
- 6* **What might God do through me?**
The main 'vision' question, but actually one of faith and prayer – and remember this is about your life not your ministry
- 7 **What are the main options open to me as I work towards this?**
This is an issue of making choices
- 8 **What resources do I have and need?**
Internal (eg. health, skills) and external (eg. people, finance)
- 9* **Where do I plan to get to this year?**
This is what I term 'aims' – steps towards the 'vision' – set them for yourself
- 10 **What are the stepping-stones towards these points?**
Precise points by date or other measurable feature, what I term 'targets'
- 11 **Where may I get it wrong?**
A very Christian question to ask at this point
- 12* **Where have I got to?**
The issue of review of all the above for my life

Items asterisked form the key sequence of purpose, values, vision, aims and review. See Article A4, *Twelve questions to help you plan*, in the Resources section of my website for an application for a church as opposed to your life.

Note that most people will automatically default to their ministry and not to their life, so keep emphasising *life* during this part of the session. Life is all about us as human beings within our families and neighbourhoods. It is a different circle from 'ministry' in the opening exercise.

EXERCISE 2 Handout 13

Pairs or small groups discuss which one or two (no more) of the above 12 questions does each person feel they most need to ask of themselves now? And why?

Using the Ordinal for your ministry Handout 2

Here is a second idea, this time for your ministry rather than for your whole life.

Note to enablers

The Ordinal is the Church of England service for the ordination of deacons, priests and bishops (variations in each one of these). It takes a big picture look at ministry and although with weaknesses it can prove a very useful compass to point ministry in the right direction and set its big-picture purpose.

This is a rewriting of the service for priests as a list of points plus a short introduction and closing point. It is taken from Training Notes TN78 in the Resources section of my website and session leaders need to have read that up.

It is adapted freely from Common Worship Ordination Services © Archbishops' Council 2013

'Your role' is to lead God's people in the offering of praise and the proclamation of the gospel.... You are to be a servant and a shepherd among the people to whom you are sent. You are to be a messenger, sentinel and steward of the Lord.

Your responsibilities

- 1 **To proclaim the gospel**
You are to lead Christ's people in proclaiming the gospel, so that the good news of salvation may be heard in every place.....

2 To baptise new disciples

You are to baptise new disciples in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and to walk with them in the way of Christ, nurturing them in the faith.

3 To teach the Scriptures

You are to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for God's family, With others you are to make clear the Scriptures, to preach the word in season and out of season....

4 To lead in worship

You are to preside at the Lord's table and, with others, to lead his people in worship, offering with them a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving....

5 To minister to the world

You are to resist evil, support the weak, defend the poor and intercede for all in need. You are to minister to the sick and prepare the dying for their death.

6 To foster people's gifts

Guided by the Spirit, you are to discern and foster the gifts of all God's people, that the whole Church may be built up in unity and faith.

7 To stir up your own gift

You are in, the strength of the Holy Spirit, continually to stir up the gift of God that is in you, to make Christ known among all whom you serve....

8 To accept discipline

You are to accept the discipline of this Church and respect authority duly exercised within it and, when necessary and with others, to minister such discipline yourself.

9 To order your life

You are to be diligent in prayer, in reading the Scriptures, and in all studies that will deepen your faith and fit you to bear witness to the truth of the gospel. You are to fashion your own life and that of your household according to the way of Christ....

Remember always with thanksgiving that you are entrusted with the privilege of leading Christ's own flock, bought by the shedding of his blood

on the cross. It is to him that you will be accountable for your stewardship of his people.

You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. Pray therefore that your love of people and your understanding of the Scriptures may grow daily. Pray earnestly for the gift of the Holy Spirit.'

EXERCISE 3 *Handout 14*

Groups or pairs discuss which of the above points they feel they most need to work on now. And why?

You might also discuss the order of the numbered points. What would you change in the order to give a more accurate understanding of the responsibilities of ministry? Would No. 9 be better as No. 1? Or would the list be better seen as a circle so that No. 9 takes you back to No. 1 again?

