**Sample Prep Rest/Sample Renewal Sheet**

**Blank Prep Sheet**

**Sabbatical Guidelines Established**

**Establish Primary Players**

1. SEED Team Sabbatical Director
2. Supervisor
3. Sabbatical Advisor
4. Sabbatical Support Team
5. You

SABBATICAL

ADVISOR

SUPERVISOR

PLAN

DEVELOPMENT

SABBATICAL

JOURNEY

INITIAL

DISCUSSION

YOU

SABBATICAL

SUPPORT

TEAM

SEED

SABBATICAL

DIRECTOR

Initial Discussion – Discussion with staff person, supervisor and the SEED Sabbatical Director to determine the timing of the Sabbatical. This is also where the discussion begins and plan is developed to secure the Sabbatical Advisor.

Plan Development – Supervisor and Sabbatical Advisor help to identify the direction and focus of the sabbatical.

Sabbatical Journey – the staff person and Sabbatical Advisor interact with the Support Team for feedback and community during the journey.

**Selection of Sabbatical Advisor**

This is a collaborative effort between the supervisor, staff person and SEED Committee Sabbatical Director. Where possible, a sabbatical advisor is selected from someone who:

* Has completed a sabbatical
* Lives in the same geographic region
* Understands the critical role of a sabbatical advisor.
* Is willing to take the initiative and commit the time necessary to serve.

The role of the sabbatical advisor is to shepherd the staff through the sabbatical process.

**Sabbatical Care Interview**

When the sabbatical is confirmed, the Sabbatical Care Interview should be set up with a pastoral care specialist. Just as one takes an annual physical to check the body, the beginning of sabbatical is a great time for a spiritual and emotional checkup. The pastoral care specialist meets with the staff person and, where applicable, with the spouse. The interview takes 2-4 hours per person. Before the sabbatical care interview, the staff (and spouse) complete and turn in inventories as follows:

* Role fit inventory
* Burnout Inventory
* Personal & Marital Survey

All inventories and surveys are kept confidential, and seen only by the pastoral care specialist. The interview will result in suggested “priority needs” (typically 2-4) and a list of possible resources to help meet the needs. The staff person is presented with a copy of these suggestions.. The staff person and sabbatical advisor then take the suggestions and create action steps that are incorporated into the sabbatical plan.

**Sabbatical Support Group**

Anyone taking a sabbatical is in danger of experiencing lack of community, loss of perspective, and a sense of isolation. While we all need times alone, we live and minister in community. To meet this need for community, everyone on sabbatical is encouraged to establish a sabbatical support group.

Ideally, this group consists of 3-5 couples for married staff or 3-5 people for singles (both YFC and non-YFC where possible) who have a good relationship with the staff person. This group meets with you (and your spouse) each month to help process your journey in a safe environment. The staff person facilitates the meetings, sharing first their current progress and then asking for input. (When possible, the sabbatical advisor will participate in the group.) Ideally, people in the sabbatical support group should meet the following criteria:

* Have the staff person’s best interest at heart
* Willing to speak the truth
* People who the staff person is willing to be transparent and vulnerable. (Transparent = open and honest about yourself. Vulnerable = invite others to speak into your life.)
* Willing to meet monthly for the duration of the sabbatical.

**Marriage Intimacy Retreat**

People in ministry often become so involved in giving to others that their personal lives are neglected. They focus on the biblical principle found in Matthew 10:8, *Freely you have received, freely give,* but may not experience another principle from Galatians 6:6 – *Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with him who teaches.*

*An intimacy retreat is designed to help couples better understand and meet each other’s emotional intimacy needs, is a time of personal renewal and encouragement exclusively for ministry couples. It’s a time to freely receive and to be reminded that the Great Commandment to love others begins at home. (YFC pays for the cost of the retreat; transportation is the staff person’s responsibility.)*

* *Ideas for Intimacy Retreat options include:*

**Example of Sabbatical Orientation Workshop**

To help staff make the most of their sabbatical a 3 & 1/2 day workshop is conducted for those starting a sabbatical. The workshop might include:

* Listening Prayer – the simple but profound process of hearing from God
* Healing Prayer – allowing God to heal our wounds and speak truth into lies we’ve learned to believe about life.
* Establishing a Sabbatical Support Group: how to benefit from this lifeline of friends who will help keep you on track.
* Developing a Sabbatical Plan: those who report a positive sabbatical also report having begun with an accurate assessment of priority needs and a realistic sabbatical plan.
* Learning God’s Lessons from Life’s Experiences: through instruction, group dynamics, time alone, and sharing with a group facilitator, you crystalize life experiences into life lessons that will instruct and motivate you in life and ministry. (More time is devoted to this in Phase 3 of the sabbatical.)
* Personal Contribution Assessment Process: discovering the importance of understanding, developing and employing your God-given design and desires.
* Soul Care: practical suggestions for nurturing your soul.

**A Word to Spouses**

“When do I get my sabbatical?” is a sentiment often expressed by spouses of staff on sabbatical. This is especially true for a wife whose main ministry is mothering and maintaining a household. Her work continues and may even increase when her husband is at home. Her opportunity to rest, reflect & refocus is often limited.

