



# LINE MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

FOR PEOPLE WHO MANAGE CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES MINISTERS

BY ALI CAMPBELL



NEW CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTERS OF 2020  
**30K**





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## **ABOUT ALI CAMPBELL**

Ali is married to the lovely Lisa and has two amazing teenage daughters. He has been involved in youth and children's ministry for 39 years - serving in local parish, diocesan and nationally.

In 2011 Ali completed his Masters in Applied Theology and Reflective Practice with CYM / Oxford Brookes.

Ali runs The Resource through which he offers consultancy for churches, training, support and mentoring for children's and youth ministers.

In 2022 Ali founded Paraklesis - The Association of Children's, Youth and Family Ministers.





# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this resource is to support effective line management for Children, Young People and Families (CYPF) ministers. We know that ministry with children and young people brings its own unique challenges, and these can sometimes be difficult to communicate within a line management framework.

Ali Campbell has put together a range of principles, tools, and quick resources that can be used by CYPF ministers and their line managers to foster effective working partnerships.

Effective line management is essential in any ministry setting. Good line management ensures that team members—whether staff or volunteers—feel supported, valued, and clear about their roles. It helps create a safe, nurturing environment where ministry can flourish and individuals can thrive.

Whether you are new to line management or have years of experience, this resource offers fresh tips, principles, and direction on best practice. The line management toolkit is a practical guide to help manage CYPF ministry with care and confidence. It provides a scaffold to support CYPF ministers in offering clear communication, pastoral oversight, accountability, and development opportunities for those they lead—ultimately strengthening the impact of their ministry.



# GETTING STARTED

This toolkit focuses on the essential tools a line manager needs to support and lead employed staff well. It is designed to sit alongside the [curriculum guide](#) for line management training. While it is not intended to be an exhaustive collection of resources—any effective toolkit will require regular review and updating—it provides key elements for embedding healthy working practices within the line management relationship.

The toolkit primarily includes templates and example documents that can be adapted to different contexts, such as:

- Line Management Meeting Template – Page 7
- Employed Ministry Staff Timesheet Outline – Page 10
- Coaching Structure Outlines (based on GROW and CLEAR) - Pages 11-13
- Reflective Practice Tools – Pages 14-23
- Annual Review Template – Pages 24-25

We invite you to try applying these principles and adapting the templates to suit your own context.



When using these resources, it may be helpful to remember the acronym ACE:  
**Accountability, Communication, Expectations.**  
Consider what these words mean within the line management relationship—we will explore this further on page 8.

**A- Accountability**  
**C- Communication**  
**E- Expectations**

When challenges arise in a workplace, or a working relationship begins to break down, the issue is almost always rooted in one or more of these three areas. By “making it ACE,” you increase the likelihood of creating an environment where employed CYPF ministers can truly flourish.



# LINE MANAGEMENT: ONE TO ONES

Effective line management is especially important in the context of Children, Youth, and Families (CYPF) ministry. CYPF roles are often wide-ranging, emotionally demanding, and shaped by the rhythms of family life, schools, and community engagement.

For clergy and other senior leaders who may not have worked in these ministry areas themselves, providing good line management means creating the space, structure, and support that enables CYPF ministers to thrive in their work. We recommend scheduling regular line management sessions with CYPF ministers.

Line management in this context is not simply about oversight or task allocation. It involves developing a healthy, collaborative relationship in which the employed CYPF minister is supported, encouraged, and held appropriately accountable. It requires understanding the unique pressures of CYPF ministry and ensuring that expectations, workloads, and priorities are realistic and well-communicated.

“ —

There are a few important principles to keep in mind:

*'Management is about arranging and telling, leadership is about nurturing and encouraging.'* Tom Peters

*'Coaching others is a form of servant leadership - because you are shifting from a mindset of me to you.'* Ken Blanchard

— ”



Part of line management is recognising that tasks need to be completed, which naturally involves some arranging and directing. But this should never be done at the expense of nurturing and encouraging the person you are managing.

It is also essential to remember that **you are not the one doing the work**—you are supporting someone else as they carry out their ministry. The focus of a line management meeting should not be “What do I need them to do for me?” but rather, “What does their ministry look like from their perspective?”