A reflection on time

The session leader suggests everyone is silent and ready to meditate on some statements about the use of time as we manage ourselves. The leader then reads the following allowing space between each item and closes this first session with an appropriate prayer. Do not rush this – take time to help everyone ponder each point.

MEDITATION *Handout 3*

This lists the following points and might be handed out to participants after the meditation.

Here are some statements about time management to consider when you have some, er, time. Ponder each one. Take your time to think about each carefully – there really is no hurry!

- 1 Time is the one commodity we all have in exactly equal measure. You cannot add one second to, or subtract one second from, the 86,400 we have each day.
- 2 But life is fragile and none of us has any idea how many more days we have available to us from this moment on. Several famous achievers died at an early age.
- 3 Time is a gift from God. It is a gift we can use, or one we can squander. Those who

- realise this most are probably those who have been close to death at some point.
- 4 'Time management' is therefore a meaningless idea. Time is fixed. It is our life or ourselves that we manage within the time that we have.
 - 5 Some people have expectations as to what they should achieve that are simply not possible. These lead to feelings of guilt and despair. Jesus Christ said that he had finished the work that God had given him, yet thousands remained untaught, unhealed and unfed.
 - 6 Once time has been wasted, it is impossible to replay the DVD. This is a subject more of personal discipline than slick techniques.
 - 7 Any group will include those with a wide variety of approaches to life and ability to achieve. We are not necessarily wrong, just different (and, often, married to each other!).
 - 8 Your own hyper-efficient life-style (if that could describe you) may depress other people who cannot keep up with you. Your very busyness may be a cause of great trouble to them.
 - 9 Your own laid-back approach to time-keeping (if that could describe you) may cause others great difficulty (eg. when you miss a deadline they were depending on).
 - 10 Scripture tells Christians to live life within the context of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ in glory. That is the time context for our discipleship.
- Maintain a quiet, peaceful presence, then close in prayer, then break as people are ready to do so.*
- Matthew 6:27** (see No.1 in the list)
"Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

John 17:4 (see No.5)
"I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do."

Galatians 5:22,23 (see No.6)
But the fruit of the Spirit is self-control.

2 Peter 3:10-13 (see No.10)
...Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ...

2: Handling stress

The second session in this DIY Workshop looks at stress. The event works without this section so you can use just Parts 1 and 3 but stress is such a major issue for many in ministry that you may find it helpful to include Part 2 as well.

Stress or distress? Handout 4

Stress is a mechanical word – 'distress' is the medical term we often mean. There is nothing wrong in being stressed as such until it becomes distress.

- 1 Some stress is essential for health (consider a violin, or human muscles).
- 2 Some stress is creative (consider 'flight', or adrenalin).
- 3 Some stress is not so good. 'Our inability to cope (and achieve and find satisfaction) with the demands and expectations placed upon us.'
- 4 What is an enjoyable thrill for one person may be real distress for another.

A balanced life requires

- outputs – to expend energy and challenge us (putting us under right stress);
- rest and recovery (sleep and relaxation);
- recreation (physical, enjoyable, intellectual, spiritual - discipleship);
- routines (daily essentials, care for our relationships – both for singles and marrieds)

How might this apply in ministry?

For an idea of discussing 'time off' with lay leaders, see Training Notes TN106, Talk about taking time 'off', in the Resources section of my website.

Factors in society that affect levels of distress

- 1 choices (food shopping, liturgical services, etc.);
- 2 change (life used to – we thought – carry on year by year);
- 3 clergy profile (the goldfish bowl in the local community);
- 4 relationships (are far more complicated than once);
- 5 ourselves (personality, experience, relationships, health, mind, spirituality);
- 6 email and social media.

Consider also our partnership with others in the above, our control over each of them, and the timing or multiplicity of such factors.

Study *Holmes and Rahe tables* (Google them) to get an interesting idea of what events supposedly have greatest impact on distress (but don't go into too much detail on the scores – and the whole tool is now somewhat dated and rather American).

Problems become more obvious when stress in your family added to stress in your church added to stress in yourself comes to a total greater than you can be comfortable with.

