



How to ...

Get support when you need it.

Much has been written about *life long learning; discipleship; maturing Christian Faith; deepening trust in God* and so on yet we all seem to falter, get stuck or even go in the wrong direction from time to time. Those called to specific or licensed ministries will engage in training for their roles but this does not render them immune to problems. When things are not going well where can we turn to for help when we have exhausted our usual support methods: prayer; reading and close friends or colleagues?

One answer is to turn to those trained to help: counsellors, mentors, coaches, consultants, mediators, spiritual directors and so on. But how do we know what we need and who can we trust? This is not made easier by the fact that there is little agreement about how each is defined and in practice that one often overlaps with another.

In the Diocese of Bristol we would like to bring some clarity by offering our own definitions and assisting when we can to put you in touch with someone who will help you decide how you can best find help or at the very least help Clergy and all lay people to take responsibility for themselves. Please refer to the following:

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is the practice of being with people as they attempt to deepen their relationship with God, or to learn and grow in their own personal spirituality. The person seeking direction shares stories of his or her encounters with God, or how he or she is experiencing spiritual issues with a skilled Spiritual Director.

The Diocese of Bristol does not offer Spiritual Direction directly but recommends you contact Revd Lizzie Kesteven: lizzie.kesteven@live.co.uk or Revd Minty Hull: aramintahull@mac.com for more informationⁱ

Counselling

Counselling has more of an emphasis on damage and distress (such as bereavement or long-standing psychological issues). The emotional distress stops a person being able to function as well as they would want to. A skilled counsellor will help a person talk about the issues involved with the aim of moving towards normal functioning.

The Diocese of Bristol does not offer Counselling itself, but can recommend you to counsellors depending on your particular need. Clergy wanting to discuss this further should make contact with the Advisor for Ministerial Support.ⁱⁱ or the Assistant Advisor, and should a need for professional counselling be identified, a referral can be made.

Mentoring

Mentoring is about supporting a person in leadership over a period of time. A skilled Mentor often has a particular expertise and experience in a related field and seeks to empower and motivate a person in a way which enables them to perform to the best of their ability.

The Diocese of Bristol is in contact with a number of trained mentors who are able to offer their services to Clergy and LLMs. For more information, contact the Ministry Development Team.

Coaching

Coaching is similar to mentoring but tends to focus on how a person can better handle an issue or challenge in the workplace or parish. A skilled Coach will facilitate a process to help unlock a person's potential and aim to enhance the performance of the individual. A Coach does not need to be an expert in a particular field.

The Diocese of Bristol has a number of people who have been trained either locally or by '3DCoaching'ⁱⁱⁱ who are able to offer their services to Clergy, LLMs and parishes. For more information, contact the Ministry Development Team.

Work Consultancy

Work Consultancy is a specialist field of support and development offered by those who have been trained in this field. It will often (but not necessarily) be associated with a particular need raised by a member of clergy. Its focus is always about the person in their role. Examples of such needs might include: Leadership skills; Strategic planning; Management and organisation; Personal time management; Problem solving; Change management.

Although these areas could be covered by courses, clergy may wish for personal work consultancy to help them through a particular issue (or combination of issues), perhaps when encountering the issues in a particular setting. Our Consultants are made up of both lay and ordained colleagues and professionals who will work with an individual on a time-limited basis and up to six sessions are funded by the diocese. In the first instance clergy should contact Ian Tomkins or Derek Chedzey.

Vocational Discernment

In the Anglican Church Vocational Discernment is the process through which a person is helped to find out whether he or she is being called by God to a licensed ministry. Information about the process in the Bristol Diocese can be found in the 'How to..' guide or by contacting the Ministry Development Team.

Mediating

Mediation is an effective way of resolving disputes which have gone beyond the point where the two sides can do it themselves. A skilled Mediator, an independent third party, will help both sides come to an agreement. Mediation is a flexible process that can be used to settle disputes in a whole range of situations.

The Diocese of Bristol has a number of people who have been trained by 'Bridge Builders'^{iv} and are able to offer their services to Clergy, LLMs and parishes. For more information, contact the Ministry Development Team.

Written by George Rendell.

Further Information

ⁱ See <http://www.bristol.anglican.org/ministry-resources/spiritual-direction/>

ⁱⁱ Contact Ian Tompkins.

ⁱⁱⁱ See 3dcoaching <http://www.3dcoaching.com/developing-skills/conversations>

^{iv} See Bridge Builders <http://www.bbministries.org.uk/>