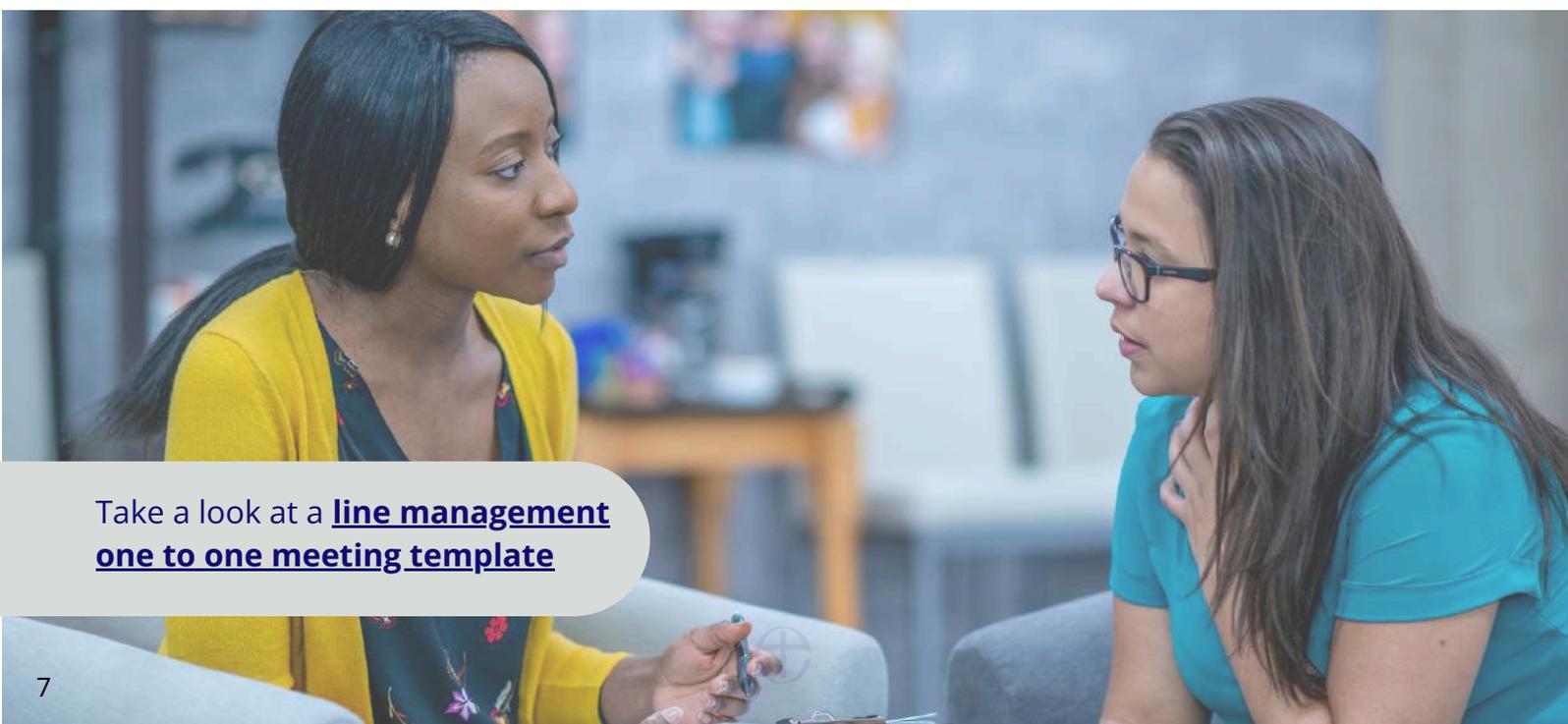
This means being aware of the demands on their time, the limits of that time, and recognising that their working patterns may differ significantly from your own. It is important to remember that safeguarding should be a rolling agenda on all line management sessions.

## taking the time to observe

Good line management also requires some visibility of their work. It is difficult to support someone well if you never see them in action. It is worth considering if you have attended the Friday night youth club, or visited the youth cell, or observed the midweek children’s group?

Ministry roles are demanding, and there are always time pressures, but a line manager being physically present at key moments can be hugely beneficial. Informal observation provides invaluable insight. It helps you understand your employee’s strengths and spot the challenges they may be navigating as they serve.

Being present at strategic moments can also impact upon CYPF ministers perception of the value of their work within the wider ministry setting.



Take a look at a [line management one to one meeting template](#)

# Remember to make it ACE

These three foundations create the conditions in which CYPF ministers—and their ministries—can flourish.



**ACCOUNTABILITY :** in the context of CYPF ministry, this is about creating a consistent, reliable framework in which the employee is supported, guided, and held responsible for their agreed work—while the line manager is equally accountable for providing time, attention, and oversight. It is a mutual commitment to showing up, communicating clearly, and taking shared responsibility for the ministry's wellbeing.

**Do it!** Put the dates in the diary for a term and, barring a legitimate emergency, stick to those times. This honours the time of the employee and sets the tone for regular engagement with their ministry activity and how they are performing their duties. Accountability works both ways—a shared commitment not to move the meeting or let it slide because something else has come up.



