

ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH

Omaha, Nebraska



QUALITY CARE CURRICULUM

FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN CARE

Our foundation, our tools, and our Quality Care Curriculum — one framework for lay caregivers, built on Ubuntu Care and adapted from ACPE standards.

“I AM BECAUSE WE ARE”

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QUALITY CARE CURRICULUM

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THE EIGHTEEN LESSONS

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9	Notice Group Patterns	18	Trust the Ongoing Work of God

01

SECTION ONE

FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN CARE

Our comprehensive framework for spiritual care — a philosophy, a set of tools, and a formation curriculum, held together as one.



Foundations of Christian Care is our comprehensive framework combining our Ubuntu Care philosophy, our core care tools — the Circles of Quality Care, the Faith Story Reflection tool, and the Two-Session Care Model — and our Quality Care Curriculum: an eighteen-lesson formation series that enhances these tools with professional-level training.

This curriculum adapts the rigorous educational standards of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), the premier accrediting body for spiritual care education that sets standards for chaplains and pastoral care providers in hospitals, hospices, and institutions across the country.

UBUNTU CARE PHILOSOPHY

Our approach is grounded in the Ubuntu principle that “*I am because we are*” — recognizing that we are interconnected, and that caring for one another is central to our identity as the body of Christ. This philosophy shapes everything we do in spiritual care.

The practical outworking of Ubuntu Care. Ubuntu Care means that when one person suffers, we all suffer; when one person heals, we all benefit. This translates into practical caregiving where we:

- **See ourselves in others' stories** — recognizing that their pain could be our pain, their joy could be our joy.
- **Care from community, not isolation** — involving others in both giving and receiving care rather than trying to meet every need alone.
- **Value relationships over tasks** — prioritizing presence and connection over simply completing caregiving activities.

- **Practice mutual care** — understanding that caregivers also need care, and care receivers also have gifts to offer.
- **Affirm our African American heritage** — celebrating that our cultural identity reflects unique aspects of God's character and creativity, and that Ubuntu is consistent with Bible teachings.
- **Build bridges across differences** — using our interconnectedness to overcome barriers of race, culture, economics, or background.

THE HEART OF IT

Ubuntu Care creates a culture where everyone both gives and receives, where vulnerability is safe, and where healing happens in community. This philosophy provides the foundation for all our care tools and curriculum.

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SECTION TWO

OUR CORE CARE TOOLS

Three tools work together in every encounter. The sections that follow unfold each one in depth.



01 THE CIRCLES OF QUALITY CARE

Our foundational framework for providing care through five deepening postures — **Compassion, Presence, Listening, Empathy, and Discernment**. The curriculum teaches the how and why behind each posture through deeper self-awareness and reflection.

02 THE FAITH STORY REFLECTION

Our reflective tool for spiritual growth — *What's been happening? What am I learning? How should I respond?* It helps people process their experiences with God, while the curriculum expands this reflection to include caregiving development.

03 THE TWO-SESSION CARE MODEL

Our simple, repeatable structure that puts the Circles into motion. **Session One** is for being heard; **Session Two** is for moving forward — with the Faith Story Reflection tool bridging the two, and Quality Care Notes keeping a faithful record.

03

SECTION THREE

THE CIRCLES OF QUALITY CARE

Five deepening postures of care — not steps to complete, but layers that encompass and build on the one before.



The Circles of Quality Care are our foundational framework for how we care. They describe five deepening postures — not a checklist to complete, but layers that encompass and build on the one before, moving from inner posture to outward response.

Care begins at the center with **compassion** and deepens outward through **presence**, **listening**, and **empathy**, continuing through **discernment** as our faithful response to what love requires.

THE FIVE POSTURES

ROOTED IN
COMPASSION

Being moved to action to lessen the suffering of others.

GROUNDING IN
PRESENCE

Being fully aware of the moment and free from distractions.

INFORMED BY
LISTENING

Paying full attention to what others are saying.

FELT THROUGH
EMPATHY

Experiencing the other person's feelings with them and expressing it back to them.

CONTINUED THROUGH
DISCERNMENT

Responding to their need for spiritual or practical care.

A RHYTHM OF CARE

In a real encounter, the five postures gather into three movements — **Stirring In** (compassion awakens us), **Being With** (presence, listening, and empathy keep us grounded), and **Continuing Through** (discernment becomes our response). This is the way care actually flows.

THE FULL TOOL

APPENDIX A

The complete Circles of Quality Care tool — the concentric diagram, each posture with its practices, the three-movement rhythm, and key insights — is provided in Appendix A for caregivers to study and carry.

04

SECTION FOUR

THE FAITH STORY REFLECTION

Honest reflection between a person and God — the reflective heart of our care.



A faith story is a narrative that tells the story of events, episodes, and seasons in your life in ways that help you process, reflect, and respond in light of your relationship with God. The Faith Story Reflection creates sacred space for that reflection — honestly, and at your own pace.

WHY WE REFLECT ON OUR FAITH STORIES

- To gain clarity about how God is working in our lives.
- To take responsibility for our responses and choices.
- To grow in loving God, self, and others well.
- To develop Christ-like character.
- To handle conflict in healthy, godly ways.
- To model authentic faith for others.
- To create a culture of spiritual reflection.

