

SELF-CAPACITIES IN HUMAN FORMATION

The Goal of Human Formation

Human formation in missionary life seeks the development of an integrated human person who possesses emotional maturity, psychological balance, relational capacity, and spiritual grounding. Such maturity enables the missionary not merely to perform pastoral duties but to live the Gospel authentically in relationships, community life, and mission. The aim of human formation is therefore not simply the correction of weaknesses or the acquisition of social skills, but the gradual integration of the whole person so that thoughts, emotions, motivations, values, and behaviours converge in a coherent life oriented toward God and service. When this integration develops, the missionary becomes capable of acting from an interior centre of freedom rather than from fear, insecurity, external pressure, or the need for approval.

Understanding Self-Capacities

Within this process of human formation, particular importance is given to the development of certain psychological capacities that support personal stability, relational maturity, and vocational perseverance. These capacities can be described as self-capacities. Self-capacities are the inner psychological and relational abilities that allow a person to function as a coherent subject who understands himself, regulates his inner experiences, and engages reality responsibly. They enable individuals to interpret their thoughts, emotions, and motivations with increasing clarity and to respond to life situations with balance and freedom. These capacities are not static traits that appear automatically but dynamic abilities that develop gradually through relationships, life experiences, education, and reflective growth. Formation therefore aims not only to transmit ideals or knowledge but also to strengthen these inner capacities so that the person becomes increasingly capable of living his vocation in a mature and stable way.

Self-Knowledge and Interior Self-Governance

One of the fundamental functions of self-capacities is to help the person know and govern himself. Human maturity requires the ability to become aware of one's inner world—thoughts, emotions, desires, fears, and motivations—and to regulate these experiences constructively. Self-awareness, emotional regulation, impulse control, and reflective decision-making are essential elements of this process. Without such capacities, individuals may become dominated by moods, impulses, or unconscious motivations that weaken freedom and responsibility. Formation therefore seeks to cultivate an interior life that is reflective, conscious, and integrated. In missionary life, this capacity for self-governance allows the person to remain faithful to commitments even when emotional fluctuations, external pressures, or personal struggles arise.

Capacity for Authentic Relationships

Self-capacities also play a decisive role in the ability to relate authentically with others. Human beings grow through relationships, and missionary life is deeply relational. Community living, pastoral ministry, and spiritual accompaniment all require the ability to form mature and respectful relationships characterized by trust, empathy, and mutual responsibility. When these relational capacities are well developed, individuals can listen attentively, communicate honestly, respect boundaries, and engage others with compassion. Without such capacities, individuals may experience patterns of emotional withdrawal, dependency, manipulation, or unresolved conflict. Formation communities therefore become important environments where candidates gradually learn to practice empathy, dialogue, forgiveness, and collaboration. Through this relational growth, the missionary becomes capable of genuine pastoral presence and fraternal communion.

Emotional Resilience and Endurance in Mission

Another essential function of self-capacities is the ability to endure stress, frustration, and suffering. Missionary life inevitably involves moments of disappointment, misunderstanding, loneliness, and pastoral difficulty. Cultural transitions, demanding apostolic responsibilities, and community tensions can place significant emotional pressure on individuals. Without the psychological resources necessary to manage these experiences, individuals may react through withdrawal, anger, discouragement, or burnout. Self-capacities such as emotional regulation, self-soothing, humour, and resilience help individuals remain stable during periods of stress. They allow the missionary to endure difficulties without losing hope and to recover from setbacks with renewed strength. In this way, human formation contributes to the development of resilient missionaries who are capable of sustaining their vocation over time.

Creative Responsiveness to Mission

Self-capacities also support the missionary's ability to respond creatively to the demands of mission. Missionary life constantly presents new and unpredictable situations. Cultural diversity, social change, and emerging pastoral needs require flexibility, openness, and initiative. Capacities such as adaptability, spontaneity, relational presence, and self-activation enable missionaries to engage reality creatively rather than rigidly. Instead of relying solely on established routines, missionaries with well-developed self-capacities are able to interpret new situations, collaborate with others, and propose meaningful pastoral responses. These capacities allow them to remain open to learning and to engage people with sensitivity and compassion in diverse cultural contexts.