**COMMUNICATION:** in the context of CYPF ministry, this is about creating an open, predictable, and respectful flow of information between the line manager and the employee. It ensures that both parties are prepared, heard, and able to engage thoughtfully with the work, rather than reacting under pressure. Good communication builds trust & helps prevent misunderstandings before they arise.

**Plan it!** Agree an agenda in advance of the meeting. This should include what you would like to discuss and what the employee would like to bring. It is sometimes helpful to use a shared template that keeps you both on track and gives space for preparation. Sending items ahead of time allows each of you to reflect on what needs to be discussed—rather than responding on the spot. You could experiment with setting agendas electronically for example through a shared google drive.



**EXPECTATIONS:** in the context of CYPF ministry, this is about establishing shared clarity around priorities, responsibilities, and what can realistically be achieved within the time and resources available. Clear expectations help prevent frustration, reduce ambiguity, and create a stable environment in which both the line manager and the employee know what they are working towards.

**Clarify them!** Have realistic expectations about what you can achieve in a one-hour meeting (the recommended length). It is helpful to include regular “check-in” items as well as space for anything new that needs attention. Sometimes topics arise that require more time—don't rush these. Pay attention to what is needed and schedule a specific follow-up to address the issue properly. Avoid adding last-minute items; stick to the agreed agenda to ensure both parties remain focused and prepared.



# TIME SHEETS

## What are they?

Timesheets are a simple way to record how an employee spends their working hours. In the context of CYPF ministry, timesheets help both the CYPF minister and the line manager gain a realistic picture of how time is distributed across planning, delivery, administration, pastoral work, and other responsibilities. They are not about micromanagement; rather, they support wellbeing, workload awareness, and good stewardship of time. Timesheets can highlight unrealistic expectations, reveal hidden pressures, and help celebrate what is being achieved.

## Why use Timesheets?

It is helpful to track how time is spent because it is easy to overlook how long preparation in CYPF setup can actually take. For example, a children's minister using a shared church space for a toddler group must take time to get all the equipment out—and then put it all away again afterwards. Timesheets help make this invisible work visible

## Planning time

When planning time, the non-negotiable items should go in first. These are the fixed activities that form the core of the role, such as time off, Sunday Junior Church, midweek children's groups, or Friday night youth sessions. Apart from school holidays—when the weekly pattern may change—these elements are usually consistent. Depending on the scope of the activities, a CYPF minister may have anything from 2 hours of “face-to-face” time with children or young people to 12 hours, once preparation, setup, planning, team communication, and contact with families are factored in.





Take a look at a [time sheet template](#)

### In the timesheet example, you will see several helpful categories:

- **Non-Negotiable:** The essential deliverables in the job description, such as midweek kids' clubs, assemblies, Junior Church, staff meetings, and line-management time.
- **Prep Time:** This includes prayer and preparation for activities such as writing a teaching slot, planning an assembly, and completing the detailed tasks required before a session can run.
- **Set Up:** Distinct from preparation, this is the practical work of getting the space ready: setting up equipment, arranging or removing chairs, or adapting a shared venue.
- **Available:** Built-in flexibility for the relational side of ministry. This might include meeting a team member for coffee, making phone calls, or writing cards to young people preparing for exams.

Other regular commitments may also need to be included, such as staff meetings (if multiple employees or volunteers share responsibilities) and attendance at Sunday services—even when the employee does not have a specific role. If the organisation expects them to be there, then it counts as work.

A key principle to remember is this: **if it is expected, it is work.** If an employee chooses to join a home group, the worship team, or another ministry activity in their own time, that should be their decision—not an assumed expectation of the role.



# COACHING STRUCTURES WITHIN LINE MANAGEMENT

Within line management sessions, we recommend using a coaching structure. There are many examples to choose from, but the simple GROW or CLEAR models are good for strengthening the ACE principles- (Accountability, Communication and Expectations-page 8.)

A coaching structure provides a clear, intentional way of supporting personal growth, developing skills, and progressing ministry goals. In a CYPF line-management context, coaching helps create space for reflective conversation, problem-solving, and planning. It enables the employee to think through their work with clarity while the line manager acts as a guide rather than simply a supervisor.

## Using the GROW model in Line Management

GROW is traditionally a coaching model, a helpful tool for line-management meetings, especially when setting goals or evaluating progress. GROW stands for:

- G**oals
- R**eality
- O**ptions
- W**ill

**Goals:** Define what you are aiming for. This could be as small as “What is the purpose of today’s meeting?” or as broad as “What should we work toward over the next three years?” A simple SWOT analysis can help reveal whether these goals are realistic.

**Reality:** Pause and consider where things currently stand. Do you have the team, the space, the finances, and the time needed to achieve these goals? Explore this thoroughly before moving on.

**Options:** Consider the possible ways to achieve the goal. Some options may allow you to start moving forward even if you can’t yet do everything you would like. This stage encourages creativity and flexibility.

