

from vulnerability to safety
reducing the space for abuse



safe as churches III

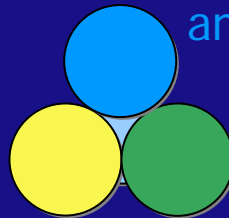
When there is connection and cohesion between these elements the space for abuse is significantly reduced

- Screening and selection
- Code of conduct
- Professional standards committee
- Pastoral education and formation
- Complaints processes
- Developing congregational awareness and health
- Recovery, support and restoration

Denominational
Protocols, processes
and policies



Personhood of the
pastor / leader



Systemic health of
the Congregation

- Ongoing spiritual formation
- Stress and burnout
- Personal relationships & emotional health
- Insight into power, leadership and pastoral ministry
- Self differentiation



- Aware community
- Healthy local governance processes
- Leadership, trust and followership
- Safe ministry protocols and boundaries

When there is little connection and cohesion between these elements the space for abuse is increased



Difficult to contact, little education for congregations, few support and supervision processes for clergy, collusion and cover up of past problems

Potential for abuse

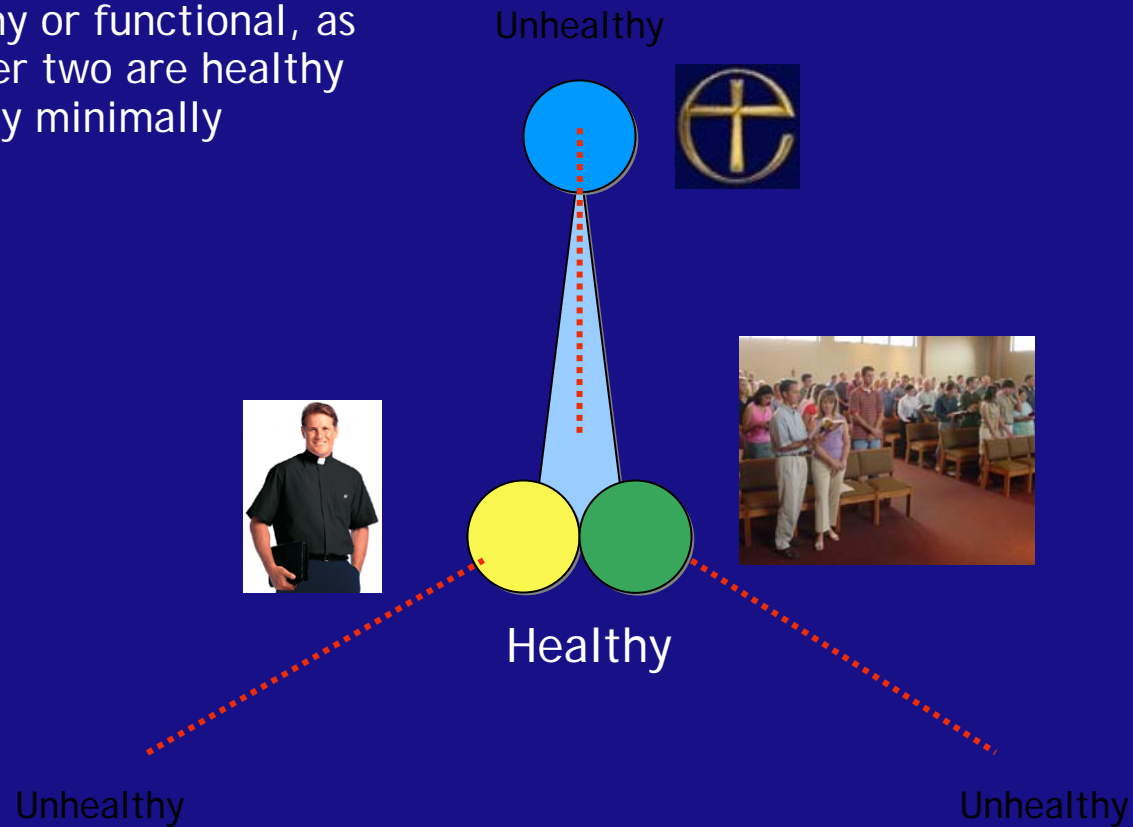


Stressed pastor who lacks training, support and supervision

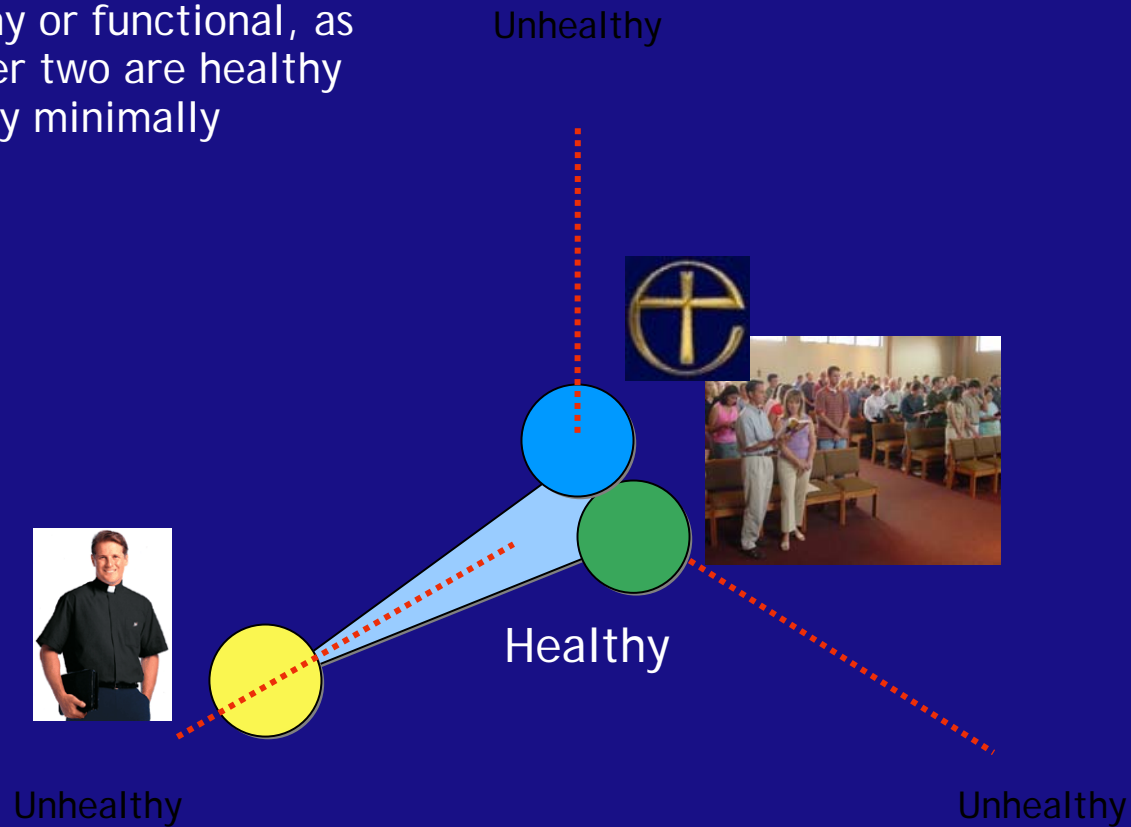


Unaware congregation with conflict and power issues

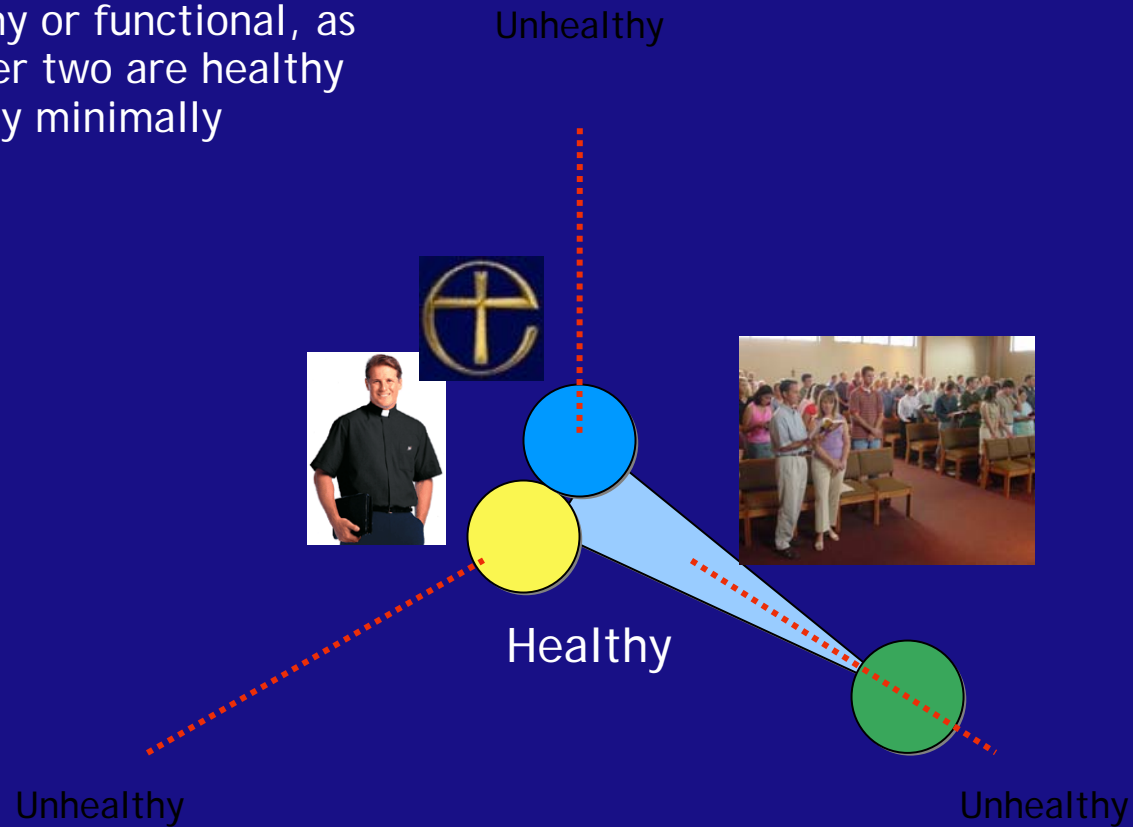
When any one of the dimensions is less than healthy or functional, as long as the other two are healthy the space is only minimally increased



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personhood of the pastor

- Questionable assumptions
 - Pastor's are aware of the power they exercise in Christian leadership and usually put in place practical and wise ministry boundaries.
 - The stresses of ministry are essentially the same as those experienced in any other profession, normal self care strategies need to be put in place.





personhood of the pastor - sources of power

- Specialised professional knowledge: God, humanity, God's will, ethics, morality
- Administration of sacraments / grace: Absolution, forgiveness, blessing, affirmation, prayer
- Leadership of faith community: Providing for inclusion and acceptance, participation, influence and power, intimacy and community
- Intimate pastoral knowledge and usually unrestricted access: life stories, family crises and celebrations

Categories of Clergy involved in Sexual Exploitation of Parishioners

I The Naïve Minister

- **Genuine lack of relational and personal maturity**
- **Lack of insight into power, sexuality and ethics in ministry – no boundaries**
- **Deficient training and formation**
- **Few support structures or self-care strategies**

Categories of Clergy involved in Sexual Exploitation of Parishioners

II The Stressed or Burnt-out Minister

- There is usually basic knowledge of ethics and boundaries.
- Inadequate support structures in place.
- Personal and/or ministry stress or burnout lowers threshold.
- The incident marks a spiritual and ministry crisis which may be fully disclosed.
- Restoration following a disciplinary and formative process is usual.