The material in this section is adapted from Training Notes TN67, Stress and the Christian worker, in the Resources section of my website.

Workplace stressors for a Christian Minister Handout 5

Which of these are dangerous for you just now? Some are clear, others more subtle.

- 1 Open-ended opportunities – no neat boundaries
- 2 High levels of emotion – funerals, up-front, conflict
- 3 Critics and bullies – the underbelly of congregational life
- 4 Secular environment – whether inner-city, suburban or rural
- 5 Solo working – no real team to share with, working from home
- 6 Long hours with financial pressure – with little escape

- 7 High expectations – from different groups of people
- 8 An environment of failure – national pressures, falling numbers
- 9 Poor management – little real care for many Ministers
- 10 Sense of inadequacy – colleagues who seem successful
- 11 The diocese and parish finance – paying share, keeping afloat
- 12 Building issues – maintenance of historical treasures

And of course, now in the past, Covid and lockdowns – and the risks of coming out of lockdown.

EXERCISE 4 Handout 14

Groups or pairs discuss which of the above points do you feel most apply to you as of now? And why? What are the triggers for these?

Where might the idea of spiritual warfare fit or not fit into this study? What does this look like as opposed to signs of distress?

Signs of distress Handout 6

Ten distress signals from our bodies ...
from the top down

- ☹ Tension headaches or migraines
- ☹ Dry throat or neck pains
- ☹ Chest tightness
- ☹ Breathlessness / sweating
- ☹ Rapid or erratic or forceful heartbeat
- ☹ Muscle tension / back pain
- ☹ Indigestion / wind
- ☹ Changes in bowel movements
- ☹ Frequent need to pass urine
- ☹ Pins and needles in legs or arms

What about you? What affects you most? What would you add to this list?

But we do not just have physical reactions to distress. Consider too behavioural and spiritual reactions.

Ten behavioural reactions

- ☹ Feeling tired and drained
- ☹ Not sleeping well
- ☹ Feeling tense, frightened or tearful
- ☹ Irritable or aggressive with mood swings
- ☹ Indecisive and complaining
- ☹ Feelings of failure and unnecessary worry
- ☹ Change in appetite, libido or menstrual pattern
- ☹ Increase in drinking, smoking, use of pills
- ☹ Unable to concentrate for long or low energy
- ☹ Poor work judgement or accident prone

And you, as before?

Five spiritual reactions

- ☹ Lack of desire to pray or read Bible
- ☹ Feelings of worthlessness and sinfulness
- ☹ Feelings of guilt and hypocrisy
- ☹ Wanting to avoid God
- ☹ Wanting to hide from other Christians

NB: None of these symptoms immediately implies distress. And all anxiety produces these appropriate reactions. They become alarm bells if they go over a limit.

EXERCISE 5 *Handout 14*

Groups or pairs discuss which of the above points do you feel most apply to you as of now? And why? What are the triggers for these?

Check out Article A25, *Working from home*, in the Resources section of the website.

How to reduce distress**Handout 7**

Apart from any specific solutions we came up with earlier:

- 1 Understand how God has made you; he loves you as you are. Seek him above all else. Study the Psalms.

- 2 Identify your main ministry stressors and seek ways to minimise them. Write out a plan for how you might achieve this.
- 3 Seek medical or Christian help if you are distressed. This is not weakness.
- 4 Seek to keep morale high, avoiding crises and multiple tasks where possible.
- 5 Improve the working environment as far as you can: nature, tidiness, whatever. A day sorting the study/house may have a significant impact on your stress.
- 6 Have a life outside the parish, take time to do what you enjoy which has nothing to do with church.
- 7 Value and use your family and close friends. Do not isolate yourself (in normal times!). Take part in some kind of group activity if you live alone.
- 8 Make time for yourself, both body and mind: diet, exercise, sleep, reading. Fall back on to the Sabbath principle. Take proper time off especially if you cannot afford to.
- 9 Structure your day more tightly with fixed times for certain activities. Take a monastic approach to the day.
- 10 Use the tools we shall discuss in the next section of today's event: a planning retreat, a 'To Do Diary', saying 'no', etc.
- 11 *Add other ideas...*

EXERCISE 6 *Handout 14*

As a group together, which of the ideas for reduction are most helpful for you, and what other ideas would you want to add that you have found effective?