**Will:** This is where ideas become actions. What will we actually do? Agree clear actions and follow through.



Take a look at the [GROW infographic](#)



## Extending GROW to GROWTH

Two additional letters are sometimes added: **T**actics and **H**abits.

**Tactics:** These are the practical steps that help ensure the actions get done. Example: If you want to be up at 7am for a run, a tactic might be placing your alarm across the room or arranging to meet someone to run with.

**Habits:** These are the repeated practices that make the goal sustainable. Example: Running once won't make much difference; but running three times a week creates a lasting pattern.

## Worked Example: Using GROW in CYPF Ministry

**Scenario:** The CYPF minister wants to strengthen the midweek youth group, which has good attendance but low engagement.

### **G — Goals (What are we aiming for?)**

Line manager and CYPF minister agree the goal to “Increase engagement within the midweek youth group over the next term by developing a discipleship pathway for young people.

### **R — Reality (Where are we now?)**

Together they explore the current situation. (The group is lively but easily distracted, sessions currently lack a consistent structure, volunteers are enthusiastic but unsure of their roles.) This stage helps identify what is—and isn't—working.

### **O — Options (What could we do?)**

They brainstorm possible strategies. (Introduce a simple, repeatable session structure, create a termly plan so prep can be done in advance, rearrange room setup for better flow.) They acknowledge that not everything can be done immediately, so they prioritise.

### **W — Will (What will we actually do?)**

They agree the following actions for the next four weeks. (CYPF minister drafts a simple weekly session structure by Friday. Volunteers receive a 30-minute briefing before next week's session. Line manager helps secure a small budget for equipment and resources. CYPF minister creates a term plan before the start of next half-term. CYPF minister and line manager review progress at the next meeting.)

## COACHING STRUCTURE: CLEAR

The CLEAR template is helpful, especially at the start of the relationship between line manager and the CYPF minister. It might be a helpful structure to use for the first term of meetings when someone is newly employed on a role.



### **C is for Contract.**

This means agreeing the terms between you - how often will we meet, where and for how long, agree the particulars of how the sessions are going to work (is each person taking their own notes, is it going to be minuted etc).



### **L is for Listen.**

This can sometimes get overlooked if the line manager is wanting to just make sure tasks are being carried out and the employee understand their role, alternatively, the employee might be keen to talk about certain aspects of the job and not be paying attention to what is being asked. Time within the meeting to listen to each other builds an understanding and, as trust grows, the meeting should become a safe place to discuss fears or concerns about the job and receive support and understanding.



### **E is for Explore.**

A chance to go a little bit deeper - whether that is to explore how a particular group or activity is working or look in more depth at something like the values or approach to family ministry in general.



### **A is for Action.**

Having explored an area or a project or specific piece of work, what are the actions that need to be agreed (this is why regular line management is so important, actions need follow up and monitoring).



### **R is for Review.**

This is where you might review the actions agreed at the previous meeting.



### **Finding What Works**

Whether you use GROW, CLEAR, or a combination of both, the key is to choose a process that works for you and—just as importantly—for your CYPF minister. When everyone feels comfortable with the structure, line management becomes far more effective. It creates an environment where staff feel seen and heard, understand what is required of them, and have the tools and support they need to fulfil the responsibilities of their role.



## REFLECTIVE TOOLS: AN INTRODUCTION

Reflective tools can support effective CYPF line management. They **create space** for both the line manager and the children's, youth, or families minister to pause, think, and evaluate what is happening in their ministry. Because CYPF work is often fast-paced, relational, and emotionally demanding, intentional reflection helps identify strengths, recognise pressure points, and highlight areas for growth or adjustment.

These tools are flexible and can be used in a variety of ways. They can be applied individually, used interchangeably depending on the situation, introduced as a one-off exercise, or embedded consistently as part of your regular line-management rhythm. The aim is not to provide a rigid system but to offer a range of approaches that encourage **honest reflection** and **constructive dialogue**.

Reflective tools also **foster creativity**. By stepping back to consider patterns, assumptions, and challenges, they help generate fresh ideas and open new ways of thinking about the ministry environment. This kind of reflective practice often leads to innovative solutions and renewed clarity about ministry needs.

When used well, reflective tools strengthen the ACE principles—Accountability, Communication, and Expectations—and create an environment where insight, creativity, and development can flourish. They help both parties **celebrate progress**, and **navigate challenges**.

Here are a few of the well-loved, tried and tested, reflective practice exercises that I have used consistently in my own CYPF ministry.