THREE AREAS OF REFLECTION

1

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Name the situation honestly — the circumstances, your inner experience, and how you've been responding.

2

WHAT AM I LEARNING?

Listen for what God is revealing — about His character, about yourself, and about others.

3

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND?

Discern your next steps — confession, forgiveness, moving forward, and honoring God.

RESPONDING WHEN OTHERS SHARE THEIR STORY

1 WHILE LISTENING TO THEIR STORY

Demonstrate loving attentiveness. Allow yourself to enter their perspective and experience their feelings with them — if it helps, use the Emotion Word Reference.

2 AFTER LISTENING

Ask clarifying questions if needed. Express back the feelings you experienced with them — keep it short. Avoid all instruction, advice, correction, commentary, or sharing your own story; this moment is about them. If confession of sin is involved, you may pronounce forgiveness.

3 IN YOUR PRIVATE TIME

Reflect on how their story has impacted you. How does it intersect with one of your own stories? What can you learn from it?

EMOTION WORD REFERENCE

Sometimes the hardest part is naming what we feel. Find the core emotion closest to the experience, then look for the more specific word beneath it. Naming a feeling is the first step to bringing it honestly to God.

SAD

Grieving · Lonely · Heartbroken ·
Discouraged · Empty ·
Disappointed · Numb

AFRAID

Anxious · Worried · Overwhelmed
· Insecure · Helpless · Uncertain ·
Tense

ANGRY

Frustrated · Resentful · Betrayed ·
Bitter · Irritated · Defensive ·
Wronged

ASHAMED

Guilty · Embarrassed · Regretful ·
Unworthy · Exposed · Inadequate

PEACEFUL

Calm · Content · Grateful ·
Reassured · Trusting · Settled ·
Rested

HOPEFUL

Encouraged · Expectant · Joyful ·
Loved · Strengthened · Renewed

READY TO USE

APPENDIX B

The complete Faith Story Reflection worksheet — all three areas, each with its three guiding questions and room to write — is provided in Appendix B. Reproduce it freely for personal reflection or to offer as homework.

05

SECTION FIVE

THE TWO-SESSION CARE MODEL

A simple, repeatable structure that puts the Circles into motion — being heard, then moving forward.



“They keep watch over your souls.”

HEBREWS 13:17

The model isn't rigid — it's a rhythm. Session One is for being heard. Session Two is for moving forward. The Faith Story Reflection tool bridges the two, and Quality Care Notes keep the caregiver faithful across both.

SESSION ONE

BEING HEARD

The first session belongs entirely to the Circles. The goal is not to solve — it is to be fully present, to listen deeply, and to help the person feel genuinely heard.

- Lead with compassion and presence; clear distraction.
- Listen for the story beneath the words; reflect empathy back.
- Resist the pull to fix. Stay in the inner circles.
- Close by offering the Faith Story Reflection tool as homework.

SESSION TWO

MOVING FORWARD

The second session builds on the trust established in the first. Now — having listened well — discernment can do its work, and next steps can be named together.

- Revisit the Faith Story Reflection together, if they completed it.
- Discern the real need — spiritual, relational, or practical.
- Name next steps together; don't impose them.
- Decide on follow-up, referral, or continued accompaniment.

The Faith Story Reflection tool bridges the two sessions — offered as homework at the close of Session One.

CARE, NOT CURE

You give care; God gives cure. In every encounter, ask one question: am I trying to fix this, or am I trying to care well? The moment you shift from caring to curing, you leave the Circles. Stay in your lane. Care well. Trust God with the rest.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS — WHEN TO REFER

Caring well sometimes means knowing the boundary of your role. Referral is not a failure of care — it is care. Use these as guides, not rigid rules.

STAY & WALK WITH THEM

- Grief, discouragement, ordinary seasons of struggle.
- Spiritual questions, doubt, and seeking direction.
- Relational tension that responds to listening and prayer.
- Anyone who simply needs to be heard and accompanied.

REFER & STAY CONNECTED

- Any risk of harm to self or others — act immediately.
- Trauma, abuse, or addiction needing clinical care.
- Persistent mental-health symptoms beyond your training.
- Anything requiring legal, medical, or financial expertise.

Referring well is itself an act of quality care: you stay present, hand off with dignity, and keep walking alongside the person spiritually even after a professional steps in.

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SECTION SIX

QUALITY CARE NOTES

A faithful record across sessions — one conversation per sheet. The notes follow the outer Circles: Listening, Empathy, and Discernment.



Quality Care Notes are a simple, confidential record a caregiver keeps after each care conversation — one sheet per conversation. They are not a clinical chart; they are a way to remember what was shared, what was discerned, and what comes next, so that care can continue faithfully across sessions rather than starting over each time.

Because memory fades — *the faintest ink is better than the best memory* — a brief, prayerful note helps a caregiver honor the trust placed in them, notice patterns over time, and know when to follow up or refer.

THE NOTES FOLLOW THE OUTER CIRCLES

Rather than a blank page, the record is shaped by the same postures that guide the conversation. After a session, the caregiver captures three things:

INFORMED BY
LISTENING

Their story — what was shared, and the understanding beneath the words.

FELT THROUGH
EMPATHY

What they were feeling, and how those feelings were reflected back to them.

