**Case Study Assignment: Providing pastoral or spiritual care to someone in crisis.**

*Sign up for one of the crisis topics we are covering in the course and email your assignment to Carrie one week ahead of time so it can be included as a reading. You will be responsible for explicitly referencing at least 8 of the readings (either in that week or in another week) that are relevant for your case study.*

*If you choose a crisis we are not covering, your case study will be posted in week 9. You will be responsible for using at least 5 readings we have done in the course that are relevant and adding 3 readings from your own literature search on the topic of your crisis.*

*Please name your file by beginning with your last name (i.e. DoehringCaseStudy).*

*Your paper will likely be 4 -5 pages, single spaced (please use single spacing).*

*Please use APA formatting. All the course readings are listed in APA formatting, so you just need to cut and paste these into your reference list. Use in text citations, as almost all of our readings do, by putting in this kind of parenthetical reference (author, year, page) and then including a reference list.*

**Assignment Outline**

**Part 1: Spiritual self-care** *(1-2 paragraphs).* Think about spiritual practices that help you experience self-compassion—practices that connect you with goodness in yourself, others or the sacred/God (depending on your religious identify or spiritual orientation). Identify and describe a spiritual practice you can use when you are doing the readings and assignments for the course. Some people practice deep relaxed breathing; some people look around them at nature or something calming. Some use traditional prayers/meditations from their faith tradition. When you try out one of these practices, pay attention to how your body feels (for example, whether muscular tension relaxes, etc.). Use your spiritual practices to accept and compassionately understand whatever emotions come up and how they are physiologically experienced.

**Part 2: The Case Study Narrative.** *In a three or four of paragraphs*, describe an experience (real or imagined)in which someone comes to you for spiritual or pastoral care because he or she is in a crisis. Make sure you clearly describe your role as a pastoral or spiritual caregiver.

**Part 3: Describe what this care seeker’s emotionally-based lived theology might be like** *(length about a page)***.** Here you will need to do some background reading in Doehring (2015) The Practice of Pastoral Care (Revised and Expanded) Chapters 1 and 5.Use the following bold terms as subheadings to describe in bullet form what you guess might be this care seeker’s lived theology:

***Emotions:*** describe what sorts of emotions seem to be [art of this caregiver’s crisis. Some of these emotions could be described as moral emotions like shame, guilt, or fear of causing harm, fear of being judged. Some of these emotions arise because of the nature of the crisis, which makes people feel responsible or fearful about causing harm. Such emotions are part of this person’s experience of problematic ways of coping and/or experiencing pleasure. The readings on this type of crisis can be referenced in describing the kinds of emotions a person is likely to feel in such a crisis.

***Values & Beliefs:*** describe what values and beliefs could be part of how this person is making sense out of this crisis (Doehring, Chapters 5 & 6 can be helpful here). For example, shame and guilt can generate beliefs about being judged by God or others, or being punished for not living a healthy lifestyle or getting the right kind of help (a moral theology).When you list a value or belief describe in a sentence or two how it seems to function in this crisis.

***Coping:*** How does this person seem to cope with this crisis? What ways of coping seems to help, what ways of coping seem to be unhelpful? Are there spiritual or religious ways of coping used and how do they seem to be helpful/unhelpful?

**Psychological Research**: Draw upon your readings to make additional comments on how psychologists understand this kind of crisis, and any psychological research that helps you better understand this person’s crisis.

**Part 4:** **Social Context** *(length: about a half a page):* How might intersecting social systems like sexism, racism, heterosexism, ableism, classism etc. shape this person’s experience of this crisis? The readings in week 3 might be referenced in describing intersecting social systems, as well as any references to these aspects of social identity in the readings for this type of crisis)

Create a heading consisting of all possible social systems that might intersect and shape this person’s experience in life-limiting ways (exacerbating stress) and/or life enhancing ways (fostering resilience) (for example: Sexism x Classism x Ableism x Heterosexism. Keep in mind that the privileges that social systems give us, as well as the disadvantages can interact to shape how people cope with and understand a crisis.

Underneath your heading make bullet points of how these systems might be interacting to shape this person’s experience of problematic coping/experiencing pleasure.

**Part 5. The intentional theology you would like to practice as this persons caregivers** *(length: about a page).*

**Now it is time to turn to describing *your* intentional theology of values, beliefs, and coping by answering the following questions in bullet form**

INTENTIONAL THEOLOGY

***Emotions:*** describe what emotions might be part of your stress responses to being this person’s caregiver (i.e. anxiety, anger, fear about causing harm….) and how your spiritual practices help you shift into the kinds of feelings/emotions you would like to experience as you offer care.

***Values:*** What values would you like to be able to practice as you offer care, and also cope with the stress of being this person’s caregiver? What makes it hard to live out these values? What helps you live out these values?

***Beliefs:*** What beliefs would you like to put into practice in the ways you offer care? Be specific about the beliefs you have about the kind of suffering this caregiver is experiencing. Referencing Chapter 5 of Doehring (2015) The Practice of Pastoral Care) is helpful

***Coping:*** What are life-giving ways you can cope with the stress of being this person’s caregiver?

In this section you may want to reference any readings that talk about compassion fatigue or the challenges of responding to this type of crisis.