When putting together the sabbatical plan, a sabbatical advisor should acknowledge the spouse’s workload, encourage the husband and wife to examine parental and household responsibilities, and consider how the load can be lifted or shared during this sabbatical so both can participate as much as possible.

**Spiritual Transformation**

Spiritual transformation is a major focus during the sabbatical. Experiencing inner freedom and more Christ-like character occurs as we allow the Holy Spirit, the Word, and others to speak to our inner person.

*Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost parts.* (Ps 51:6)

*The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out.* (Proverbs 18:15)

*Spiritual growth does not occur by changing our behavior, but by changing what we believe*. Dallas Willard

As we come to understand what we believe about God, the world, ourselves, and others, and as we allow Jesus to touch those beliefs, we become more transformed into the image of God and experience more of the freedom of the Gospel.

The Reflection Phase is a good time to look at issues like lack of brokenness, false identity, unresolved sin and woundedness, addictions, hiddenness, shame fear, guilt, pride, anger, etc. Dealing with these below-the-line issues in our lives helps us move from living from the heart of flesh to living from the heart Jesus gave us.

**Personal Contribution Assessment**

*Make careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don’t be impressed with yourself. Don’t compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your life.* Galatians 6:4-5 (The Message)

* Assessment Part 1 – Discovering Your Design
  + Question – How has God designed me?
  + Topics
    - What are my preferences?
    - What are my personal values?
    - What are my spiritual gifts?
    - What are my primary roles?
  + Desired Results = A Personal Design Profile
* Assessment Part 2 – Defining Your Contribution
  + Question – How has God directed me?
  + Topics
    - What are my circles of concern?
    - Ministry Focus Assessment
    - Life Lessons
    - Personal Mission Statement
  + Desired Results = Personal Contribution Summary
* Assessment Part 3 – Developing Your Capacity:
  + Interpersonal Relationships
  + Vocational Fit
  + Team Building
  + Personal Growth
  + Avoiding Common Pitfalls

**Sabbatical Expense Guidelines**

General Principle: Only ministry-related expenses will be allowed during a sabbatical. Some sabbatical expenses (meals, recreation, etc.) are personal expenses. For tax purposes, a sabbatical is a leave of absence with pay and is a self-defined benefit in and of itself.

*General Guidelines*

1. You may raise extra ministry funds to meet additional ministry expenses expected during your sabbatical.
2. Expenses for rest, relaxation, and recreation are considered personal and not ministry.
3. Going someplace local alone is a personal expense ( a movie, local coffee shop for prayer/reading/reflection).
4. Expenses when you or your spouse travel overnight for a prayer/reflection retreat are ministry expenses.
5. Expenses for meals alone are allowed only when you are away from home overnight on ministry business. (Meal-Travel).
6. When reporting sabbatical ministry expenses, fill in the Ministry Purpose with the “why” of the expense (spiritual/prayer retreat, met with sabbatical support group, professional development, etc.). Include comments on how this relates to your sabbatical (part of approved sabbatical plan, approved by \_\_\_\_\_\_, went by myself, also spent 2 nights doing \_\_\_\_, etc.)

*Examples of Reimbursable Sabbatical Ministry Expenses*

1. Counseling for ministry-related issues
2. Overnight prayer retreats
3. Professional development books/seminars/courses
4. Sabbatical support group meetings
5. Sabbatical Orientation Workshop
6. Marriage Retreat
7. Meeting with Sabbatical Advisor

**Helpful Tips and Lessons Learned**

1. If you have school-aged children, consider taking a sabbatical during the school year rather than summer
2. It’s okay to sleep more
3. This is not a sabbatical from life. Expect to spend time on family responsibilities, expense reports, updating your supervisor, etc.
4. Expect to feel stress as you transition into the rest phase – change is stressful.

**Sabbatical Phases (Explained on page 1)**

* Release & Relinquish
* Rest & Recovery
* Reflect & Refocus
* Realignment and/or Reassignment
* Re-entry & Re-engagement

**Sabbatical Debriefing Questions**

* Personal Questions
  + How are you feeling about your ministry assignment?
  + What major lessons did you learn and how do you anticipate these lessons making a difference in your future?
  + How would you rate your sabbatical from 1-10? (1 is low, 10 is high)
  + How has God spoken to you during your sabbatical?
  + Do you have any emotional healing or relational healing issues you want to work on? What’s your next step?
* Process Questions
  + What activities were most helpful during each phase of your sabbatical?
  + What activities were least helpful during each phase?
  + What would you do differently?
  + Would you consider being a sabbatical advisor to another staff?
  + Do you have ideas, suggestions, or comments to help us improve the sabbatical process?

**Benefits to YFC and Staff**

1. Healthy Staff
2. Empowering emerging YFC leaders to “fill the gap” raising their level of leadership while others rest, recover, and regain a new vision for mission.
3. Promotes longevity in professional ministry versus a “sprint, crisis, recover” culture.
4. Avoids burning out
5. Spiritual Growth: passion, wisdom, humility, and understanding.
6. Vocational gifts developed and enhanced.
7. Family’s health and commitment to mission enhanced or restored.
8. Witness to the community of the love and trust YFC has for its leadership.