

WHAT DOES CLERGY WELLNESS LOOK LIKE?



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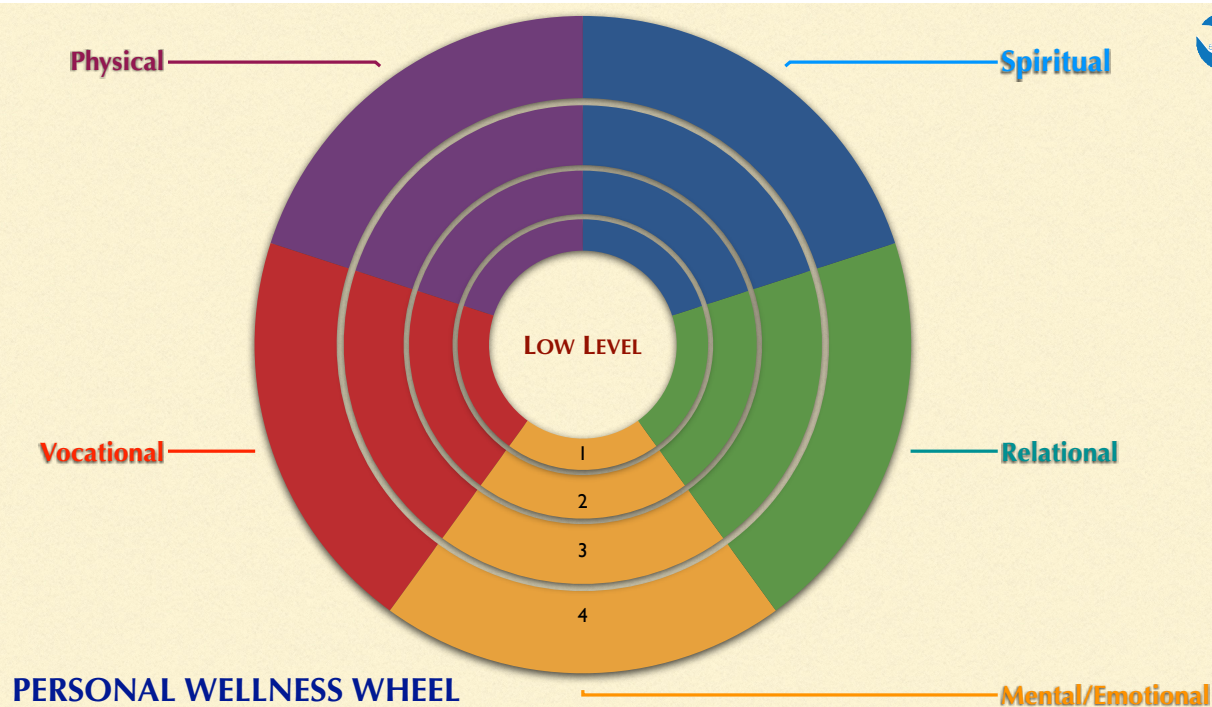


