**Case Studies for Lay Leader Burnout HMR Session**

**Case Study #1**

* **Pastor Jane Doe has been in her current senior pastor position for about 10 years. She has become increasingly hostile in church council meetings, to the point of leaving some people in tears. She has become very “short” with staff members; she has become increasingly unavailable - both in her lack of office hours to meet with congregants and absences from Sunday worship services. It appears that the Pastor is under stress but has not shared what that might be. The current Church Moderator, Sally, has been the recipient of numerous “rants” from the pastor during her tenure as Moderator, as well as numerous and regular complaints from congregants regarding the pastor's behavior, lack of availability and absences. The Moderator is so upset with the current situation, she has resigned her position as Moderator and has stated she will never accept another leadership roll or be a member of any team or committee in the future.**

**Discussion Questions:**

* ***How would you interpret Sally’s actions? What are her burnout factors?***
* ***How would you characterize the actions of the Pastor?***
* ***What could Sally do to help get through this situation?***

***Case Study #2***

* **Mary Jo has served in many church lay leadership roles including Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, Delegate, Worship team, Finance team, endowments, and probably more we can’t even remember. She is also active in the wider community with the Library, Red Cross, Lions Club, etc. She is also now 80+ years young. Why is she now saying she needs to withdraw from all church activities?**

**Discussion Questions:**

* **How would you interpret Mary Jo’s actions?**
* **What are her burnout triggers?**
* **What steps could you or she have taken to lessen or eliminate these burnout factors?**

Case Study #3

**Jason grew up in the Glenville Church and loved it and its people. Though the church had about 75 members, Jason was one of the few under age 45. He recently started his own accounting firm and was spending long hours getting it off the ground.**

**Since Jason was a teenager, he has helped around the church with maintenance and yard work. These jobs were becoming more numerous now that more of the members were elderly and could not help as they used to. Jason became the “go to” person for any project that demanded physical labor or maintenance expertise. Between his business and the church, Jason had little time to spend with his wife, Jenny, and their three-year-old daughter. The strain was starting to affect his marriage.**

**One Sunday, Jason overheard a discussion between two Board of Trustee members that the Building and Grounds budget has grown considerably, and they had to decide what to do with the money. Seeing this as an opportunity, Jason suggested that the church hire out the care of the ground’s chores, mowing, weeding, bush trimming, etc. The Trustees said they would take the idea to the full Board. A week later, the Trustees got back to him and said that they thought they needed to add to the church “rainy day” fund instead.**

**Jason wrote a letter to the Board of Trustees and the Church Council that he would no longer be available for any of the grounds work.**

**Discussion Questions**

* **How would you interpret Jason’s actions?**
* **How would you characterize the Board of Trustees decisions?**
* **What would you do next?**

**Mary and Martha**

***In the story of Mary & Martha, the cause of Martha’s worry and overwork was a distorted view of God. “Don’t you care?” she said, “that I’m left to do all the work?”… "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better…”***

**This is frequently interpreted as spiritual values being more important than material business, such as preparation of food. What can we learn about burnout from this story?**