

The Whole Youth Worker: Advice on Professional, Personal, and Physical Wellness in the Trenches

Jason Tucker

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Reviewed by Rev. Michael Philliber, PhD, for Reader Views (12/08)

The allure of youth work can quickly fade, especially when there is very little direction on what to do and how to get it done. Jay Tucker has pulled together his eight years of experience into a short manual, “The Whole Youth Worker: Advice on Professional, Personal, and Physical Wellness in the Trenches,” that will help guide most youth workers around the dangerous curves and out of the sinkholes of youth ministry. This short, 148-page, readable paperback, has very valuable, sensible, workable counsel that most every person who works with teenagers in an ecclesiastical setting ought to read.

“The Whole Youth Worker” covers a wide range of subjects in 21 succinct chapters. The author lays out solid ground rules for any Church youth program, while avoiding the air of regulatory bullheadedness. Simple things like how to set up and run a “Lock-In”, how to keep yourself emotionally and physically healthy, and how to manage the inevitable romances between youth group participants. The realistic approach Tucker takes is the stuff most youth workers have never heard and want to know.

One of the greatest strengths of “The Whole Youth Worker” is the pithiness of each content-full section. Tucker could have sacrificed subject matter to keep the material accessible, but instead he has crafted a delightful balance of substance with shortness. That makes this an easily digested handbook for any busy Minister of Youth out there, while making it a worthwhile guide.

If you’re a Senior Pastor wondering what to give your Youth Minister to help them negotiate this important work, or if you’re a youth worker trying to figure out what to do and not to do, or if you’re thinking about becoming a Youth Minister of some kind, then “The Whole Youth Worker” by Jason Tucker is the book to get.