- It's a difficult issue to address because **health** is the *congruence of multiple facets that unique for each person.*
 - There's no such thing as **perfect health**; there's only *increasing health that gravitates toward or away from optimal levels.*
 - Our personalities, skills, training, biogenetic makeup, and experiences *will always both inhibit and nurture health.*
 - We can be **intentional** about becoming healthier, but it requires *striving for balance rather than perfection.*
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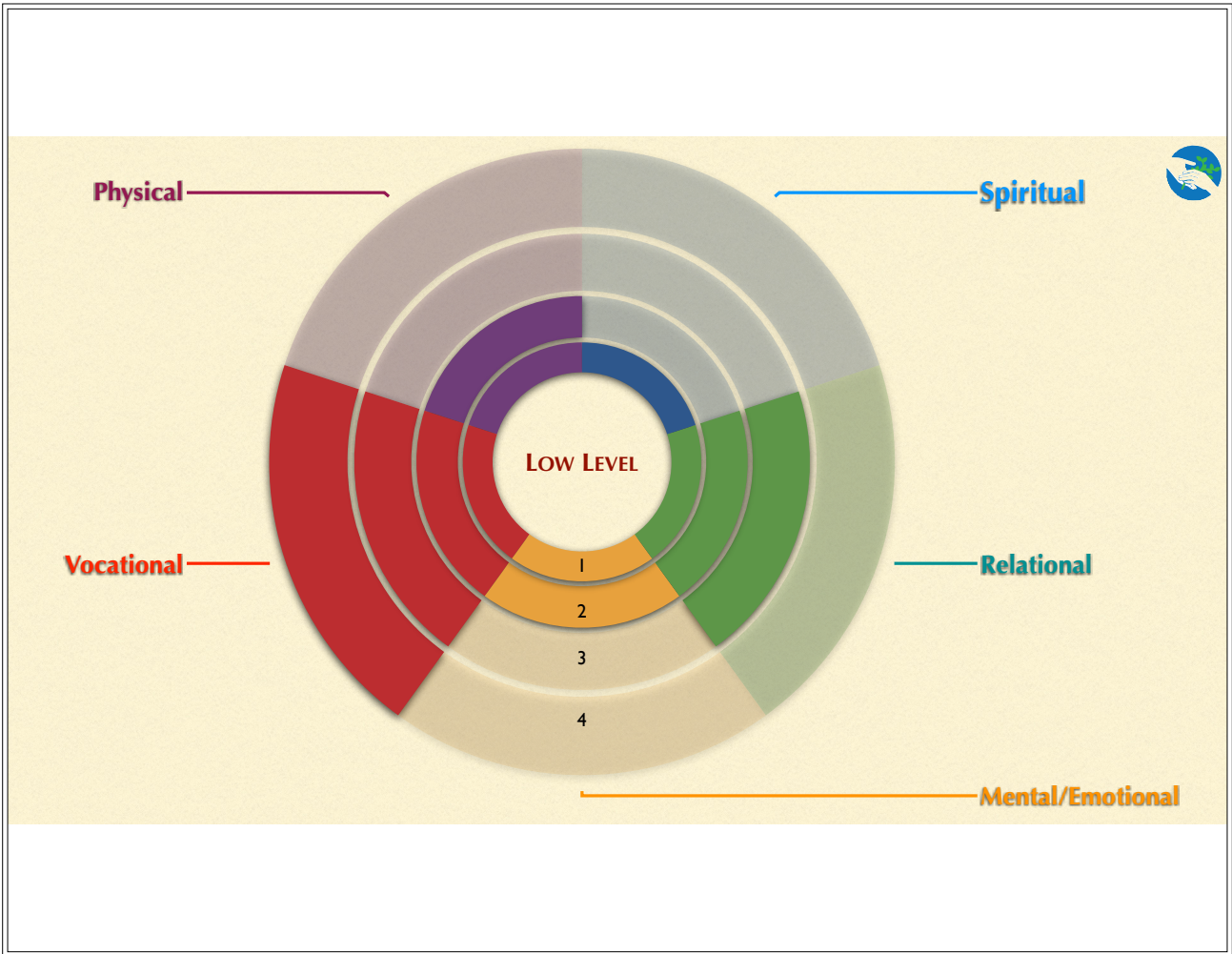
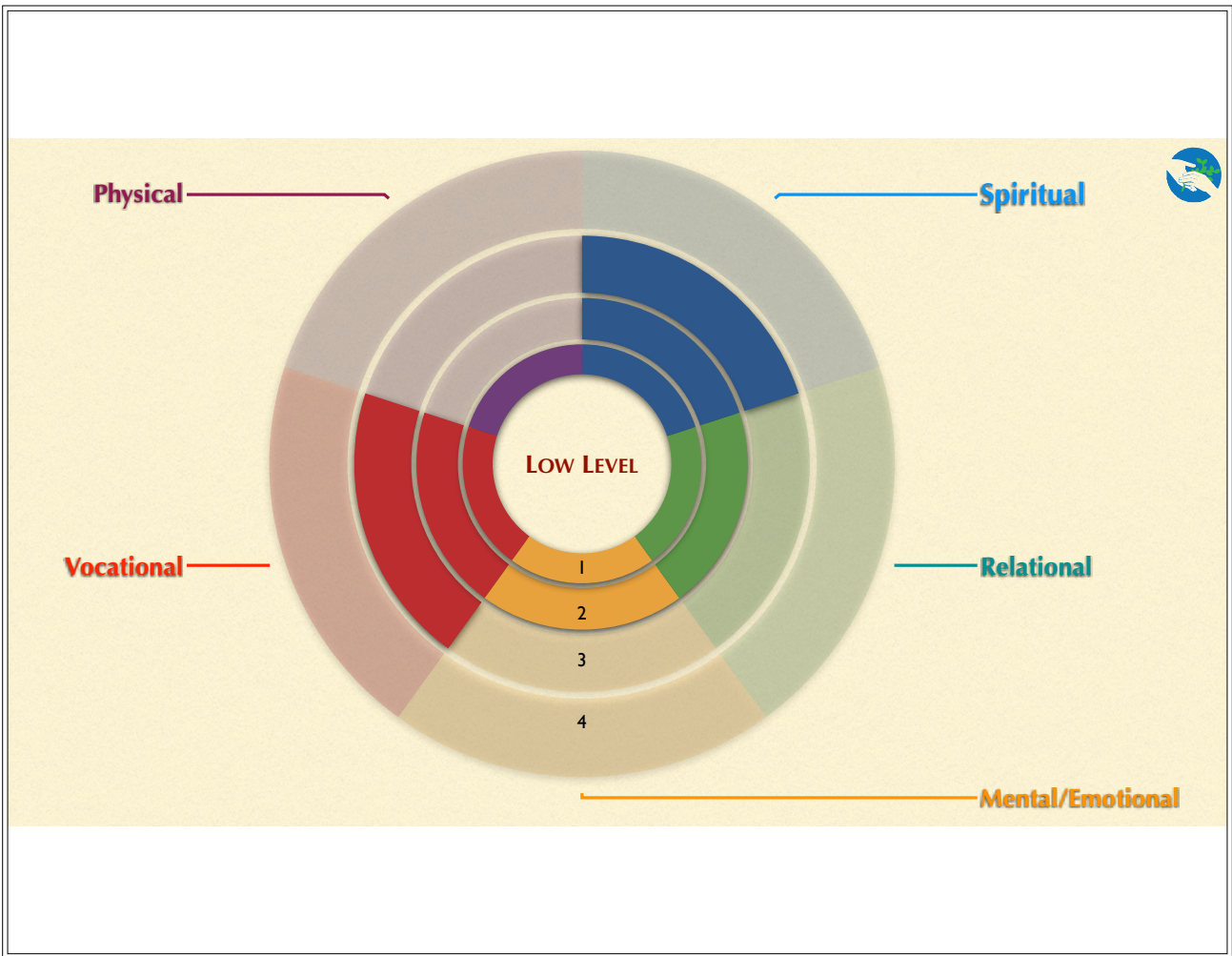
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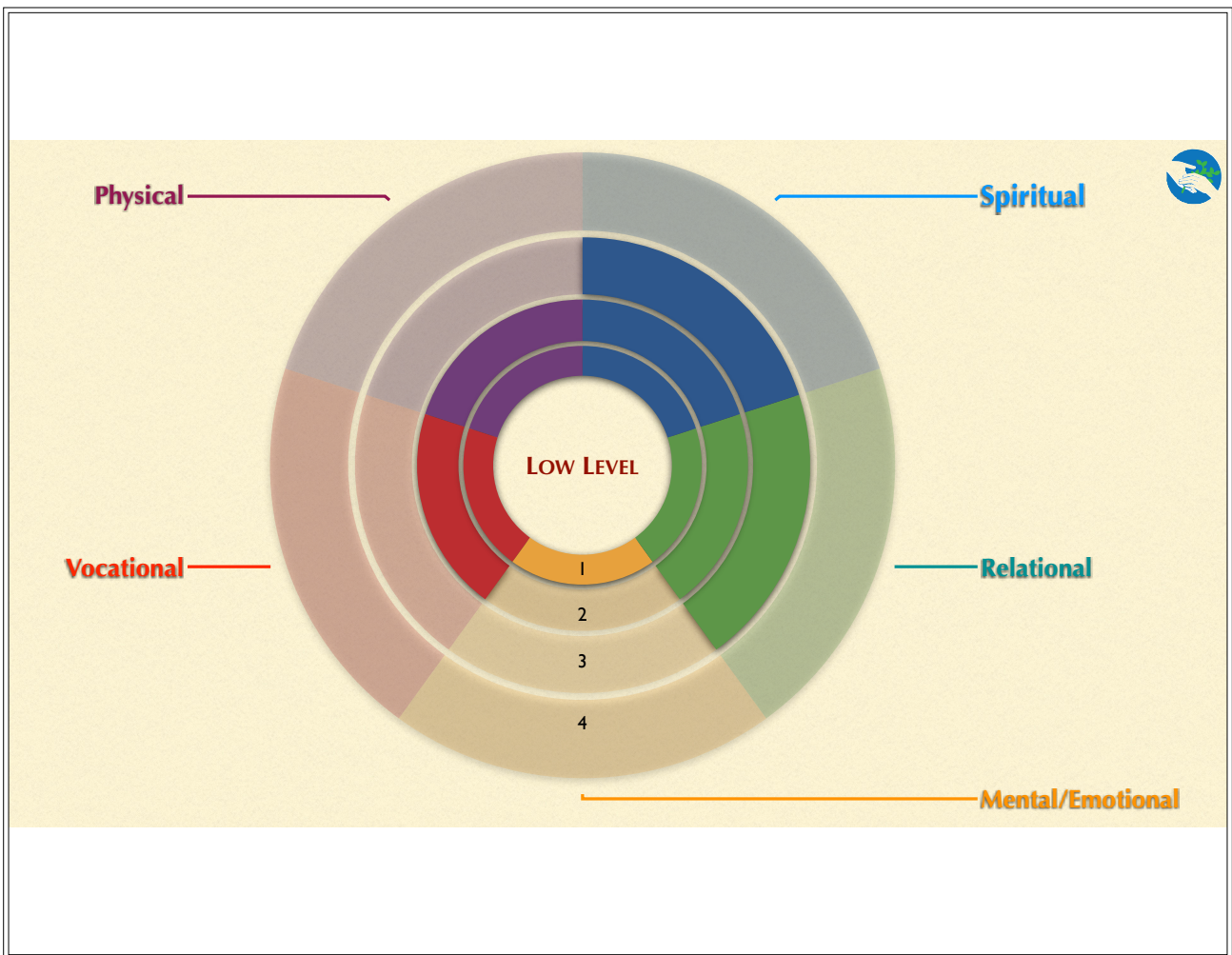


