



A little about Furloughs and Sabbaticals...

Furlough: A leave of absence from your normal work or ministry, granted for a period of time for personal time, business, study, relaxation and reflection while still being paid.

Sabbatical: A period of time to stop usual work or ministry in order to study, travel, rest and renew while continuing to be paid.

Furloughs and Sabbaticals could be...

A time to receive – instead of being the one always giving and leading you now can spend some time receiving. Receive from the Lord, from friends, your family and those the Lord has placed around you.

A time to be with family – whether that is at home or somewhere away from home, being with your family with no agenda and schedule, no to-do list is important.

A time to read, study, and write - read some books you haven't gotten to (we have some suggestions on the Resource List), study, do some research, maybe even try your hand at writing.

A time to play and just hang out – take a hike or daily walk, get back into a sport you've let drop, or simply good time with family and friends at the lake, in the pool, or around the table.

A time to be quiet – we generally don't do this well, but it is vital that we get some quiet and alone time for ourselves and with the Lord. Silence is needed to pay attention, hear what the Lord has for you, or just being at peace with the Lord. Get used to being quiet and still.

A time for spiritual direction/coaching/counseling – spend some time with someone that will listen well and have your best interest in mind. Someone that might give you guidance, coaching and/or accountability to be present with the Lord and begin to walk down a path of spiritual and physical health.

A time for prayer – find your place and time to seek the Lord and spend time in conversation. Plug in intentional and extended time of prayer thru out your day and sabbatical.

A time for travel – take some time to go see friends, visit family, or just get away to those destinations you've been putting off. ** Try not to have a defined agenda (if possible.)

A time for retreat – booking some time at a retreat center (for a day, a few days, or extended time) may be just what you need. Take the opportunity to get out of the center of the chaos where you lead and direct and take care of others – and allow for your personal nourishment and care from a supportive community.

Considerations while planning your sabbatical or furlough -

Budget: As you plan out your time, you will need to account for your expenses during your time. Sit down and put together a furlough budget so you don't have to worry about that in the middle of your time.

Funds for your furlough/sabbatical: Do you need help with funding your time away? Even though you are being paid while on furlough, you can have expenses back home and at your sabbatical location(s). Have you considered your expenses and funding need? Have you checked on any possible grants or foundation assistance to help fund your budget?

Housing: Where will you stay? What are the accommodations and what will you need to bring for your comfort and routine? Will you have free lodging or what will be your cost?

Transportation: Will you have use of a car or other vehicle? Will you need to arrange public transportation? What is available and what is the cost?

Recreation/Entertainment: What are you hoping to do for fun and entertainment? What arrangements do you need to make? Plan and book early so you aren't disappointed and frustrated instead of energized and joyful.

Counseling/Coaching/Retreats: Do you have someone that will coach you into, thru, and out of your sabbatical or furlough? Having some accountability as you plan and carry out your schedule is a great thing to have. Are you wanting to arrange for specific coaching and counseling for situations or areas of concern while you are on sabbatical. Is marriage counseling something you would like to check into? Are you hoping to spend some time at a retreat or get-away? For you personally – you and your spouse – or for your entire family?

Wrapping up before leaving: Have you considered what you need to complete or put on hold while you are gone? What projects will continue while you are gone and who will take the lead on those? Have you considered your team's leadership and care while you are gone? Think about what you want to come home to. Don't leave a mess or you will most likely come back to a mess.

Some other thoughts:

Plan activities that allow for decompression as you begin your furlough/sabbatical. Ease your way in – sleep and rest can be a great way to get started.

Do something the first day to mark entrance into your sabbatical. Spend the first week (if possible) breaking away from your “normal” routines.

What you plan and what really plays out may likely be different. Plan carefully and revise freely.

Focus on one thing at a time – avoid multi-tasking. It's ok if you travel less than you imagined, read less than you planned, sleep more than you intended, or find that you need to reroute along the way. Enjoy your time with people, savor every meal, and be present in each situation.

Stay away from To-Do lists, agendas, packed schedules, big projects, and huge accomplishments. Rest, relaxation, new direction, and finding a good pace are more important.