CONTINUED
THROUGH
DISCERNMENT

The immediate need — spiritual or practical — and how the caregiver responded.

A short follow-up section closes each record: whether another session was agreed, whether the Faith Story Reflection was offered, the caregiver's own next step, and whether a pastoral referral is needed.

READY TO USE

APPENDIX C

A printable Session Record form is provided in Appendix C. Reproduce it freely — one sheet per care conversation. Keep every completed note secure and confidential.

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SECTION SEVEN

THE QUALITY CARE CURRICULUM

Eighteen lessons of monthly formation, covering all ACPE Level 1A outcomes.



WHY ACPE STANDARDS

Clinical Pastoral Education represents decades of research and practice in effective spiritual care formation — emphasizing self-awareness, experiential learning through action and reflection, cultural humility, professional boundaries, and peer learning with mutual accountability.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Eighteen lessons covering all ACPE Level 1A outcomes, designed for eighteen months of monthly formation during our Fast & Fellowship gatherings. Each lesson builds on the last while standing alone for flexible participation.

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

Lessons are delivered in 15–20-minute sessions during fellowship meals, emphasizing experiential learning through group reflection, peer discussion, and practical application between gatherings.

FORMATION PHILOSOPHY

This is formation, not just information. Participants reflect honestly on their caregiving, practice new skills in real situations between gatherings, learn from one another, and grow in confidence and competence as spiritual caregivers.

ACPE CATEGORIES EXPLAINED

A

SPIRITUAL FORMATION & INTEGRATION

Understanding how your personal story, cultural background, and faith beliefs shape how you care for others.

B

AWARENESS OF SELF & OTHERS

Developing empathy, cultural humility, self-care practices, and awareness of bias in caregiving relationships.

C**RELATIONAL DYNAMICS**

Learning healthy boundaries, deep listening, group awareness, and spiritual discernment in care encounters.

D**SPIRITUAL CARE INTERVENTIONS**

Building practical skills for spiritual conversations, assessments, and appropriate responses.

E**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Growing in ethical practice, reflection skills, teamwork, and commitment to lifelong learning.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

By completing this curriculum, participants will demonstrate ACPE Level 1A competencies — increased self-awareness, empathetic listening, respect for diverse backgrounds, ethical awareness with appropriate boundaries, reflective practice, and a collaborative spirit in caregiving.

What this provides: a solid foundation for congregational care ministry, hospital visitation, supporting families in crisis, grief companionship, and community spiritual presence.

SECTION SEVEN · REFERENCE

ACPE STANDARDS ALIGNMENT CHART

#	ACPE CATEGORY & OUTCOME	LESSON TITLE	FOCUS AREA
1	A1 · Narrative History	Know Yourself to Be Present	Self-awareness in care
2	A2 · Socio-Cultural Identity	Your Background Matters	Cultural awareness
3	A3 · Spiritual Orienting Systems	Your Faith Shapes Your Care	Faith and care integration
4	B1 · Self-Care	Care for the Caregiver	Sustaining care ministry
5	B2 · Justice-Seeking Bias Awareness	Advocate with Love and Justice	Speaking up for others
6	B3 · Intercultural Humility	Appreciate Diverse Faith Expressions	Honoring faith diversity
7	C1 · Empathy	Practice Empathic Presence	Presence over fixing
8	C2 · Relational Boundaries	Know Your Limitations	Healthy boundaries
9	C3 · Group Dynamics	Notice Group Patterns	Family / group care
10	D1 · Spiritual Care Relationships	Respond with Spirit-Led Wisdom	Spirit-guided responses
11	D2 · Cultural / Religious Resources	Use Spiritual Resources Wisely	Connecting faith and care
12	D3 · Spiritual Assessment	Discern the Real Need	Understanding deeper needs
13	D4 · Documentation	Record Your Care	Responsible documentation
14	E1 · Clinical Method	Reflect on Your Own Growth	Learning through reflection
15	E2 · Ethical Practice	Build Trust through Integrity	Trustworthy care
16	E3 · Consultation & Feedback	Share What You've Learned	Peer learning and support
17	E4 · Teamwork & Collaboration	Communicate with Care and Clarity	Graceful communication
18	E5 · Research-Based Care	Trust the Ongoing Work of God	Lifelong learning

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SECTION EIGHT

THE EIGHTEEN LESSONS

One lesson per monthly gathering. Each stands alone, yet builds on the last — moving from personal formation to shared practice.



Each lesson opens with a question, names two key ideas, offers a group exercise, gives one concrete practice to carry into the week, and closes with a word to remember. Bring your honest reflection; leave space for others. The goal is formation, not information — what is learned here is meant to be practiced between gatherings.

LESSON 1 KNOW YOURSELF TO BE PRESENT

BUILDING ON

This deepens the “Grounded in Presence” element of our Circles of Quality Care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To become aware of how your past experiences shape how you care for others.

OPENING QUESTION

How does your story affect how you care for others?

KEY IDEAS

- You bring yourself and all your experiences, values, and history into every care moment.
- Being aware of what you carry helps you be more fully present.