Categories of Clergy involved in Sexual Exploitation of Parishioners

V The Manipulating Minister

- **Intelligent, capable, charismatic, loved and respected.**
- **Multiple concurrent or serial abuses.**
- **Deliberate and calculated deception.**
- **Adept at manipulating not only victims but also colleagues and authorities – difficult to confront.**
- **Calculating in self-protection – use legal action if backed into a corner.**
- **They often slip the system.**
- **Not to be restored to ministry.**



personhood of the pastor

5 movements toward healthy ministry

- Articulating a personal theology of leadership and ministry.
- Developing accountability and support with a supervisor, mentor or spiritual director.
Establish a regular formative review process.
- Cultivate practical recreation, self-care and spiritual formation strategies.
- Engage ongoing professional learning and formation.
- Attend to relationships and emotional health outside of ministry.



health of the congregation

Toward healthy congregational life

- Create an aware culture especially aware leaders.
- Create a safe relational environment
Clearly and collectively articulating boundaries to create an “arena of safety”
- Create clear pathways for any issues to be discussed and resolved
- External consultancy and reviews

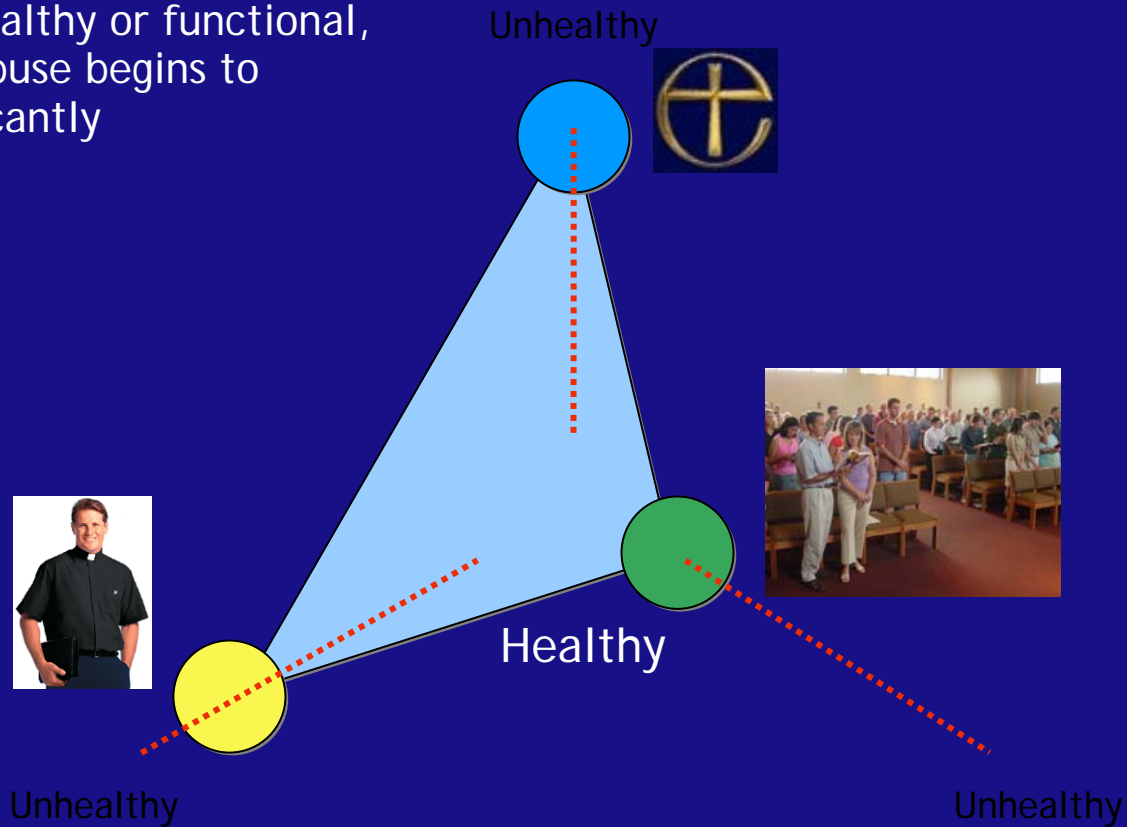




health of the congregation - aware culture

- General understanding of power, trust, potential for abuse.
- Understanding types of offending leaders.
- Understanding patterns of offending: attraction, testing, control.
- How do offenders maintain and get away with abuse?
- How do they control the victims?
- How do they control the environment?
- Understanding seduction, intimidation and threat.
- The prison of secrets and corruption.

When any two of the dimensions
are less than healthy or functional,
the space for abuse begins to
increase significantly



When any one of the dimensions is less than healthy or functional, as long as the other two are healthy the space is only minimally increased