EXERCISE 7 *Handout 14***Biblical stress**

Consider the Gospels. What were the particular stressors that Jesus was living under during his three years of ministry? And what can we learn from how he handled these? OR study St Paul's attitude to stressors in 2 Corinthians chapters 4 and 11 (and other chapters too).

3: Four key tools to set you free

We move now from road atlas to something more like Ordnance Survey, from big picture to something more detailed. This third session takes four self-organising tools that can be used to help you manage yourself within the timeframe that God gives us. In a training session you can take as many of these as you have time for, but the list represents the most useful tools that are applicable to a wide range of people.

1: 'Planning retreats' Handout 8

You cannot do either this kind of big picture thinking (Part 1) or dealing with practical solutions to your stressors (Part 2) while on the job. Most of us need time away from all distractions with time to clear the mind of current concerns. You also need an environment to excite you and take you into God's presence.

Hence the idea of a regular 'planning retreat'. The agenda is to REVIEW the past, PRAY over the present and PLAN for the future. Ideas for this might include:

- A day right away from base six times a year
- A termly 48-hour session including a night away
- An annual few days on your own

You may want to use

- A friend's house or a cottage somewhere in the country
- A retreat house of any kind
- Just going out for a long walk not too close to home.

If you work best in a team setting, you may want to adjust this idea and go away as a team or with one or two of those you know from your college days. But the key points are that:

- This is neither 'a management session' nor a 'retreat' but a 'planning retreat'!
- It needs to go in the diary early on and not be bullied by more urgent needs.
- You need to go 'away' from your normal environment and from distractions.
- The longer the better – include at least one night away if that is possible.

For further thinking on this, read Training Notes TN54, *Creating space for a Planning Retreat*, on the website.

EXERCISE 8 *Handout 14*

The time to plan your first Planning Retreat is now. If you fail to do this now you will quickly get lost in the daily detail of stress and it simply will not happen.

But if you are taking part in this workshop as a group, this would be a good opportunity to help each other clear time in the diary for such an event, and hold each other to decisions made now.

Common thoughts before such an event are likely to be 'I have not got time for this – there is too much pressing business'. Common thoughts afterwards are, 'Thank God I made the time for this. It was so worthwhile.'

So the issues to decide are what might be possible in my situation regarding time away from base? Where might I be able to go for this time? How might I divide up my sessions for review, planning, prayer and, perhaps, reading.

As a group together share experiences of those who have done something like this in the past, and help each other find a way of enabling this within the next month or two.

Let the group decide to share experiences through a Zoom meeting at a given future date or through a 'WhatsApp' group.

As part of this exercise it would be worth reading Training Notes TN54 in the Resources section of this website, *Creating space for a Planning Retreat*.

Note that this tool needs little explanation but a considerable amount of decisive action!

It needs to be underlined that this is not a traditional retreat, but neither is it a planning session. It is both of these and the enabler of the session needs to keep stressing this. There needs to be no awkwardness of feeling this is not a 'proper retreat'.

2: The art of saying 'No' with grace and without guilt Handout 9

We need to understand something about expectations placed on us:

- 1: Our own
- 2: The denomination
- 3: Our colleagues
- 4: Our parish/area
- 5: Our church members
- 6: Our family and friends

Why you may find it so hard to say 'No'

EXERCISE 9 Handout 15

As a group come up with a number of reasons why most of us find it difficult to say 'No' when we know we should. Fill in the box on Handout 9.

Assess the request

- Listen carefully
- Ask questions
- Activate the pause button
- Give yourself time and space to pray and ponder
- Consult your 'team'
- Beware agreeing to something in the distant future
- Block off activity time in your diary
- Check out alternatives
- Check out the urgency
- Make suggestions for next time

Ask yourself questions of:

- Priority
- Promises
- Time taken
- Completion date
- Enjoyment
- Preventing others
- Hurting others
- Pressure
- Replacement
- Developments

And remember, it is better to say 'No' now than 'Yes' and fail to deliver.