GROUP EXERCISE · NARRATIVE HISTORY AWARENESS

Reflect together:

- What formative and transformative experiences in your life story have been significant to your spiritual journey?
- When have you noticed your story intersecting with someone else's story during a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Before your next care conversation, take five quiet minutes to name one experience from your own story that this person's situation might stir up. Notice it — then set it aside so you can be fully present to them.

FINAL THOUGHT

“We cannot give what we do not have. Self-awareness is the foundation of all meaningful care.”

— HENRI NOUWEN

NOTES

LESSON 2 YOUR BACKGROUND MATTERS

BUILDING ON

This expands our awareness of what we bring into care situations

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To recognize how your background and culture shape how you care for others.

OPENING QUESTION

What's one way your background — family, culture, where you grew up — affects how you see people's problems?

KEY IDEAS

- Your social identity (race, culture, family background) influences your approach to spiritual care.
- Being aware of this helps you provide more respectful care across differences.

GROUP EXERCISE · BACKGROUND AND CULTURE AWARENESS

Reflect together:

- How does your social identity relate to how you provide spiritual care?
- When have you noticed a care encounter where your background affected your response?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

This week, catch one moment when your first reaction to someone's problem was shaped by how you were raised. Pause and ask: what might I be missing from where they stand?

FINAL THOUGHT

"We all need mirrors to remind ourselves who we are. I'm no different."

— BARACK OBAMA

NOTES

LESSON 3 YOUR FAITH SHAPES YOUR CARE

BUILDING ON

This expands our Faith Story Reflection to include how our beliefs affect our care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To see how your beliefs about God and suffering affect what you say to hurting people.

OPENING QUESTION

What is one belief you hold about suffering that affects how you treat people in pain?

KEY IDEAS

- Your faith and values are part of a belief system that influences every care encounter.
- Being aware helps you care without imposing your beliefs on others.

GROUP EXERCISE · FAITH AND CARE CONNECTION

Reflect together:

- How do your values and beliefs about spiritual care shape your approach to helping others?
- Are you aware when your belief system intersects with someone else's during a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Write one sentence describing what you believe about why people suffer. Then ask a trusted friend how that belief might land on someone who is in pain right now.

FINAL THOUGHT

“Faith includes noticing the mess, the emptiness and discomfort, and letting it be there until some light returns.”

— ANNE LAMOTT

NOTES

LESSON 4 CARE FOR THE CAREGIVER

BUILDING ON

This supports sustained practice of our Circles of Quality Care through self-care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To recognize the varieties of self-care and begin using self-care practices.

OPENING QUESTION

What renews your soul when you feel depleted?

KEY IDEAS

- Self-care is essential to deeply engage the pain of others sustainably.
- Different types of self-care address different aspects of caregiving stress.

GROUP EXERCISE · SELF-CARE AWARENESS

Reflect together:

- What varieties of self-care do you currently practice, and what new practices might help you?
- When have you noticed how your level of self-care affected a care encounter?

THIS WEEK Put it into practice

Choose one form of self-care — rest, prayer, a walk, an honest conversation — and put it on your calendar this week before you take on anyone else's burden.

FINAL THOUGHT

“Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”

— MARK 6:31

NOTES

LESSON 5 ADVOCATE WITH LOVE AND JUSTICE

BUILDING ON

This expands our Ubuntu Care understanding of interconnected community

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To recognize implicit and systemic bias and its impact on spiritual care.

OPENING QUESTION

When have you seen someone overlooked or mistreated? How did you respond?

KEY IDEAS

- Personal biases affect how we see and respond to different people.
- Justice-seeking awareness means recognizing and addressing bias in spiritual care.

GROUP EXERCISE · BIAS AWARENESS BUILDING

Reflect together:

- What personal biases might you have, and how might these impact the spiritual care you provide?
- When have you noticed bias affecting a care encounter — your own or someone else's?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Notice one person being overlooked in a room you're in this week. Do one small, deliberate thing to make sure they are seen, heard, and included.

FINAL THOUGHT

“Seek justice, encourage the oppressed, defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.”

— ISAIAH 1:17

NOTES

LESSON 6 APPRECIATE DIVERSE FAITH EXPRESSIONS

BUILDING ON

This expands our Faith Story Reflection to honor different spiritual traditions

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate respect for the faith expressions of others.

OPENING QUESTION

How do others' religious practices challenge or inspire you?

KEY IDEAS

- Intercultural humility acknowledges your limited vision of others and openness to new perspectives.
- All humans share universal needs that can help us see our common humanity.

GROUP EXERCISE · FAITH DIVERSITY APPRECIATION

Reflect together:

- How can you demonstrate respect for different faith expressions while staying grounded in your own?
- When have you noticed how respect for someone's faith expression affected a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Ask someone from a different faith background what a recent practice or season meant to them. Listen only to understand — not to compare or correct.

FINAL THOUGHT

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

— JOHN 13:35

NOTES

LESSON 7 PRACTICE EMPATHIC PRESENCE

BUILDING ON

This enhances the “Felt through Empathy” element of our Circles of Quality Care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate knowledge of and initiate use of empathy in spiritual care contexts.

OPENING QUESTION

When have you just needed someone to be there, not say anything?

KEY IDEAS

- Empathy means entering their world without losing yourself.
- Presence often helps more than advice.

