**PLUS: Professional Learning Units for Staff**

Nurturing new staff into well-equipped, spirit-filled professionals who serve and lead in right relationship with colleagues and congregation



**PLUS 5: Differentiated Leadership**

Differentiated leadership involves regulating your own anxiety, and being clear about where you end and another person begins. Handy for church work!

**Watch this video:** (It’s under 7 minutes long. You may want to watch it twice!)

[Friedman’s Theory of Differentiated Leadership](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9H-i9lHr28)

**For Your Journal**

*Your journal is just for you. You can type it. You can scribble it. You can use complete sentences or quick phrases. Responses need not be lengthy. You can type or write directly onto this document or in a spiral notebook. Writing something down for each question forces you to clarify your thoughts, helps you remember your ideas, and gives you something to return to later.*

1. Were you familiar with Edwin Friedman or the concept of self-differentiated leadership before watching this video? If so, from what context?
2. Reflect on and briefly describe a situation in your congregation that you believe involved one or more people who were poorly differentiated. What behaviors lead you to think this? Could improving someone’s understanding and practice of self-differentiation have been used to improve the situation?
3. Reflect on and briefly describe a time when you believe someone was attempting to “triangle” you. How successful were they – and why/why not?
4. Do you agree that stress and burnout are more about getting stuck in others’ problems than about over-working? How do you guard against getting ensnared in the problems and others – and how do you do so in a way that still conveys caring for the person(s) involved?
5. Do you think your congregation shows signs of being chronically anxious, or are people generally well-differentiated? Why?
6. What in the video especially stood out for you and why? How might you make use of some of your learnings?

**Connect**

For today’s PLUS session, you decide with whom to connect. Do you want to discuss your learnings with your supervisor? Do you work with a lay leader with whom it would be helpful to discuss self-differentiated leadership? Do you have a trusted mentor you want to talk to? You might want to go back to your journal to reflect on what you talked about.

The PLUS Program will evolve over time, with units added, removed, and modified in response to user feedback, changing needs, and new information. Please take a minute to tell us what you think of any PLUS unit, to share your general experience with the PLUS program, or to ask to be notified when the next unit is available: [PLUS Feedback Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PLUSprogramfeedback).