How to say 'No'

- 1 Say something positive first
- 2 Say the actual word 'No'
- 3 Smile
- 4 Never lie but do not give too much away
- 5 Don't over-apologise or feel guilty

For more on this theme, see Training Notes TN84, *How to say 'No' when you should*, on the website.

3: The 'To Do Diary'

The 'To Do Diary' is a tool that has helped many Ministers and others take control of their use of time. Read it up in detail in Article A50 on this website, *The 'To Do Diary' guide*. Whoever is leading the workshop needs to become familiar with it from this source.

Key principles Handout 10

- 1 You keep your engagements and your desk work together on the same page, listing **everything** you need to do even if just reminders or minor actions.
- 2 You have three page sections to each diary day: **Timed Engagements** (TE), **Main Tasks** (MT) and **Quick Actions** (QA). You expect MTs to take 45 minutes or more, and QA to take up to 30 minutes but often just 5 minutes.
- 3 In any one day the time taken by TE + MT + QA must be **less than the hours available to you**. If a day is already full and you are expected to add an additional TE (a suddenly called staff meeting for example), then MT and/or QA must be reduced.
- 4 In fact you want to leave timed space in each day for **interruptions** and unexpected items. The amount that it is wise to leave will vary person to person.
- 5 You expect to **move things** around a bit from day to day.
- 6 When not on a TE, you tackle your MTs and QAs. You **celebrate each achievement** by ticking the list or whatever.

- 7 At the end of the day you deal with **each item not ticked**: by transferring them to another page within issues of urgency and importance, or dropping them altogether.
- 8 You then draw a line through the whole page and go to bed with **NOTHING OUTSTANDING**.

This can work on a digital diary system but, I dare to say, is better if used with pen and paper diary, such as an A5 page to a day office diary.

'Timed engagements' examples Handout 11

- Any events or meetings, just as you would expect to find in a normal diary.
- Any actions you need to take at a fixed time such as a promised phone call.
- Any actions you want to undertake at a specific time of the day.
- Timed actions for personal or family events.

'Main tasks' examples

- Major items of work you want to undertake which need at least about 45 minutes.
- You may want to break these into several days' entries, such as sermon preparation.

'Quick Actions' examples

This is the section that can really enable reliability. It's the game changer for me. Many of them are just reminders and each one you expect to take no more than half an hour with several taking less than five minutes.

- Action reminders – someone you need to speak to who is currently unavailable, a staff member who wants you to remind him/her next week, a payment to make next month.
- Awaiting response – expecting an email reply you don't want to lose track of, you send out an order due for delivery in one week, you feel you need to remind another member of staff of something they have promised you.
- Recurring actions – a reminder to your small group of the next fortnightly meeting, elderly people who rely on a pastoral call from you each month, check

stationery supplies once a month. (Use the 'diarise' function.)

- Keeping promises – you promise to pray as a friend goes into hospital next week, you tell the staff meeting you will sort something out.
- Spreading the work – breaking a major job into short bursts and diarising one a day next week, you want to check over the article you wrote yesterday before you send it off
- Sudden thoughts – you are busy but suddenly think of someone who needs a call from you, you spot someone at church but did not get a chance to speak to them.
- Far-ahead reminders – you want to send a family member a birthday card on schedule, someone asks you to follow up on them in three months' time, you've just put your last printer cartridge into your printer.
- Personal tasks – you need to book the car in for service, you need a reminder about your child's school test in maths, you promised to get the car washed before the weekend.

EXERCISE 10 Handout 15

List some real, live examples from group members of Timed Engagements, Main Tasks and Quick Actions.

When is it helpful to make a Main Task a Timed Engagement and when might this be dangerous if overdone?

Pack and unpack time

One time consuming event which we often fail to allow for is what I term pack/unpack time. If this is not included in the 'To Do Diary' you can be in trouble.