GROUP EXERCISE · EMPATHY PRACTICE

Reflect together:

- How can you practice caring about someone's experience from their perspective?
- When have you experienced or provided empathy that made a real difference in a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

In one conversation this week, resist offering a single piece of advice. Simply notice what the person seems to be feeling, and reflect it back to them.

FINAL THOUGHT

“Jesus wept.”

— JOHN 11:35

NOTES

LESSON 8 KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS

BUILDING ON

This supports healthy boundaries within our Circles of Quality Care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate knowledge of and initiate use of healthy relational boundaries in spiritual care contexts.

OPENING QUESTION

Have you ever tried to help someone beyond what you were equipped for?

KEY IDEAS

- Healthy boundaries protect both you and the person you're caring for.
- Knowing when to refer is part of responsible spiritual care.

GROUP EXERCISE · BOUNDARY AWARENESS

Reflect together:

- How can you maintain caring relationships while setting appropriate limits?
- When have you noticed the need for healthy boundaries in a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Name one situation you've been carrying that is beyond your role or training. Identify who you could refer it to — and take the first step toward the handoff.

FINAL THOUGHT

“What you are doing is not good... you will wear yourselves out.”

— EXODUS 18:17-18

NOTES

LESSON 9 NOTICE GROUP PATTERNS

BUILDING ON

This enhances our Ubuntu Care understanding of interconnected relationships

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate understanding of group dynamics as it relates to spiritual care encounters.

OPENING QUESTION

Think of your family or friend group — what role do you usually play? (encourager, problem-solver, quiet listener)

KEY IDEAS

- Everyone plays roles in groups, and families in crisis have established patterns.
- Understanding group dynamics helps you support rather than disrupt helpful patterns.

GROUP EXERCISE · GROUP DYNAMICS AWARENESS

Reflect together:

- How might your natural role in groups affect your caregiving approach with families?
- When have you noticed group patterns affecting a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Watch your own family or small group this week. Name the role you tend to play, and notice how that role shapes the way you try to help others.

FINAL THOUGHT

“But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.”

— 1 CORINTHIANS 12:18

NOTES

LESSON 10 RESPOND WITH SPIRIT-LED WISDOM

BUILDING ON

This guides the “Continued through Discernment” element of our Circles of Quality Care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate the ability to represent your role and function when initiating spiritual care relationships.

OPENING QUESTION

When have you felt prompted to say or do something specific in care?

KEY IDEAS

- Understanding your role helps you know what you can and cannot offer.
- Effective spiritual care relationships require both boundaries and compassion.

GROUP EXERCISE · ROLE CLARITY PRACTICE

Reflect together:

- How do you represent your role and function when offering spiritual care to others?
- When have you noticed how clear communication about your role affected a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Before your next care visit, pause and pray, “Lord, give me the words.” Afterward, write down one moment when you sensed the Spirit’s prompting.

FINAL THOUGHT

“The Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”

— LUKE 12:12

NOTES

LESSON 11 USE SPIRITUAL RESOURCES WISELY

BUILDING ON

This connects our Faith Story Reflection to practical spiritual resources

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care · Continued through Discernment

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate understanding and initiate use of spiritual resources that address spiritual wellbeing.

OPENING QUESTION

What spiritual resources — prayer, scripture, music — have been most helpful to you in difficult times?

KEY IDEAS

- Spiritual resources should match the person's faith tradition and current needs.
- Effective use requires understanding both the resource and the person receiving care.

GROUP EXERCISE · SPIRITUAL RESOURCE AWARENESS

Reflect together:

- How do you discern which spiritual resources might be helpful for someone receiving care?
- When have you seen spiritual resources used effectively — or ineffectively — in a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Ask someone you care for which spiritual resource — a psalm, a hymn, a prayer — has carried them before. Offer to return to it together the next time you meet.

FINAL THOUGHT

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.”

— 2 TIMOTHY 3:16

NOTES

LESSON 12 DISCERN THE REAL NEED

BUILDING ON

This deepens the “Informed by Listening” element of our Circles of Quality Care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Circles of Quality Care

OBJECTIVE To understand that people often have deeper spiritual needs beyond what they directly express.

OPENING QUESTION

What are people really asking for when they share their pain?

KEY IDEAS

- Spiritual assessment goes deeper than taking a spiritual history — it discerns underlying needs.
- People often don't directly state their deepest spiritual needs.

GROUP EXERCISE · ASSESSMENT VS. HISTORY

Reflect together:

- How can you discern someone's deeper spiritual needs beyond what they directly tell you?
- When have you noticed a difference between what someone said they needed and what they really needed?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

In one conversation, listen past the first request. Gently ask, “Is there something underneath this that you'd want me to know?” and wait for the answer.

FINAL THOUGHT

“What do you want me to do for you?”

— MARK 10:51

NOTES

LESSON 13 RECORD YOUR CARE

BUILDING ON

This supports responsible practice within our Circles of Quality Care

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Quality Care Notes

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate understanding of the role of documentation in the provision of spiritual care.

OPENING QUESTION

Why might it be helpful to keep notes about your caregiving encounters?

KEY IDEAS

- Documentation helps you remember important details and track patterns over time.
- Appropriate record-keeping supports better care while protecting privacy.

