

How to Help People in Need: Practical Training for Christian Caregivers and Counsellors

How can we help others deal with problems in their everyday lives? As the Church reaches out to unbelievers and sees them come to the Lord, how can we see them become mature in Christ? What can we do to ease the burdens of fellow believers? The purpose of this seminar is to better understand the problems that people deal with and to acquire right knowledge and practical skills based on the example of Jesus Christ to be able to accompany them in their difficult situations. Lay leaders, pastors, and disciple-makers will learn effective steps and develop the skills of active listening, empathy, confrontation, and problem-solving that are necessary in caregiving ministry to truly help people in need.

Alina Wieja founded Life and Mission Ministry Poland (www.misja.org.pl) in 1990 along with her husband Henryk. The organization serves to encourage, inspire, and equip Christians to live a life that makes a difference. In 1995 Alina started the Institute for Christian Counseling and Leadership Training, which trains Christian counselors, caregivers, and lay leaders in bringing effective help to people struggling with psycho-somatic and spiritual issues. She also serves as Editor in Chief of the family magazine *Inspiracje* and the European Trustee of Media Associates International. She has written several books including *Women Coming Back to the Creator*, *Embraced by God*, *Overcoming Discouragement*, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, *To Be a Wise Mother*, and five *Training Manuals for People Helpers*. Having served in many areas of ministry, Alina has a great passion for investing in the next generation of leaders.

I. Why we need Christian Care Giving Ministry?

A. What is the Purpose of the Christian Care Giving Ministry?

1. Understanding the needs and problems that people deal with, in their everyday life.
2. Spiritual discerning and practical ability to put into practice the knowledge and God's wisdom, communicating the truth and grace in love.
3. The attributes of Christian caregiver/counsellor:
 - a. Only Jesus has the power to give a new life to a person.
 - b. Jesus is the One who brings lasting change in a person's life.
 - c. The Holy Spirit brings awareness of sin together with hope for good change.
 - d. God answers prayers and gives wisdom.

B. The Jesus model of helping those in need

C. Biblical examples of care giving ministry and counselling

D. The right attitude of Christian caregiver/counselor

1. Transformed mind and humble heart
2. Knowledge and skills
3. Time, presence, and patience

E. Major characteristics of the person looking for help

1. Feelings
2. Facts and problems
3. Values and attitudes
4. Past, present, and future

F. The main goals of Christian Caregiving Ministry in someone's life:

1. Transformation of mind and heart, new ways of life
2. Taking the responsibility for own choices and actions
3. Right expressions of feelings, such as fear, anxiety, anger, etc.
4. Making the good choices and behavior
5. Helping to recognize sin, entering forgiveness and reconciliation
6. Supporting the spiritual growth

II. Personal Calling and Wisdom of the Caregiver/Counselor:

A. The right use of a prayer and scriptures

- B. Caring for our own needs
- C. Keeping the healthy boundaries
- D. Growing up in the love of Jesus

III. Stages in Care Giving Process

A. Stage I – Knowing the person and problems

1. The right perception of the person looking for help
2. Body language of a caregiver – practical suggestions
3. Active listening – the basics in communication
4. Active listening – understanding the unspoken message
5. Asking the right questions
6. Basic Empathy – general principles
7. Advanced Empathy
8. Evaluation of the First Stage – practical suggestions

B. Stage II - Ability to confront in truth and grace

1. The biblical meaning of confrontation
2. Power of truth
3. Expressing grace with love and hope

C. Stage III – Searching for the ways to good changes

1. Choosing the best solution to set the goals
2. An action plan
3. Checking on actions taken, with encouragement
4. Feedback, with motivation
5. Evaluation of the results, with hope

D. Case study

IV. Practical Elements to consider for a Caregiver/Counsellor

- A. Confidentiality
- B. Discretion
- C. Keeping records in care giving practice
- D. Prayer
- E. Supervision

Suggested Readings:

- Cloud Henry, *Changes that Heal* (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, 1992).
Collins Gary R: *Can you Trust Counseling?* (IACC,1995).
Collins Gary R: *How to be a People Helper?* (Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, 1995).
Collins Gary R: *The Biblical Basis of Christian Counseling for People Helpers* (NavPress,1993).
Egan Gerard: *Exercises in Helping Skills* (Brooks/Cole Publishing Company. 1990).
Egan Gerard: *The Skilled Helper* (Brooks /Cole Publishing Company,1990).