Self-Capacities within the Forge of the Missionary

Within Claretian formation, these human capacities are not understood as merely psychological skills but as integral elements of the broader transformative journey described through the image of the Forge of the Missionary. Formation is seen as a process in which the person is progressively purified, configured, tempered, and sent in mission. In the movement of purification, self-capacities such as self-awareness and emotional regulation enable candidates to confront personal limitations and inner conflicts with honesty and courage. During the stage of configuration, capacities such as self-mastery, relational presence, and intimacy support the gradual integration of personal identity with the values of the Gospel and the Claretian charism. In the tempering stage, capacities such as resilience, adaptability, and humour strengthen the missionary's ability to persevere through trials and responsibilities. Finally, in the movement of being sent, capacities such as initiative, spontaneity, and relational presence help the missionary respond creatively to the needs of the people and the demands of apostolic mission.

Formation Processes that Strengthen Self-Capacities

The development of these capacities occurs through a combination of personal reflection, relational learning, structured formation experiences, and ongoing accompaniment. Reflective practices such as journaling, prayerful self-examination, and spiritual direction help candidates become more aware of their inner life. Community life provides daily opportunities to practice empathy, dialogue, and conflict resolution. Workshops, pastoral placements, and formation programs offer practical experiences through which relational and emotional skills can be strengthened. Personal accompaniment by formators helps candidates interpret their experiences and identify patterns that may either support or hinder vocational growth.

Toward Interior Freedom and Missionary Maturity

Ultimately, the cultivation of self-capacities serves the deeper goal of fostering interior freedom. A person who develops these capacities becomes increasingly capable of acting from conviction rather than compulsion, relating to others with authenticity, enduring difficulties with resilience, and responding creatively to God's call. Human formation therefore prepares the missionary not merely to fulfil functional roles within the Church but to live his vocation with maturity, stability, and generosity. Through the strengthening of these self-capacities, the missionary gradually becomes a person whose humanity is sufficiently integrated to serve as a credible witness to the Gospel and an effective instrument of God's grace in the world.

This module explores eight core self-capacities essential for human formation:

1. Self-Activation
2. Self-Mastery
3. Spontaneity
4. Relational Presence
5. Intimacy
6. Self-Soothing
7. Humour
8. Adaptability

Each section includes:

- Definition
- Importance for formation
- Practical examples
- Self-reflection questions
- Formation strategies
- Accompaniment guidelines
- Assessment tools
- Spiritual integration

1. Self-Activation

Definition: Self-activation refers to the **capacity of the person to initiate action from within**, guided by personal convictions, values, and sense of calling rather than by external pressure, supervision, or approval. It reflects the ability to move from passive dependence to responsible initiative. In psychological terms, self-activation involves the emergence of the person as an **active subject capable of directing his own behaviour**, rather than merely reacting to external circumstances.

This capacity expresses three closely related qualities:

- **Personal agency** – the awareness that one can influence situations and make meaningful choices.
- **Initiative** – the willingness to act proactively rather than waiting for instructions.
- **Responsible freedom** – the ability to take ownership of decisions and their consequences.

A person with strong self-activation does not remain immobilized by uncertainty, fear, or dependence. Instead, he is able to recognize needs, discern appropriate responses, and act responsibly. Self-activation therefore marks the transition from **passive compliance to purposeful action**, from simply following instructions to actively participating in the unfolding of one's vocation.

In formation contexts, self-activation reflects the growing ability of the candidate to **internalize values and translate them into concrete behaviour**. When this capacity develops,

actions arise not primarily from obligation or external expectations but from personal conviction and a deep sense of mission.

Why Self-Activation Matters in Formation

Many candidates entering formation come from educational or cultural contexts where authority structures strongly shape behaviour. As a result, they may initially demonstrate patterns such as:

- dependence on authority figures for direction
- fear of making mistakes or being corrected
- hesitation to propose ideas or take initiative
- passivity in decision-making.

While obedience and humility are important virtues in religious life, excessive dependence can hinder the growth of personal responsibility and maturity. When individuals wait constantly for instructions, their vocation risks remaining **externally directed rather than internally owned**.