GROUP EXERCISE · DOCUMENTATION AWARENESS

Reflect together:

- What kind of information might be helpful to document about your care encounters?
- When might documentation be important for providing better care to someone over time?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

After your next care conversation, fill out one Quality Care Notes sheet. Notice what you remember more clearly simply because you wrote it down.

FINAL THOUGHT

“The faintest ink is better than the best memory.”

— CHINESE PROVERB

NOTES

LESSON 14 REFLECT ON YOUR OWN GROWTH

BUILDING ON

This integrates our Faith Story Reflection practice with caregiving growth

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate awareness and initiate use of the clinical method of learning (action–reflection–new action).

OPENING QUESTION

What's one thing you've learned about yourself through caregiving?

KEY IDEAS

- Growth happens through the cycle of action, reflection, and new action.
- Regular reflection on your caregiving experiences deepens your learning.

GROUP EXERCISE · ACTION-REFLECTION PRACTICE

Reflect together:

- How can you use the pattern of action–reflection–new action to grow as a caregiver?
- When have you noticed how reflection on a care encounter helped you improve your approach?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Recall one recent care encounter. Write down one thing you would do the same way again, and one thing you would do differently next time.

FINAL THOUGHT

“We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience.”

— JOHN DEWEY

NOTES

LESSON 15 BUILD TRUST THROUGH INTEGRITY

BUILDING ON

This strengthens the foundation needed for meaningful Faith Story Reflection sharing

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate through behavior the attributes of integrity and honesty in spiritual care practice.

OPENING QUESTION

What helps someone trust you enough to share their heart?

KEY IDEAS

- Trust is built through consistency, confidentiality, and authentic presence.
- Integrity means aligning your actions with your stated values in caregiving.

GROUP EXERCISE · TRUST BUILDING PRACTICE

Reflect together:

- How do you demonstrate personal responsibility and appropriate boundaries in spiritual care?
- When have you noticed how integrity — or the lack of it — affected a care encounter?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Keep one small promise this week exactly as you made it — a call, a visit, a prayer. Notice how a kept word changes the trust in a relationship.

FINAL THOUGHT

“The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity.”

— DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

NOTES

LESSON 16 SHARE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

BUILDING ON

This applies Faith Story Reflection principles to peer learning and mutual encouragement

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate knowledge of the role of consultation in the learning process of spiritual care.

OPENING QUESTION

What is one lesson from caregiving that you think others need to hear?

KEY IDEAS

- Consultation and feedback are essential for continued growth in spiritual care.
- Learning happens through engagement with others, not just individual reflection.

GROUP EXERCISE · PEER LEARNING PRACTICE

Reflect together:

- How can you engage feedback and consultation to improve your spiritual care?
- When have you learned something important about caregiving from someone else's experience?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Tell one fellow caregiver about a lesson you've learned the hard way. Then ask what they've learned that you haven't — and really listen.

FINAL THOUGHT

“Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens another.”

— PROVERBS 27:17

NOTES

LESSON 17 COMMUNICATE WITH CARE AND CLARITY

BUILDING ON

This connects our Faith Story Reflection sharing principles to all caregiving conversations

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To recognize that spiritual care works best as part of a broader care team.

OPENING QUESTION

How do you coordinate with others when you're all trying to care for the same person?

KEY IDEAS

- Spiritual care is most effective when coordinated with other forms of care.
- Clear communication helps integrate spiritual care with the broader care team.

GROUP EXERCISE · TEAM COMMUNICATION PRACTICE

Reflect together:

- How can you engage with others who are also providing care to the same person?
- When have you seen good — or poor — communication affect a team care situation?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

The next time more than one person is caring for someone you love, send a brief, gracious note to coordinate. Lead with, “How can I support what you’re already doing?”

FINAL THOUGHT

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

— HELEN KELLER

NOTES

LESSON 18 TRUST THE ONGOING WORK OF GOD

BUILDING ON

This encourages lifelong learning within our Ubuntu Care framework

TOOL TO INTEGRATE

Faith Story Reflection

OBJECTIVE To demonstrate awareness of how continued learning is relevant to spiritual care.

OPENING QUESTION

Where have you seen God at work in someone's healing, even when you didn't see immediate change?

KEY IDEAS

- Lifelong learning includes staying open to new insights about effective spiritual care.
- We plant and water, but God gives the increase in people's lives.

GROUP EXERCISE · LEARNING AND TRUST

Reflect together:

- How can you stay committed to learning while trusting God with the outcomes of your care?
- When have you seen God continue working in someone's life beyond your direct involvement?

THIS WEEK

Put it into practice

Name one person whose healing you long to see but cannot control. Release them to God in prayer this week — and keep showing up faithfully anyway.

FINAL THOUGHT

“So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who makes things grow.”

