

## Healthy Growing Pastors

What are the issues for a pastor wanting to stay healthy and growing?  
Here are 11 essentials.

**1. Be a constant learner.**

Information, communication and knowledge are changing at an amazing rate. It is crucial that pastors continue to take up learning opportunities. This applies to both formal setting re study and informal re mentoring, supervision etc. Submit yourself to assessment and review processes.

**2. Develop relationship skills.**

More people leave formal ministry for relational reasons than any other. It is essential to develop skills of listening, compassion, social interaction, conflict resolution and team work.

**3. Develop leadership skills.**

Leadership has become the number one growth point for pastors today. It is different to management and different to pastoral skills. Some have strong natural gifts in this area and others need to develop strengths. Leadership is not defined by one personality type or style. It comes in many shapes and sizes.

**4. Work through personal insecurities.**

Our character, personality and upbringing will markedly influence our effectiveness in ministry. Self-awareness is essential. Progress needs to be made in areas of insecurity or deficiency. The pressure of ministry will expose our weaknesses as well as our strengths.

**5. Multiply yourself through others.**

The role of pastor has changed from 'doer' to 'equipper'. Recognising and releasing the gifts and abilities of others is crucial. Mentoring should be a three-dimensional thing: downward, outward and upward.

**6. Constantly attend to the spiritual disciplines.**

It is very easy to emphasis the practice of ministry competencies today and fail to work from a foundation of faith and Christ-likeness. Prayer, study, solitude, sacrifice, simplicity and service all help create servanthood and obedience.

**7. Choose your hills to die on.**

Differences of opinion, sinfulness, changes in culture and spiritual opposition will all be encountered in ministry. Sometimes the issue will be yourself, sometimes other people. Be wise in deciding when to take a stand. "It is the little foxes that spoil the vine"

**8. View all of life as a whole.**

Make no distinction between the sacred and the secular. Consider God's creation as a whole, and His intention to transform all things. Too many pastors get into a 'church' or 'spiritual' ghetto mentality. One aspect of your life will affect all the rest.

**9. Attend to your marriage and family.**

They are your first circle of responsibility and support. Do not neglect them on the premise of doing church work or God's work. Recognise that the track of emotions finishes with your partners when you unload your concerns and frustrations.

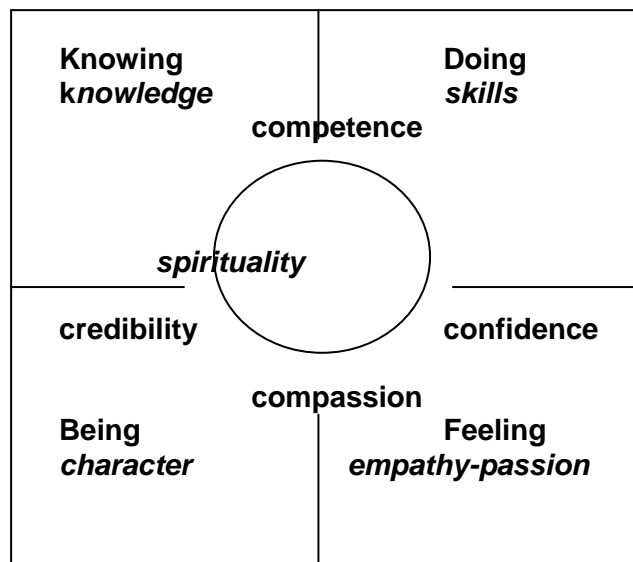
**10. Attend to your physical health.**

'Fitness' applies to all areas of life. When you are well physically you will have greater strength to endure, to cope with stress and to respond positively.

**11. Don't take yourself too seriously.**

Neither the world nor the church will fall apart if you are not there. It does not all depend on you. Work hard without over working. Look for friendships, times of laughter and be willing to laugh at yourself.

**Development Model  
For training Pastoral Leadership Students  
At Carey Baptist College**



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**Having attended to all of the essentials above, it would still be possible to be an ineffective pastor. There needs to be measureable outcomes against which we judge our work e.g. ministry competencies, church health and growth i.e. the call to be fruitful as well as faithful.**