Formation therefore seeks to cultivate self-activation so that the candidate gradually becomes a **responsible protagonist of his own vocational journey**. Rather than simply conforming to expectations, the formee learns to act from an inner sense of purpose and conviction. Healthy self-activation allows the missionary to:

- discern God's call personally and consciously
- take responsibility for personal growth and formation
- recognize needs in community or mission settings
- initiate creative pastoral responses
- collaborate actively in community life.

Without this capacity, missionary life may become mechanical or dependent, with the individual functioning mainly as a passive executor of tasks. With self-activation, however, the missionary becomes an **active participant in God's mission**, capable of responding creatively and responsibly to emerging needs.

Self-Activation and the Growth of Vocational Ownership

A fundamental goal of formation is the **interiorization of vocation**. In the early stages of formation, candidates may follow rules and structures primarily because they are expected to do so. Over time, however, authentic vocational maturity requires that these commitments be **freely embraced from within**.

Self-activation plays a decisive role in this transition. When this capacity grows, the formee gradually moves from:

- external obedience → internal commitment
- compliance with rules → personal appropriation of values
- dependence on authority → responsible collaboration.

This transformation allows the candidate to live his vocation with **conviction, creativity, and personal investment**.

Examples of Self-Activation in Formation

Self-activation becomes visible through concrete behaviours that reflect initiative and personal responsibility. Examples include:

- A formee noticing the spiritual needs of migrants in the local area and proposing a pastoral outreach initiative to serve them.

- A novice developing a consistent rhythm of personal prayer without requiring constant reminders from formators.
- A student organizing a Scripture-sharing group among young people in the parish where he serves.
- A community member taking responsibility for improving communication during community meetings.
- A candidate seeking feedback from formators in order to grow personally.

In each of these situations, the individual moves beyond passive participation and becomes **an active contributor to mission and community life**.

Obstacles to Self-Activation

Several psychological and cultural factors may inhibit the development of self-activation.

Common obstacles include:

- **Fear of failure.** Some individuals avoid initiative because they fear criticism or rejection.
- **Excessive dependence on authority.** When individuals have been accustomed to highly directive environments, they may struggle to act independently.
- **Low self-confidence.** A lack of confidence in one's abilities can lead to hesitation or passivity.
- **Perfectionism.** When individuals believe they must act flawlessly, they may avoid acting altogether.
- **Cultural patterns of hierarchy.** In certain cultural contexts, initiative may be perceived as disrespectful toward authority figures.

Formation therefore aims to create an environment where initiative is encouraged and mistakes are understood as part of the learning process.

Self-Reflection Questions

Formees can deepen awareness of this capacity by reflecting on questions such as:

- What activities awaken energy, enthusiasm, and motivation in me?
- Do I tend to wait for instructions before taking action?
- How comfortable am I proposing ideas or initiatives?
- When was the last time I took initiative for something meaningful?
- What fears or doubts prevent me from acting on my convictions?
- In what situations do I feel most confident to take responsibility?

These reflections help candidates identify both strengths and areas needing development.

Formation Strategies for Developing Self-Activation

Formation programs can intentionally cultivate self-activation through structured experiences that encourage initiative and responsibility.

1. Personal Mission Statement: Formees are invited to write a short statement describing their personal sense of vocation, gifts, and missionary aspirations. This exercise helps clarify inner motivations and strengthens the sense of personal responsibility for one's vocation.

2. Initiative Projects: Each formee develops a small project within the formation community or pastoral setting. Examples may include organizing prayer groups, educational workshops, or social

outreach activities. These projects provide opportunities to practice planning, collaboration, and leadership.

3. Discernment Workshops: Workshops focused on discernment help candidates distinguish between authentic desires rooted in vocation and impulsive or ego-driven motivations. Learning to interpret inner movements helps candidates act more responsibly and confidently.

4. Courage Practices in Community: Community meetings can intentionally encourage initiative by inviting members to propose ideas, improvements, or new apostolic possibilities. Creating a safe space for dialogue strengthens the confidence needed to take initiative.

5. Leadership Opportunities: Assigning rotating responsibilities in community life—such as organizing community prayer, coordinating recreation, or leading discussions—helps candidates practice active participation and responsible leadership.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators play a crucial role in nurturing the development of self-activation. Their role is not merely to direct behaviour but to **encourage personal responsibility and initiative**.