— 1 CORINTHIANS 3:7

NOTES



*Give your best care, every time, to every soul – and
leave the rest in the hands of the One who heals.*

I AM BECAUSE WE ARE

Antioch Baptist Church · Omaha, Nebraska



APPENDIX

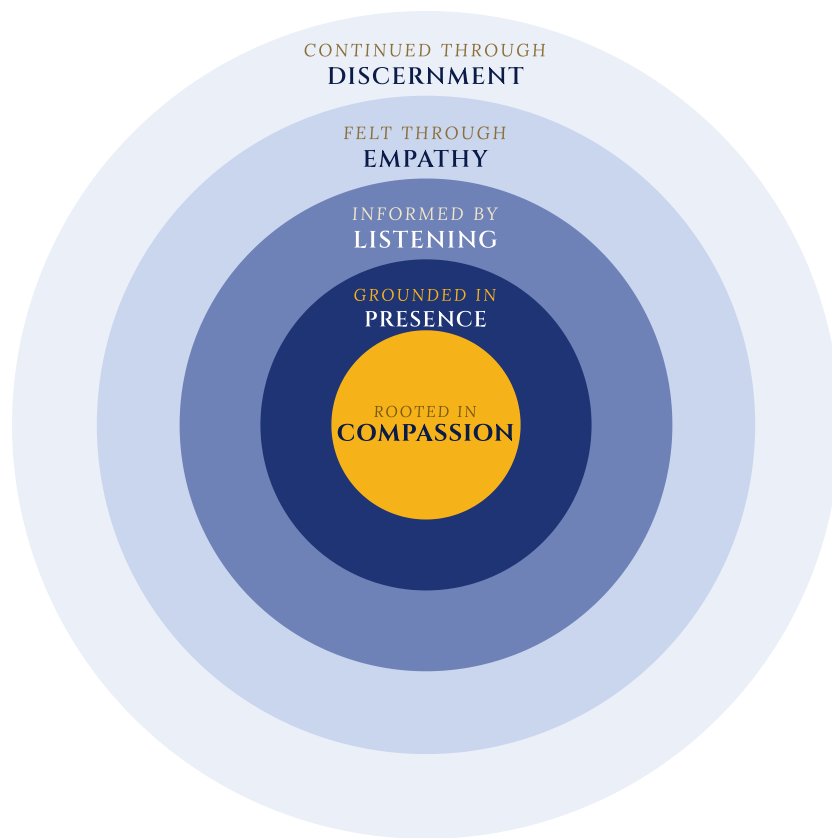
THE TOOLS

Ready-to-use, printable versions of our three core care tools.
Reproduce these pages freely for caregivers to carry, complete, and
keep.

A · THE CIRCLES • B · FAITH STORY • C · CARE NOTES

APPENDIX A THE CIRCLES OF QUALITY CARE

The complete tool. Care begins at the center – compassion – and deepens outward. Not steps to complete, but deepening postures that build on one another.



THE FIVE CIRCLES IN PRACTICE

ROOTED IN COMPASSION

Being moved to action to lessen the suffering of others.

- Let love be your reason for showing up.
- Let your actions reveal the heart of God.

GROUNDED IN PRESENCE

Being fully aware of the moment and free from distractions.

- Quiet your mind and stay in the moment.
- Let your undivided attention speak louder than your words.

INFORMED BY LISTENING

Paying full attention to what others are saying.

- Listen without judgment, fixing, or interrupting.
- Seek to understand their story, not just their words.

FELT THROUGH EMPATHY

Experiencing the other person's feelings with them and expressing it back to them.

- Let your heart be moved by what they feel and stay with them in it.
- Reflect their feelings back in a way that helps them feel seen and heard.

CONTINUED THROUGH DISCERNMENT

Responding to their need for spiritual or practical care.

- Discern what is truly needed — by listening, observing, or asking.
- Respond with care, at the right time and in the right way.

HOLD THIS LIGHTLY

The Circles are not a set of steps to complete — they are deepening postures of care that build on each other. As you care for others, allow God to shape your heart, expand your love, and lead you to serve with humility and grace.

THE RHYTHM — THREE MOVEMENTS

STIRRING IN COMPASSION

Compassion awakens us to the suffering of others.

BEING WITH PRESENCE · LISTENING · EMPATHY

Presence, listening, and empathy keep us grounded in love.

CONTINUING THROUGH DISCERNMENT

Discernment becomes our faithful response to what love requires.

KEY INSIGHTS ON THE RHYTHM

STIRRING IN · COMPASSION

- Constantly nurture your own relationship with God.
- Let love be your motivation, not obligation or duty.
- Ask God to open your heart to what they're experiencing.
- Notice moments when someone's pain intersects with yours.

BEING WITH · PRESENCE → LISTENING → EMPATHY

- May require multiple cycles — don't rush to “doing for” too quickly.
- It's about them, not you — resist making it about your story.
- Your presence is often more powerful than your words.
- People need to feel heard before they can receive help.

CONTINUING THROUGH · DISCERNMENT

- Discern what is truly needed — by listening, observing, or asking.
- Service becomes our faithful response to what love requires.
- Respond with care, at the right time and in the right way.
- Sometimes the most faithful response is the care that's already been given.

CARE, NOT CURE

You give care; God gives cure. In every encounter, ask: am I trying to fix this, or care well? Stay in the Circles. Trust God with the rest.

APPENDIX B Faith Story Reflection · Worksheet

A WORD BEFORE YOU BEGIN

THE PATHWAY TO CLARITY

Significant life events — a diagnosis, a loss, a conflict, unexpected joy, a turning point — have a way of surfacing the questions we've been avoiding: *What does this mean? What is God doing? What am I supposed to do now?*

Here's what I've learned: honest and guided reflection is the pathway to clarity. When we take time to examine what we're experiencing, what we're feeling, and what God might be doing, we create the conditions to experience His presence more fully in our circumstances. Without that space, we rush through our pain, our confusion, and even our joy — and might miss what God intended for us to receive in it. This tool provides a framework for that kind of intentional reflection.

