

Workshop 3



Providing support & help #2

Engaging networks & practical care

Helen Thorne



Biblical Counselling UK

Care is never simple

One person hurts ...

A family hurts ...

A community hurts ...



The story of Naomi

Naomi: grieving, afflicted, bitter

Orpah: grieving, uncertain, left-behind

Ruth: grieving, travelling, having to work

Kinsman redeemer: responsible, fearful, walking away

Boaz: surprised, compassionate, sacrificial

Hired hands: providing, protecting - while at work

Wider community: speaking, looking, feeling



Care is never simple

Multidirectional strategy

- the whole family needs care

Multi-gifted team

- the body, the gifts, our finitude matters

Unidirectional focus in the moment

- be invested in the one



Case Study

Carrie is a 34-year old woman with depression.

It began with post-natal depression aged 27.

Since then, it has persisted, fueled by childhood abuse.

She lives with her husband and 2 children (7 and 5).

Her Mum takes the kids to school.

They largely eat take-aways but that brings financial strain.

She believes in Jesus but rarely gets to church.

Her family attends regularly on Sundays.



Multidirectional strategy: principles

- Not: we solve everything (sovereignty matters)
- Not: we're in charge (agency matters)
- But ...
- What is helpful to enable each person to take a baby step?

Think about the story of Naomi



Multidirectional strategy: practicalities

- Who else is already involved? Doing what?
- Where are the gaps?
- What is urgent?
- What can the church uniquely offer?
- What can the family cope with?



Multidirectional strategy: complexities

- Sometimes needs / desires conflict
 - Compromise?
 - Honour the weaker?
 - Hard conversations?
- Sometimes we can't see how to meet the really important needs
 - Time to pray!



Discussion 1

Identify a couple of key needs for each person

Highlight any areas of possible conflicting desires
– how might you navigate those?



Multi-gifted team: principles

- God provides people / gifts
- God raises up new people / new gifts
- God calls us to serve sacrificially
- God takes us out of our comfort zone
- God does not call us to be unsafe

Think about the story of Naomi



Multi-gifted team: practicalities

In your church:

- Who do you have that might get alongside this family in any way?
- Who are the unlikely people in your congregation who could grow into such a role?
- Where is there an overlap between the needs – the gifts and the availability?



Multi-gifted team: complexities

- The gifted people may not be available
 - Priorities can be reviewed
- There may be personality clashes
 - Relationships can be left – or restored
- Can't find people to do what I want
 - That may be good



Discussion 2

Look at the needs – look at who God has given you.

Where are the overlaps?



Unidirectional focus: principles

- Know your responsibility
- Know your circle of care / others' responsibility
- Know your accountability
- Love the person in front of you

Think about the story of Naomi



Unidirectional focus: complexities

- But there just aren't enough people, I need to support them all
 - It's not a sin to say "I'm sorry, I can't help"
- They don't want lots of people helping
 - Make sure they know how inadequate you are!



Discussion 3

What would your role likely be in this pastoral scenario?

What is in place in your church to help you do your role well (and keep you accountable for not doing everyone else's role too!)



Care is never simple ... but it's good

Naomi: praising

Ruth: secure and fruitful

Kinsman redeemer: content with his first family

Boaz: newly married with another child

Hired hands: back at work

Wider community: rejoicing

Orpah: unknown (pastoral care is never neat!)