Furlough/Sabbatical Worksheet

Date: From _____ To _____ Location(s) _____

Coach _____ Host _____

Potential Objectives/Desires/Goals/Outcomes:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Communication/Accountability Plan:

With coach:

Best way to communicate _____ How often? _____

With donors:

Best way to communicate _____ How often? _____

Possible Priority Issues:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Possible Resources:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Reviewed by coach _____ Reviewed by Perception Funding _____

Breakdown of furlough/sabbatical time:

When:

What:

Where:

How:

Why:

When:

What:

Where:

How:

Why:

When:

What:

Where:

How:

Why:

When:

What:

Where:

How:

Why:

TOP 10 Return and Debriefing Considerations

1. How are you feeling about re-engaging and re-entry into your ministry?
2. What will you do to prepare for your return? (Discuss with your coach)
3. What major lessons did you learn and how do you anticipate these lessons making a difference in your future?
4. How has God spoken to you during your sabbatical/furlough?
5. What activities were most helpful during your sabbatical? Least helpful? What would you do differently?
6. How can you continue some of the sabbath lifestyle you experienced? (Discuss with your coach)
7. Allow space and time for the grief of significant others (family and close friends) of your leaving sabbatical and returning to “regular” life.
8. Be easy on yourself and avoid expectations to “repay the debt” for those that covered for you while you were gone.
9. Keep your calendar clear of major commitments your first week back (if possible), but do schedule several meetings with key friends and supporters to share your highlights of what you learned.
10. Thank appropriate persons as you return.

Resource List

Books and Studies

Replenish, Leading from a healthy soul, by Lance Witt One cannot lead successfully front stage when one is completely depleted back stage. In a time when pastors are leaving the ministry in record numbers due to cynicism, disillusionment, weariness, and personal scandals, there is an urgent need for soul care in the private lives of leaders.

A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23, by W. Phillip Keller Based on his years as a keeper of sheep, Keller infuses new hope and meaning into our relationship with Christ, the Good Shepherd. Keller writes of the loving Shepherd of Psalm 23 who leads his sheep to the green pastures and cool waters.

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, by Peter Scazzero In this revised bestselling book, Peter Scazzero outlines a roadmap for discipleship with Jesus that is powerfully transformative. He unveils what's wrong with our current definition of "spiritual growth" and offers not only a model of spirituality that actually works, but seven steps to change that will help you experience authentic faith and hunger for God.

Emotionally Healthy Leader, by Peter Scazzero In *The Emotionally Healthy Leader*, bestselling author Peter Scazzero shows leaders how to develop a deep, inner life with Christ, examining its profound implications for surviving stress, planning and decision making, building teams, creating healthy culture, influencing others, and much more.

Boundaries, by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend Does your life feel like it's out of control? Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townsend help you learn when to say yes and know how to say no in order to take control of your life and set healthy, biblical boundaries with your spouse, children, friends, parents, co-workers, and even yourself.

Essentialism, The Disciplined Pursuit of Less, by Greg McKeown Essentialism is not one more thing—it's a whole new way of doing everything. A must-read for any leader, manager, or individual who wants to do less, but better, and declutter and organize their own their lives, Essentialism is a movement whose time has come.

Live God Speed – The Pace of Being Known livegodspeed.org Godspeed is a short film that addresses the topics of community, being known, stability and slowing down.

Podcasts and Blogs

Blog post about why it's important <https://www.give-dignity.org/blog---on-the-margins/archives/04-2017>

Blog about what I learned on my sabbatical. <https://www.perceptionfunding.org/impact/archives/06-2016>

Debriefing Centers

Paracletos - Cultivating a community of care. Helping God's global workers thrive in the field.

www.paracletos.org

dave@paracletos.org

Retreat Centers

Shalom Retreat Center – Located in eastern Kansas, Shalom Retreat Center exists to provide experiences that restore hearts, enrich lives and inspire hope.

Counseling

Peace Partnership *This local counseling center is passionate about offering help to those who often cannot afford counseling. Because of our partnership, all counseling services are steeply discounted for our ministry partners.*

Coaching

Perception Funding (Joe Chenoweth) We will walk along with you and assist you in creating a furlough/sabbatical worksheet. We'll be your accountability partner, as well as help you navigate the entire furlough process.

Other Resources

Sample Sears family furlough letter <https://www.dropbox.com/s/5hxxz5jrbvmtzrr/furlough%20letter.docx?dl=0>

Sears monthly update in little ways for several months leading up to it.
<https://mailchi.mp/8767572da983/on-the-margins?e=b5ccf4df76>

Audio sermon teaching on sabbatical <http://voxdei.libsyn.com/march-2-2013-sabbatical>

Audio sermon after the sabbatical <http://voxdei.libsyn.com/august-4-2013-voice-sund>