



Healing Hearts • Restoring Relationships • Liberating Lives

Wellspring E-Newsletter Pastor Survey Results

Our periodic newsletter, 'Springing Forth, contains complimentary professional articles on counseling topics aimed to assist pastors in their pastoral counseling role. The November '08 and February '09 editions asked readers to complete an online Pastor Survey to assess the counseling issues they most need help with. They were asked to judge two criteria for each issue: *The Frequency* with which the problem is seen in their counseling office and their *Need for Help* dealing with that issue.

We are appreciative of those pastors who took the time to complete our Pastor Survey, as this will help us determine the information they most desire and need. Below is a summary of the results submitted by survey respondents.

The top five issues with which pastors say they Need Help:

- 1) Eating Disorders
- 2) Addictions
- 3) Conflict
- 4) Sexuality
- 5) Anxiety/Depression

These were followed closely by *Abuse, Marriage, Crisis Intervention, Divorce and Parenting*.

The top five issues which pastors say they See Most Frequently:

- 1) Conflict
- 2) Anxiety/Depression
- 3) Marriage
- 4) Parenting
- 5) Addictions

These were followed by *Divorce, Sexuality, Abuse, Crisis Intervention and Eating Disorders*.

To summarize the survey results:

Eating Disorders, #1 on the "Need Help" list, is seen infrequently by pastors, but they need help when they are: "If I do (see eating disorders), I will immediately refer them for professional help."



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***Conflict*, #1 on the "Seen Most Frequently" list, is significant in that it also made the Top Five of the "Need Help" list. One pastor said that it is "Probably the most common reason for appointments."**

***Addictions*, also listed in the Top 5 of both lists, is another example where pastors find the need to refer: "Folk with long term addictions need more supervision than I can give."**

***Anxiety/Depression* was also included in the Top Five of both lists. Pastors expressed such concerns: "(Individuals) in this category often need closer supervision than I can regularly supply."**

The *Pornography* issue appeared in both the *Sexuality* and *Marriage* category: "Pornography has been the pervasive issue." Also, "(Marital issues) of late have been communication and pornography."

While the majority of pastors feel generally confident in their *Marriage* counseling abilities, they feel that they need help when it comes to the areas of *Pornography* and *Abuse*: "Communication I can assist; sexual addiction is a different matter." Regarding *Abuse*, "My biggest problem is that I can't provide the ongoing accountability that these people need."

***Marriage* appeared as #3 on the "Seen Most Frequently List." Pastor comments include: "Marriage issues have been my number one issue. In the last three years, (my) church of 100 members has seen four couples go through divorce. An additional three have talked to me about their difficulties." Another pastor commented, "Most of the marriage issues I have counseled have been successful. However, I know my limitations and have referred people to professionals when needed." Another said, "I would guess that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the time I can help them sufficiently. For the other $\frac{1}{4}$ I refer them to professional Christian counselors."**

Wellspring will be publishing articles addressing these issues in forthcoming issues of our E-Newsletter, 'Springing Forth. They will also be posted to our Website's "Helpful Articles" page (www.wellspringstl.org).