

# Deacon Ministry Newsletter March Edition, 2005

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Spiritual Formation: Discipleship in an  
Unchurched Culture, Helwys, 2004.



## *The Power of Relationships*

In a fast paced world how can deacons balance the demands of work, family, community involvement and ministry expectations and needs? Such is a struggle for many in the self-help professions and those who serve as lay pastors or deacons in many congregations. Life seems very complex these days and very busy for most people. So what's a deacon to do? Seems to me that there's a common thread – the power of relationships.

Randy Frazee struggles with these questions in his writings and his church. Some things he's discovered helps streamline ministry and expectations without jeopardizing family and work roles. Let me summarize some of his learnings and add a few of my learnings around balancing ministry and personal demands.

- ❑ Streamline life as much as possible
  - Frazee explains a model of doing church that helps with this in The Connecting Church. [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and [www.pantego.org](http://www.pantego.org)
  - **Coaching Questions:** What if we learn to build church around geographical roadmaps of our lives? Schools, workplaces, recreational experiences of family members etc.
- ❑ Find and work the natural intersections of life
  - **Coaching Question:** How can deacon ministry be organized and accomplished through existing and 'as you go' relationships rather than through creating 'out of the way' or 'extra' relationships or meetings?
- ❑ Embrace the 'as you go' part of the Great Commission rather than planning more trips and experiences
  - Learning to embrace the 'as you go' will help streamline life, make us more accountable to living our faith 7 days a week and helping create redemptive relationships and experiences that serve as ministry and mission opportunities.
- ❑ Pray about and seek God's direction for life's challenges and relationships
  - **Coaching Question:** What might happen if you learn to do prayer walks through your workplace, community gatherings, recreational relationships?
- ❑ Learn to ask instead of tell. Coaching is a great discipling tool for the fast-paced, post-modern culture. [www.valwoodcoaching.com](http://www.valwoodcoaching.com)

- **Coaching Question:** When you want to ‘tell someone something’ how could you reframe and ‘ask a question’ that might help them discover the answer for themselves and thus build ownership of an emerging belief system?

Learning to balance ministry demands and personal schedules is challenging at best for many church leaders today. Maybe what we need is not the skill of learning to balance as much as the skill of streamlining our programming for a new culture. We are told over and over that our world is in a state of a ‘new normal’ yet many of our churches are still functioning with programs created for and by values of a 1950’s world. How do we discover God’s plan for this ‘new normal world and church’? I’m certainly not advocating changing our values or Biblical foundation. I am reminding us that the New Testament talks more about the FUNCTION of the church than the FORM of the church. The function stays the same but the programs are made by men and women and can be changed. Many programs have served us very well in the past but may be stumbling blocks for the birthing of the new.

Deacons can lead the way as spiritual leaders to assist a congregation in exploring what their new normal might look like as they seek to be more effective and efficient in a modern day world.

**Resources for the journey:**

Randy Frazee – Making Room for Life, Zondervon, 2004

[www.pantego.org](http://www.pantego.org) and [www.theconnectingchurch.org](http://www.theconnectingchurch.org)

Bill Hull – Revival That Reforms, Regal press, 2003

Randy Newman – Questioning Evangelism, IVP, 2004

Brian McLaren - Reinventing Your Church, Zonderon, 1998

Edward Hammett – Reframing Spiritual Formation, Smyth & Helwys, 2003 [www.transformingsolutions.org](http://www.transformingsolutions.org)

***Training Without Travel for Deacons*** - Teleclasses by Telephone – sign up and register for an opportunity to dialogue with Eddie and other deacon leaders from across the country . Topics and schedule found at [www.transformingsolutions.org](http://www.transformingsolutions.org)

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