Formators should:

- affirm initiatives taken by candidates
- challenge patterns of passivity
- encourage creative thinking
- help candidates discern motivations behind initiatives
- create an environment where mistakes are seen as opportunities for growth.

At the same time, formators must guide candidates to ensure that initiative remains aligned with community life and missionary values.

Helpful accompaniment questions include:

- “What do you feel called to do in this situation?”
- “What initiative could you take to address this need?”
- “What prevents you from acting on this idea?”
- “How might this initiative serve the mission of the community?”

These questions encourage the candidate to reflect and take ownership of his actions.

Assessment Tool

Self-activation can be evaluated periodically through reflective assessment tools.

Self-Activation Scale (1–5)

Statement	Rating
I take initiative when I see a need	
I act on my convictions	
I express my ideas confidently in community	
I assume responsibility for my growth	
I propose solutions rather than waiting for instructions	
I feel motivated to contribute actively to mission	

Scores can be discussed during accompaniment sessions to identify areas of growth.

Spiritual Integration

Self-activation is not merely a psychological trait; it has deep spiritual significance. Throughout Scripture, God calls individuals to respond actively to His invitation. The response to God's call always involves **personal initiative and courageous action**.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus publicly proclaims His mission: “**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.**” (Luke 4:18)

This declaration reflects a profound sense of mission and initiative grounded in obedience to the Father.

Similarly, the Psalmist encourages trustful commitment to action: “**Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.**” (Psalm 37:5)

These passages remind us that vocation does not call for passive compliance but for **active cooperation with grace**. God's call invites the person to step forward, assume responsibility, and participate creatively in the unfolding of His mission.

In this perspective, self-activation becomes an expression of **faith in action**. It reflects a willingness to offer one's gifts, energy, and creativity in service of the Gospel.

Formation Insight

When self-activation develops within the formation process, the candidate gradually becomes a missionary who does not simply follow instructions but who **actively seeks ways to serve the Kingdom of God**. Initiative becomes guided by discernment, responsibility, and love for mission.

Such missionaries embody the dynamic spirit of apostolic availability: persons who recognize needs, respond with generosity, and collaborate creatively with others in the service of the Gospel.

2. Self-Mastery

Definition: Self-mastery refers to the **capacity of the person to regulate impulses, emotions, and behaviours in light of consciously embraced values, commitments, and goals**. It is the ability to govern one's inner life so that actions correspond to convictions rather than to momentary desires or emotional reactions. Self-mastery involves several interconnected abilities:

- **Discipline** – the ability to sustain constructive habits and practices.
- **Self-control** – the capacity to moderate impulses and emotional reactions.
- **Integration of desires** – the harmonization of personal needs, emotions, and aspirations with deeper values and commitments.

In psychological terms, self-mastery reflects the development of **inner governance**, where the individual becomes capable of directing his behaviour in a coherent and purposeful manner. Rather than being controlled by impulses, moods, or external pressures, the person acts from a stable centre of self-awareness and intentional choice.

It is important to emphasize that self-mastery is **not repression**. Repression attempts to suppress or deny emotions and desires, often leading to inner tension or psychological fragmentation. Authentic self-mastery, by contrast, involves **recognizing emotions and desires while guiding them constructively** toward meaningful goals.

Thus, self-mastery represents **freedom over compulsions rather than suppression of desires**. It allows the person to respond to situations thoughtfully rather than impulsively.

Importance of Self-Mastery in Formation

Missionary life demands a high degree of personal discipline and emotional maturity. Candidates for missionary vocation are entrusted with responsibilities that require stability, reliability, and integrity.

For this reason, self-mastery becomes a fundamental component of human formation. It enables the missionary to live faithfully the commitments of religious life and apostolic mission. Missionary life requires:

- **emotional stability**, especially in stressful pastoral situations
- **disciplined habits**, such as regular prayer, study, and community participation
- **fidelity to commitments**, including vows, community responsibilities, and apostolic service.

Without adequate self-mastery, individuals may become vulnerable to patterns that weaken vocational stability. These vulnerabilities may include:

- addictions or compulsive behaviours
- impulsive emotional reactions
- difficulty maintaining discipline
- inconsistency in commitments
- inability to persevere through challenges.

