

"I Can't Be a Stephen Minister!"



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Maybe you haven't said this aloud in a crowd, but you may have spoken it to yourself in the mirror—or at least thought it. Anytime some new challenge shows up, the "I can't" phrase is bound to be nearby.

You may have heard about Stephen Ministry, realized that you do have the gifts, the commitment, and the desire necessary to be a Stephen Minister, and you even may have felt God's tap on your shoulder. But you still aren't sure.

What are some of the reasons you've given yourself for not becoming a Stephen Minister? Here are some likely candidates.

"I'm not qualified to be a Stephen Minister."

What qualifications are necessary to be a Stephen Minister? You need to be a caring person who is willing to learn, grow, and serve. You must be willing and able to maintain confidentiality. You need to make a commitment to training, ministry, and supervision. If you meet those qualifications, your Stephen Leaders will equip you with the rest of what you need: training, support, encouragement, care, and prayers. They will make sure that you will succeed as a Stephen Minister.

"I don't know what to say or do in a ministry situation."

Stephen Ministry training is thorough and practical. It includes listening; dealing with feelings; maintaining assertiveness, confidentiality, and boundaries; beginning and ending caring relationships; and caring for people who are grieving, dying,

"I have problems in my own life. How can I help other people with their problems?"

aging, divorcing, and experiencing other life crises. The goal of training is to prepare Stephen Ministers for whatever they might encounter when working with care receivers. Through reading, lecture, questions and answers, and skill practice you will learn what you need to know to succeed as a Stephen Minister. After being assigned to a care receiver, Stephen Ministers participate in continuing education and Supervision Group sessions. This is where they care for and support one another and sharpen their caregiving skills.

"I don't have enough time to be a Stephen Minister."

There's a way in which that is true for everyone—time is a precious commodity. As a matter of fact, time is so precious that it only makes sense to use it on activities that make a real difference—in others' lives as well as in your own life.