**Have a go for yourself....**

- What? So what? Now what? - Pg 15
- Traffic lights- Pg 15
- Mrs Gren- Pg 16
- Three trees- Pg 17
- Set the BAR- Pg 18-22
- Three Chairs- Pg 23



## WHAT? SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

These are a simple series of reflective questions that are helpful if, within a line management meeting, a situation is discussed that is concerning. This is not a safeguarding issue but simply a challenge in ministry or something that needs to be thought about and explored in a bit of detail.

### What?

What has happened? What is the situation? Can you describe what took place (the time, the context, who was involved, the fall out / outcome).

### So What?

Has the situation happened before? What happened last time? What is important to notice? Is this something that we can do something about? How do you feel about the situation?

### Now What?

What could we do differently next time? Is there anything that can be changed? Can we influence things?



## TRAFFIC LIGHTS

[See the infographic here](#)

This is a simple tool for leaders, either for personal reflection on priorities - or if you are leading a team, very helpful to see where your team are with vision and the future as well as delivering on what matters. This works well within a line management meeting, if the meeting is structured around 'time and priorities.'

**GREEN for GO.** Sometimes there are things we should be doing we just haven't made happen yet - these can be anything from a project on the back burner to personal discipline (e.g. pray more!) Write down one or two things that should just be happening, or things that can be improved with very little outlay - essentially, green for go represents those things you can and should just be getting on with.

**AMBER for DREAM.** Amber represents what you would like to do, but maybe not yet. Waiting for the right time or permission, or a team to be put in place. Good to name these things though. It might also be personal, for example, "where do you see yourself as a leader in 3 years time?"

**RED for STOP.** For some of the GO things and indeed for some of the DREAM things, some stuff you are already invested in will need to stop. Honest reflection might also highlight those things that just aren't working or have run their course and should stop.



# MRS GREN

This tool is based on the old acronym Mrs Gren, which is still used to teach about the 'marks of life' for living things. I then couple that with John 10:10 - Jesus came that we might have life in all its fullness. Do we experience that 'life' in and through our ministry? The point of these questions is to prompt reflection and they can help someone address areas where they recognise they might have become a bit stagnant or not thriving as they would like to.

**M**

## **Movement**

Are you static, or can you (and do you) move your position? Can you give an example where you have changed your mind?

**R**

## **Respiration**

Where do you get your energy from? What sustains you? What is your 'oxygen'?

**S**

## **Sensitivity**

As a leader you need to detect changes in your surroundings, can you adapt accordingly? Do you notice / are you aware of what is happening?

**G**

## **Growth**

Are you a learner? Are you teachable? Are you continuing to grow and invest in the development of yourself and others?

**R**

## **Reproduction**

Are you producing fruit? Are you seeing others develop and grow with / because of your investment?

**E**

## **Excretion**

Are you keeping short accounts with others? How do you deal with your own failure and mess?

**N**

## **Nutrition**

Where do you get fed intellectually, spiritually? Where do you go for your own soul nourishment?

See the MRS GREN [infographic here](#)



# THREE TREES

**I have developed this tool using the fable of the three trees. Taking each tree in turn and what they wanted to be.**

## **Treasure**

What do you treasure in life and ministry? Then, taking it further in to practice - what do your children, young people & families treasure?

*'Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.' Matthew 6: 21*

## **Strength**

Where do you get your strength from? Then, taking it further in to practice - where do your children, young people & families draw their strength from?

*'In quietness and trust is your strength.' Isaiah 30:15*

## **Light**

What lights your way? Then, taking it further in to practice - what lights the way for the children, young people & families in your care?

*'You are the light of the world.' Matthew 5: 14-16*

Each of the above can be explored in more detail, but essentially, the questions are to prompt self reflection - and part of our care of staff is to encourage regular reflection on what really matters to us.

Do we treasure God, do we treasure what He has given us to do? Do we draw our strength from Him or solely rely on our gifting and skills? Do we light the way and point to Jesus, or make it all about us?

[Here is an outline of the story.](#)

[Here are some reflective questions.](#)



## SET THE BAR



### Introduction

**This section is addressed specifically for CYPF ministers.** It's also an invitation to line managers and supervisors to help create the kind of culture where this heart work is encouraged, protected and supported.

Every so often, it's vital to pause and take a spiritual and wellbeing "pulse check." Ministry has a way of sweeping us along—full of people who need us, tasks that call to us, and expectations that form around us almost unnoticed. But if we never stop to notice how we're really doing, we gradually run on empty without realising it.

This kind of check-in isn't about guilt or performance; it's about being honest before God, paying attention to the movements of our hearts, and becoming more self-aware in our discipleship journey. For CYPF ministers, this matters deeply: we can only invite young people to grow in Christ if we ourselves are growing, noticing, and allowing the Holy Spirit to shape us.

This exercise—setting the BAR—is simply an invitation to reflect on the areas that quietly shape everything we do.