You need time to 'pack' for any event. Let's take a business meeting as an example. Here you need to allow time for:

- Getting your papers together and checking you have got everything you will need for the agenda in hand. This may need to be done on a day before the meeting.

- Reading up materials you have been sent that explain or give background to agenda items.
- Discussions with other committee members or research with those not on the committee, as you promised to do at the last meeting.
- Preparing items you need to introduce at the meeting.

If you fail to allow time for this in the diary you end up either rushing such work through just before the meeting, or being unable to take informed decisions at the meeting itself.

But you also need to set aside time for 'unpacking' too. Examples of this just after the meeting include:

- Filing papers back where they belong.
- Noting all actions which are your responsibility and recording them in your diary or doing them straightaway.

If you fail to allow for such actions you run the risk of failing to action what you have promised to do. The To Do Diary system enables you to do all this.

For further detail on this idea, see Training Notes TN23, *How to do 'To Do' lists* for an outline or, for fuller detail, Article A50, *The 'To Do Diary' guide*, on the website.

4: A monthly calendar Handout 12

The idea here is to plan your year month by month. This then feeds into the To Do Diary.

Start with a blank list of months.

Think 'aims' – specific projects

Your role is at heart fairly static, but within that context you need specific priorities or aims for each period (say, each year). Most of these will be what you want to achieve by a given date.

If you have clear priorities in life or ministry, where do you need to get to by, say, this time next year? This is bringing the big picture planning down in scale.

Aims change year by year, unlike purpose. They can include ideas of activity, relationships, seasonal issues, personal discipleship. In a parish you might have specific aims you wish to achieve by the time you move on.

Then add dated events throughout the year

You may have specific deadlines you need to meet at various points in the year. These might include:

- Deadlines that are some way ahead: eg. special services or speaking engagements, booking your family holiday, planning your move from curacy (if applicable).
- Regular activities not to be forgotten: eg. a bimonthly magazine article deadline.
- Monthly/weekly activity that needs to be fitted in: eg. sermon preparation, claiming expenses.

And so: a monthly list

This acts as a monthly reminder of out-of-the-ordinary activity. It does not give specific dates but lists what needs to be done that month.

This is the half-way stage between the big picture priorities for the year and the daily detailed activity. It links the two.

It is NOT putting exact dates on when you do stuff but does show monthly deadlines by when you intend to have it done.

EXERCISE 11 Handout 15

List some real, live examples from group members of one or two of their aims for the current year. Then list some group examples of major dated events.

Now create a list of these by month – see the table for Handout 12.

We have only covered four tools in this section, but together they can make a considerable difference to managing ourselves and coping with high levels of stress



Resources on my website you might find helpful on this theme<https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources>**Articles**

- A4 Twelve questions to help you plan* *
- A25 Working from home – boundaries, discipline and space
- A27 Reliability in ministry – for administrators and leaders
- A36/37 Sorting out your study – the space and the stuff in the room
- A50 The 'To Do Diary' guide – how to use this simple tool* *

Training Notes

- TN6 The Minister's role in larger churches
- TN7 Ideas for how to make time for life
- TN11 Keeping a time log
- TN23 How to do 'To Do' lists* *
- TN40 Appointing a Church Administrator
- TN43 Did Jesus use an iPhone? – *essential reading to back up all this material*
- TN54 Creating space for a Planning Retreat* *
- TN57 Clear your clutter!
- TN62 Know what distracts you* *
- TN67 Stress and the Christian worker* *
- TN70 Do's and don'ts for a new leader
- TN78 The role of a church leader* *
- TN84 How to say 'No' when you should* *
- TN106 Talk about taking time 'off'* *
- TN112 Set my leaders free!
- TN157 The value of review

* *Materials used in this workshop

This workshop is available at <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk/Resources/DIY-Workshops-index> then W5. See also the resources listed above.

John's resources are marked for filing categories of Leadership, Management, Structures, Planning, Communication, Administration. File W5 under Leadership.

John Truscott, 24 High Grove, St Albans, AL3 5SU

Tel: 01727 568325 Email: john@john-truscott.co.uk Web: <https://www.john-truscott.co.uk>