Three areas. Specific questions. A structured pathway that ensures you don't skip over something God wants to take you through. Don't rush it — the process is the point.

This experience is not a substitute for sharing with other trusted individuals. Rather, it creates sacred space for honest reflection between you and God first — so that when you return to your caregiver relationship, you bring what you've discovered rather than what you've been carrying alone.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Take your time. Some sections will feel more relevant than others — that's okay. You don't have to complete it in one sitting; return to it as often as you need. You'll know you're on the right track not when you have all the answers, but when you begin to see your situation in light of your relationship with God.

NAME

DATE BEGUN

APPENDIX B Faith Story Reflection · Worksheet

01

 AREA ONE

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

Name the situation honestly — the circumstances, your inner experience, and how you've been responding.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES

What specific situation(s) am I facing right now?

MY INNER EXPERIENCE

What are my honest thoughts and feelings about this situation? If it helps, consider the Emotion Word Reference at the end of this tool.

MY RESPONSE

How have I been responding to this situation so far? What have my actions and choices revealed about what I believe or value?

APPENDIX B Faith Story Reflection · Worksheet

02

 AREA TWO

WHAT AM I LEARNING?

Listen for what God is revealing — about His character, about yourself, and about others.

ABOUT GOD

What am I learning about God's character through this situation? Consider His love, patience, faithfulness, power, provision, justice, and mercy.

ABOUT MYSELF

What is God revealing to me about my own thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, and patterns? Where do I see growth? Where do I see resistance?

ABOUT OTHERS

What am I learning about the people involved in this situation? How might their perspective or experience be different from mine?

APPENDIX B Faith Story Reflection · Worksheet

03

 AREA THREE

HOW SHOULD I BE RESPONDING?

Discern your next steps — confession, forgiveness, moving forward, and honoring God.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Is there anything I need to confess — to God, to myself, or to another person? Is there anyone I need to forgive? What might that look like?

MOVING FORWARD

What might it look like to love God, myself, and others well in this situation going forward? What small step could I take this week that reflects this love?

GLORIFYING GOD

Is there anything else I can do or change that would honor God and reflect His character in this situation?

APPENDIX B Faith Story Reflection · Worksheet

A VOCABULARY FOR THE HEART

EMOTION WORD REFERENCE

Sometimes the hardest part is naming what we feel. Find the core emotion closest to your experience, then look for the more specific word beneath it. Naming a feeling is the first step to bringing it honestly to God.

SAD

Grieving · Lonely · Heartbroken · Discouraged ·
Empty · Disappointed · Numb

AFRAID

Anxious · Worried · Overwhelmed · Insecure ·
Helpless · Uncertain · Tense

ANGRY

Frustrated · Resentful · Betrayed · Bitter ·
Irritated · Defensive · Wronged

ASHAMED

Guilty · Embarrassed · Regretful · Unworthy ·
Exposed · Inadequate

PEACEFUL

Calm · Content · Grateful · Reassured · Trusting
· Settled · Rested

HOPEFUL

Encouraged · Expectant · Joyful · Loved ·
Strengthened · Renewed

You may feel several of these at once — even ones that seem to contradict each other. That's normal. Bring all of it honestly to God.

APPENDIX C QUALITY CARE NOTES — SESSION RECORD

ONE CONVERSATION PER SHEET

KEEP CONFIDENTIAL

A simple record that helps you stay faithful across sessions. The notes sections follow the outer Circles of Quality Care — Listening, Empathy, and Discernment. Treat everything here as confidential.

NAME (CARE RECEIVER)

CAREGIVER

DATE OF CARE CONVERSATION

SESSION #

WHAT PROMPTED THE CONVERSATION?

Who initiated the conversation? What was the stated reason?

LISTENING · THEIR STORY

CIRCLE · INFORMED BY

What are they sharing? What am I understanding — the story beneath the words?

EMPATHY · WHAT THEY'RE FEELING

CIRCLE · FELT THROUGH

What are they feeling? How did I express their feelings back to them?

APPENDIX C Quality Care Notes · Session Record

CONTINUING THROUGH DISCERNMENT

CIRCLE · CONTINUED THROUGH

What is their immediate need — spiritual or practical? How did I respond?

FOLLOW-UP & NEXT STEPS

DID WE AGREE ON ANOTHER SESSION?

☐ Yes — Date: _____ ☐ No ☐ Not yet — follow up by: _____

WAS THE FAITH STORY REFLECTION TOOL OFFERED?

☐ Yes — assigned as homework ☐ Yes — used in session ☐ No

OTHER HOMEWORK OR ASSIGNMENT GIVEN

MY NEXT STEP BEFORE WE MEET AGAIN

Prayer focus, resource, or person to consult.

PASTORAL REFERRAL NEEDED?

☐ Yes — Reason: _____ ☐ No

CONFIDENTIAL

These notes hold someone's trust. Store them securely, share them only as care requires, and handle every word as you would want your own story handled.