See the BAR [infographic here](#)





## **B** = BALANCE

Balance covers a whole host of things. I've worked in ministries where the expectation was that you keep going until you see a bright light... then collapse for a bit... then recover just enough to keep going again. I've also worked 37 hours a week with actual time off in lieu if I worked evenings or weekends. I know—miraculous!

Balance looks different for everyone, but the truth is simple: we give our best to young people when we're not utterly shattered by the time youth group rolls around. Simple... but not easy. Balancing work and life is hard when your life is your work. Yet getting this right makes a world of difference. We often urge young people to "be the difference," but do they see us being different? Are we modelling healthy patterns in time, energy, social media habits, rest, friendships, even grocery shopping? This takes discipline.

One suggestion: if you haven't bought *The Beautiful Disciplines* by Martin Saunders—get it. Not for your young people (though you may use it with them), but for yourself. Investing in spiritual disciplines invests in your spiritual health—and your young people reap the benefit too.

Think of gymnasts learning the balance beam: they're taught not to stare at their feet but to look ahead. Balance isn't just surviving the moment; it's keeping our eyes fixed on where we're going. Peter walking on water comes to mind. Let's keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, let's gain our sense of balance from the author and perfecter of our faith.



# A = ATTITUDE

This could be an article all by itself. Think about that one young person with attitude. Got them in mind? Good. Now rewind: how was your attitude at 15? Mine was terrible—I was an “angry young man,” convinced I knew best (I didn’t), always needing the last word (which I was usually wrong about).

**As adults, attitude can quietly shape our ministry in unhealthy ways. When my attitude drifts, I tend to slip into three things—each with an antidote in Philippians 2.**

**Comparison:** This leads to jealousy, insecurity, fear—emotions that will dominate our choices if we let them. The antidote? Christ’s attitude: “who made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant.” Our benchmark isn’t other ministries; it’s Jesus.

**Competition:** I grew up with this: “We need to do what the church up the road is doing!” You earned spiritual stripes by doing more, giving more, being more. Today it’s fuelled by social media—Have I posted enough? Do people know I’m actually doing anything? Numbers saved? Followers? Notable selfies? What are we grasping for? Jesus “did not consider equality with God something to be grasped.” If He wasn’t grasping, why are we?

**Complaining:** Ah. Here’s mine. The longer I’ve been in youth ministry, the more I feel I have to complain about. Ministry is tough. Everyone has expectations—PCC, the vicar, congregation, young people, parents, volunteers, spouse, children... ARGH! One negative thing can colour an entire evening. If we let circumstances shape our attitude, we become cynical. And attitude leaks. Young people, leaders, family—they all see it.

We need, once again, to come back to Christ’s example. After Paul’s beautiful, poetic description of Jesus in Philippians 2, he reaches a crucial “therefore.” In other words: if we take on the attitude of Christ, then our lives will begin to change. And right there in verse 14 he names one expression of that Christlike attitude: “doing everything without grumbling or arguing.”

In ministry, we often have a choice. We can tightly “hold onto” the things that upset us, worry us, frustrate us, or feel unjust—and let a complaining spirit take root. Or we can “hold onto” the Word of Life (verse 15). What’s beautiful here is that the phrase Paul uses can also mean “hold out.” So Paul is painting this double movement: hold onto the Word and hold it out to others. If we’re not truly holding onto the Word of Life, we’ll have nothing life-giving to hold out. And if we’re not holding it out, we probably haven’t grasped what it means to hold onto it in the first place.

So ask yourself: what are you gripping? What are you refusing to let go of? Release it. Hand that complaining spirit to Jesus. Ask Him to restore joy—real, deep joy—in your life and in your ministry.





## **R** = RELATIONSHIPS

I once heard a youth worker boast that he knew his youth group better than his own children. I was stunned. Is that what ministry means—sacrificing our closest relationships for the sake of serving others? Absolutely not.

If every relationship becomes merely a tool for ministry, we've lost something profoundly human. If ministry consumes all our time so that friends and family get only leftovers (or a "see you in six months"), then our bar is all wrong.

Relationships aren't props for ministry. They're part of living a whole, healthy life. I now have children—they are not "youth work projects." They are my kids. I grew up seeing men in ministry who were always out serving others, while home and family were neglected. We cannot teach young people the value of relationships if we refuse to invest in our own.

Jesus cultivated friendship with such intentionality. He invested time in His disciples simply for the sake of being in relationship—think of His post-resurrection breakfast on the beach, not a teaching session, not a strategy moment, just friendship. Jesus also built others up wherever He went. He made people feel seen, valued, and heard—even those He may never meet again, like the bleeding woman.

And Jesus wasn't afraid to be vulnerable with His closest friends. In Gethsemane, facing the darkest moment of His life, He asked them to watch and pray with Him. Perhaps He simply needed to know they were with Him—that they had His back.

