

# *The Beliefs Chart:* *A Tool for Understanding and Change*

## **Healthy Congregations**

*Healthy Congregations* is an educational workshop which draws on the family systems theory of Dr. Murray Bowen. A key concept at the heart of *Healthy Congregations* is “differentiation of self,” a person’s capacity to calmly articulate what they think and value, and to act on that basis, while staying in active relationship even with those who disagree. *Healthy Congregations* is designed for presentation as a single, nine-hour workshop, but can be adapted for a single-day event. It is also appropriate for presentation to district or other judicatory gatherings.

One possible outline for a weekend workshop would be:

Friday:	7:00-9:30	<b>What is System Thinking?</b>
		<b>Video Case Study: “The Anxious Congregation/The Responsible Congregation”</b>
Saturday:	9:00-10:30	<b>Healthy Congregations Respond to Anxiety</b>
		<b>Healthy Congregations Invite Differentiation of Self</b>
	10:30-10:45	Break
	10:45-12:00	<b>Healthy Congregations Focus On Strength</b>
		<b>Healthy Congregations Manage Conflict and Other Automatic Patterns</b>
	12:00-1:00	Lunch
	1:00-2:30	<b>In Healthy Congregations, Leaders Challenge People</b>
		<b>In Healthy Congregations, Leaders Focus On Mission</b>
	2:30-2:45	Break
	2:45-4:30	<b>In Healthy Congregations, Leaders Promote Health Through Their Presence and Functioning</b>
		<b>Planning For a Healthier Congregation</b>

The presenter of this *Healthy Congregations* workshop is Bob Williamson. Bob is a religious educator with a private practice serving clergy, laity, and church organizations of all denominations. Over the past ten years, Bob has drawn on Bowen family systems theory in developing the *Beliefs Chart* as a tool for understanding and change. He is a graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (M.Div., 1976). Bob serves as adjunct faculty with the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center (LMPC), and as a member of the faculty of the Center for Family Consultation (CFC). Bob is a member of the Liberal Religious Educators Association (LREDA).

**For further information, contact Bob Williamson at [www.BeliefsChart.org](http://www.BeliefsChart.org), or phone 630-910-1856.**