

Rev. Gifford Smith
Minister of Spirituality & Recovery
JOB DESCRIPTION

INCREASED AWARENESS * APPROPRIATE REFERRAL * CONTINUING SUPPORT

Because of the nature of the world in which we live, nearly everyone is touched in one way or another, at one time or another, by the disease of addiction. Our faith communities are no exception. Yet often, it is the church, synagogue, or mosque that is least knowledgeable or equipped to minister to those touched by the disease of addiction.

Together, I join the challenge with America's institutions of faith to seize this unique opportunity to serve, nurture, and honor individuals and families troubled by the nation's number one treatable illness.

My mission as Minister of Spirituality and Recovery is to assist clergy, congregations, and denominational officers in creating "sacred places for healing" for individuals and families touched by addiction, within faith communities. Through worship, education, dialogue, seminars and retreats I seek to facilitate seven cornerstone responses to addiction disease in faith communities.

The seven cornerstone responses are:

1. Increase awareness by recognizing the prevalence of addiction issues in families and congregations, as in all society.
2. Advance and enhance knowledge of the process of the disease of addiction and recovery.
3. Point out the benefits in addressing early symptoms and risks (early intervention) with positive, non-judgmental responses.
4. Promote understanding of the faith community's role in the prevention of alcohol and other substance and compulsive behavior addictions.
5. Respond with help, including appropriate referral, for people afflicted by addiction.
6. Provide help for families, children and others affected by addiction through continuing support
7. Respect and honor people in recovery from addiction and its consequences.

(Adapted from the Rush Center of the Johnson Institute)

These cornerstones are marks of success when congregations become "sacred places for healing" by learning the facts, avoiding judgment, practicing compassion, and applying firm supports. As Minister of Spirituality & Recovery, I see limitless potential in creating "sacred places for healing" in our congregations and faith communities through increased awareness, appropriate referral, and continuing support. Together we can truly make a difference.

"Blessed are the addicted for they shall be healed by the grace of God."
The 9th Beatitude by Rev. Gifford Smith