**So what about us? Do we bluff our way through relationships, keeping everything surface-level? Or can we be honest, real, and even broken when we need to lean on someone? Who can you lean on?**





If we have relationships beyond our ministry contexts—and we're investing in them—then we also need to ask: who are we lifting up? Who are we encouraging, nurturing, making time for? And do we even leave space in our lives for this?

**If you're running on relational fumes, stop now, go and deal with it. Take some time out. Phone a friend. Go for a coffee, simply to be human, present, and connected.**

## **Conclusion**

The best thing you have to offer young people is a healthy you. If we want our youth ministry to last—and to bear fruit—we must pursue life in all its fullness ourselves.

So ask yourself:

- **How healthy is your balance?**
- **How healthy is your attitude?**
- **How healthy are your relationships?**



# THREE CHAIRS



See the Three Chairs [infographic here](#)

The “three chairs” is a simple but powerful tool that helps ministers reflect on their past, present, and future. To use it, place three chairs in a row or imagine three distinct spaces. Each chair represents a different moment in time. As you move between them, give yourself permission to fully inhabit that perspective—past, present, or future—without judgement or rushing.

## How to use the three chairs with a specific event:

### 1. Sit in the past chair.

Picture yourself stepping back into the moment you’re reflecting on.

Give yourself permission to remember honestly.

What happened? What took place?

What were you feeling, assuming, fearing, or hoping at the time? Who else was involved?

Don’t analyse—simply recall.

### 2. Move to the present chair.

Return to who you are today.

Allow yourself to acknowledge what’s true for you now.

How do you feel about that event in this moment?

What impact is it still having on you, your ministry, your relationships?

What consequences remain?

Notice without attaching blame.

### 3. Finally, sit in the future chair.

Give yourself permission to imagine freely.

Does what happened have to define what comes next?

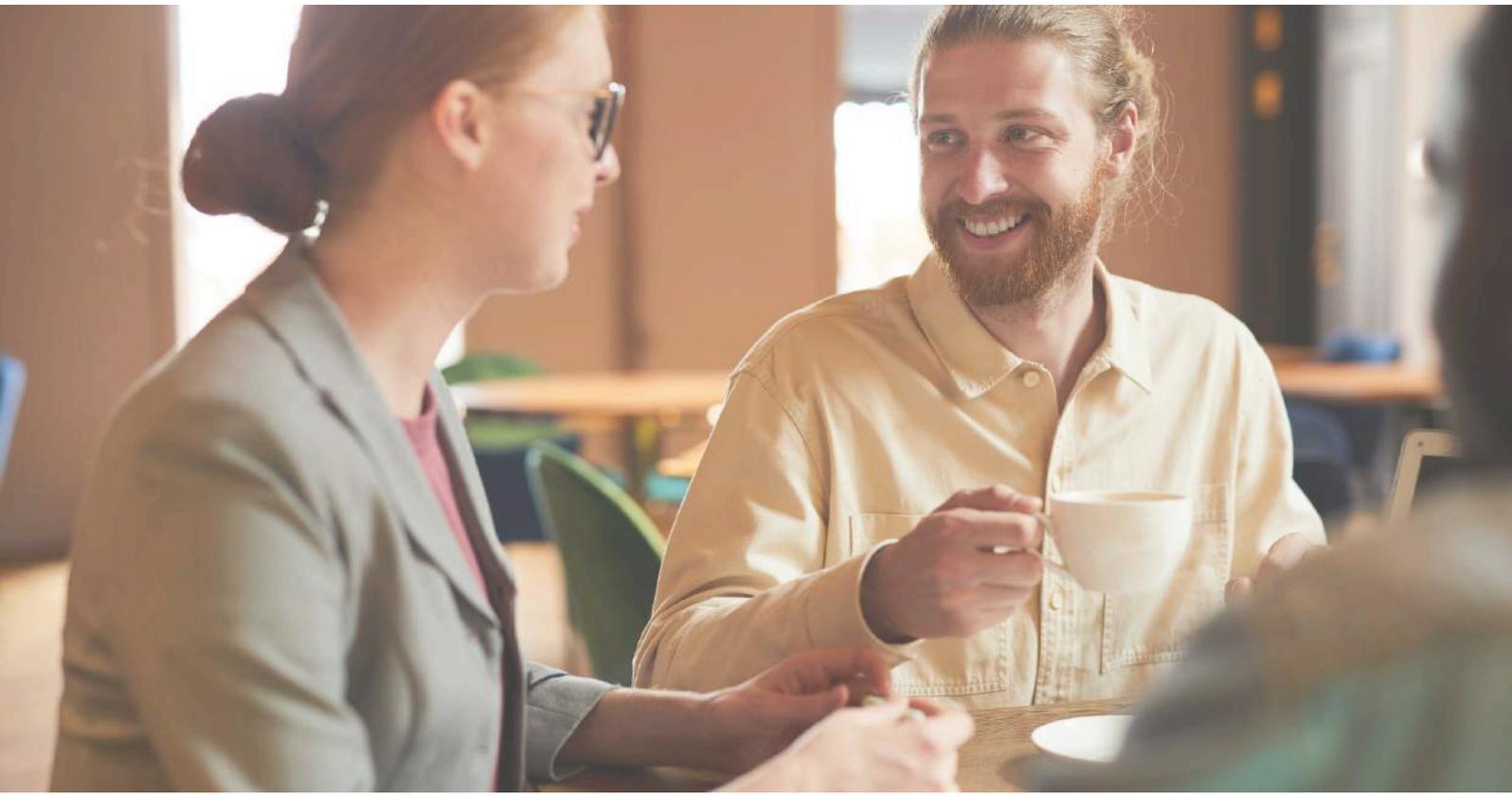
What could the future look like if healing, wisdom, or courage shaped it instead?