- **Spiritual:** *I feel a strong connection with God, have a strong sense of God's presence and providence in my life, and engage in spiritual practices that enhance this relationship.*
- **Relational:** *I have a strong relationship with my family, strong relationships with a small group of trusted friends, and feel a trusting connection with a larger group of colleagues and acquaintances, and build trust and mutuality with colleagues and members in my church.*
- **Mental/Emotional:** *I am able to deal with disappointments and conflict fairly well; I'm able to limit the impact of negative thought distortions while recognizing my strengths; and when necessary I'm able to share with family, friends, a therapist, spiritual director, coach, or colleagues in a way that helps me deal with struggles.*
- **Physical:** *I tend to eat a healthy diet that moderates sweets, processed foods, alcohol, and sugary drinks while increasing fruits, vegetables, lean meats, and water; get adequate rest and sleep; and I get a moderate to higher level of cardio and strength building activities.*
- **Vocational:** *I feel a sense of meaning and purpose in what I do on a daily basis so that what I do is fulfilling; I have a decent level of skill in the different areas of my position that allows me to do well; and I pursue profession development to a degree that I'm always growing in my ability to be an effective pastor.*




PERSONAL WELLNESS WHEEL





THREE QUESTIONS

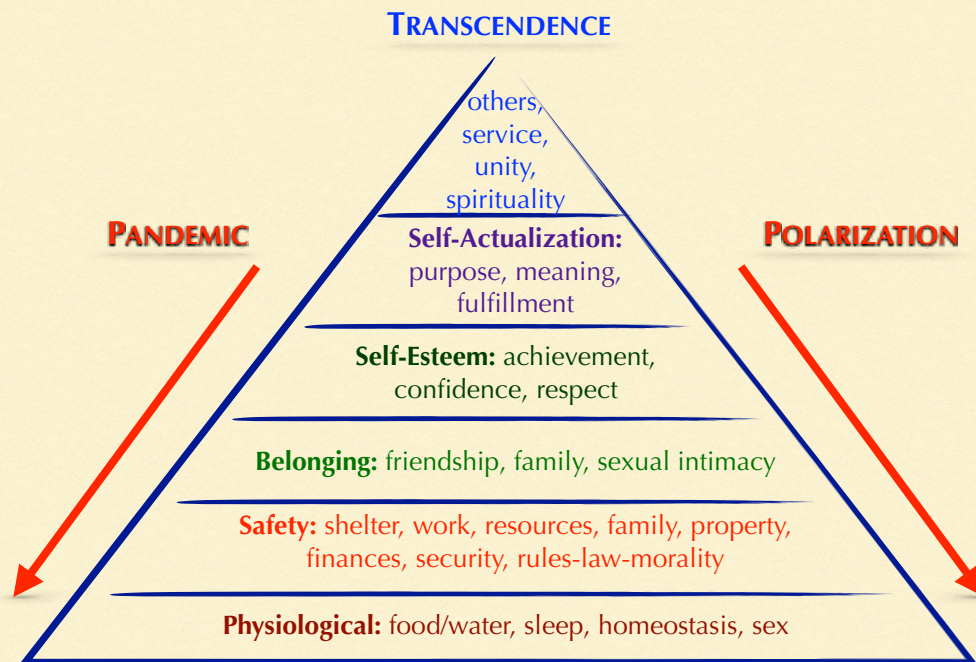


1. What are the fundamental obstacles to becoming healthier in our weaker areas?
 - Learned helplessness?
 - Thought distortions?
 - Figuring out where to start?
2. What's holding you back from being your optimal self?
3. What can you intentionally do to overcome what's holding you back?

FOCUS ON OVERALL HEALTH



- Pastors have been among the unhealthiest professions **physically** because:
 - *We sit a lot and don't exercise, can give in to sugary, salty, and processed food cravings, are surrounded by church food, and feel as though we don't have the time and energy for health and exercise.*
- Pastors face unique **mental** and **emotional** challenges that can take a toll on us as we:
 - *Keep burdens and issues to ourselves, allow persistent self-sabotaging thoughts distortions to afflict us, fail to meet unrealistic expectations, and create conditions that can turn into PTSD.*
- Ministry presents all sorts of **relational** challenges by:
 - *Leaving us often feeling isolated and alone, causing us to ignore marital and familial issues in order to meet perceived church expectations, and leaving little time for personal and family care.*
- Ministry creates **spiritual** issues by:
 - *Leaving us feeling as though there's no time for prayer and spiritual pursuits in our busyness, causing us to feel like spiritual frauds.*



PURSUING MEANING, PURPOSE, AND JOY



“As an assistant professor at a university, I started caring less about getting tenure and more about making a difference in the world. Most importantly, I stopped thinking that I’d live forever and started thinking that I’m on this earth for an extraordinarily brief period of time—so I should make the most of it.”

—Victor Strecher, *Life on Purpose*



I met an old priest who said to me, "I complained for too long that my work was constantly being interrupted, until I discovered that my interruptions were my work." It is sad that he discovered this so late in life.

–Henri Nouwen



MEANING asks, "*Why am I here?*"

PURPOSE asks, "*Am I living for what matters most?*"

–Victor Strecher, *Life on Purpose*



WE LOSE A SENSE OF MEANING AND PURPOSE BY...

- ✿ Focusing too much on whether or not we are successful.
 - ✿ Comparing ourselves to others, especially to “so called” successful pastors.
 - ✿ Trying too hard to “fix” our churches rather than “love” them.
 - ✿ Putting everything on our shoulders rather than on God’s.
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WE GAIN A SENSE OF MEANING AND PURPOSE BY...

- ✿ Taking time to identify what in ministry gives you a sense of “this is why I’m here” and “this is what matters.”
 - ✿ Reframing your response to Zoom/video worship/empty churches: this IS how I’m making a difference
 - ✿ Be intentional about MAKING time for prayer, reflection, and intention that restores meaning and purpose
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