What choices or steps might lead toward a different, healthier outcome?

Let hope speak loudly here.

This exercise can also help you reflect on your wider life story, not just a single event. Sit in the past chair and ask: *What has brought me to this point? What experiences, seasons, or people have significantly shaped who I am?* Move to the present chair: *What has God entrusted to me right now? What strengths, wounds, or passions do I carry into my current role?* Then sit in the future chair: *Where do I sense God leading me? What might the next five years hold? What kind of minister—and person—am I becoming?*

The three chairs offer a gentle, embodied way to reflect, make meaning, and invite God into the unfolding story of your life and ministry. It draws upon Heidegger’s concept of ‘Beings in Time.’ Additional materials that support this exercise can be found in Jon Ord’s book, *Youth Work: Process, Product and Practice*, and Alasdair MacIntyres book, *After Virtue*.



# ANNUAL REVIEW TEMPLATE

## Introduction

The annual review is designed to provide structured reflection on the past year’s work, identifying achievements, challenges, and development needs. It offers a framework for open and constructive conversation between the CYPF minister and their line manager, ensuring clarity of expectations, accountability, and ongoing support. The purpose is to evaluate progress, plan, and ensure that both the individual and the ministry are flourishing.

To make the review effective, set aside 60–90 minutes. This allows enough time for meaningful conversation without feeling rushed. If complex issues emerge, a follow-up meeting can be arranged.

Choose a space that promotes openness and focus—ideally a neutral, quiet, and private room where interruptions are unlikely. Avoid meeting in public spaces or busy offices. A comfortable and confidential environment helps ensure a healthier, more honest conversation. Both the minister and line manager should prepare in advance. Here are some basic principles and a template you may want to use.

Take a look at this [Annual Review template](#)



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Make it ACE (should be self explanatory by now!)

## 1. Plan for it

There should be plenty of notice before the annual review so the employee / line manager have time to prepare.

## 2. Celebrate the milestones

This is so important, rather than rush in to what comes next, take time to celebrate and notice what has worked, pay attention to what has gone well over the past year.

## 3. For the coming year determine (together) some clear objectives

Ideally no more than three. Do these already feature in their job description? Does the job description need a re-work to reflect these?

## 4. Notice potential obstacles

What could inhibit this happening? How could you agree together ways of mitigating those challenges?

## 5. Come up with an action plan and ask these questions :

- Is training required? CPD should feature annually within the review, whether that is fresh training required to up-skill the worker or the point at which you agree conferences / retreats for the coming year.
- Is there a budget for this\*?
- What will be the pay increment? Pay should be reviewed annually, and take into account longevity in post, experience, qualifications and the requirements of the role. Additional considerations might be the cost of living.

\* Budget and equipment should be split as follows :

- budget for ministry (i.e. resources for groups, subscriptions to curriculum, activities etc)
- allowance for expenses (travel, books for study, conferences etc)
- tools for work (laptop, printer, phone).





## MORE RESOURCES

If you have found this toolkit helpful, make sure you take a look at the other resources available for people who manage Children's, Youth and Families Ministers:

- Recruiting Well
- The Good Practise Charter
- The Curriculum
- Vital Life: A Wellbeing Workbook

All available at: [churchofengland.org/hrguidance](https://www.churchofengland.org/hrguidance)



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### SOMETHING MISSING?

We will keep track of the advice in this document and will update as appropriate. We are working with the Church of England National Safeguarding Team to check everything we suggest is appropriate and up to date.

If something vital is missing please let us know by emailing [the30kproject@churchofengland.org](mailto:the30kproject@churchofengland.org)