Such patterns can gradually erode personal integrity and weaken missionary effectiveness.

Self-mastery therefore strengthens the missionary's ability to **remain faithful to his vocation even when emotions fluctuate or circumstances become difficult.**

Self-Mastery and Interior Freedom

One of the deepest purposes of self-mastery is the development of **interior freedom**. Freedom is often misunderstood as the ability to do whatever one desires. In reality, authentic freedom emerges when the person is able to **choose what is good and meaningful despite internal impulses or external pressures**. Self-mastery allows the missionary to:

- remain calm when confronted with criticism or conflict
- persevere in commitments even when motivation declines
- regulate emotional responses in pastoral situations
- resist distractions or temptations that undermine vocation.

In this sense, self-mastery strengthens the ability to live according to one's deepest values rather than being governed by temporary emotions or impulses.

Self-Mastery and the Integration of Desire

Human desires are not enemies of spiritual life. They represent powerful sources of energy that can support growth and creativity. However, when desires are not integrated, they may create inner conflicts that weaken stability.

Self-mastery therefore involves **the integration of desires into a coherent life orientation**. The person learns to recognize his desires, interpret them in the light of vocation, and channel them constructively. Through this process, desires become aligned with deeper commitments such as:

- love for God
- dedication to mission
- responsibility toward community.

When this integration occurs, the person experiences greater coherence between inner life and external behaviour.

Examples of Self-Mastery in Formation

Self-mastery becomes visible through everyday behaviours that demonstrate emotional regulation and disciplined commitment. Examples include:

- pausing and reflecting before reacting to criticism or disagreement
- maintaining healthy boundaries in the use of digital technology and social media
- persevering in prayer even when distractions arise
- completing responsibilities faithfully even when motivation is low
- choosing constructive responses rather than reacting impulsively to frustration.

These behaviours demonstrate that the person is increasingly capable of guiding his actions according to values and commitments rather than momentary impulses.

Common Challenges to Self-Mastery

Several psychological dynamics can make the development of self-mastery difficult.

These may include:

- **Emotional impulsivity:** Strong emotions may lead individuals to react quickly without reflection.
- **Instant gratification culture:** Modern environments often encourage immediate satisfaction rather than patience or discipline.
- **Stress and fatigue:** Under pressure, individuals may revert to less mature patterns of behaviour.
- **Unresolved emotional conflicts:** Inner tensions or unmet needs may weaken the ability to regulate behaviour.

Formation therefore aims to create a supportive environment where candidates can gradually strengthen their capacity for self-regulation and disciplined living.

Self-Reflection Questions

Formees can deepen awareness of self-mastery by reflecting on questions such as:

- What habits or behaviours tend to control my actions?
- How do I usually react when I feel frustrated, criticized, or misunderstood?
- Can I delay gratification for the sake of long-term goals?
- Do I maintain discipline even when motivation decreases?
- Which situations challenge my self-control the most?
- What practices help me regain inner balance?

Such reflection helps candidates recognize patterns that either support or hinder their personal growth.

Formation Strategies for Developing Self-Mastery

Formation programs can intentionally strengthen self-mastery through practical exercises that cultivate discipline and emotional awareness.

Habit Awareness Exercise

Candidates are encouraged to observe and record their daily habits for a week. This exercise helps identify patterns related to:

- sleep and rest
- digital use
- prayer and study

- emotional reactions.

The goal is to develop awareness of habits that either support or undermine personal discipline.

Rule of Life

Developing a personal rule of life helps create a balanced rhythm that integrates:

- prayer
- study
- community life
- physical well-being
- recreation.

A consistent structure supports stability and prevents disorganization or impulsive behaviour.

Delayed Gratification Practices

Simple disciplines strengthen the ability to delay gratification and strengthen self-control.

Examples include:

- digital fasting for specific periods
- limiting unnecessary media consumption
- practicing silence or reflection before responding to situations.

Such practices help candidates develop patience and emotional regulation.

Emotional Regulation Practices

Formation can include training in techniques that help individuals manage emotions constructively, such as:

- reflective journaling
- breathing and mindfulness exercises
- prayerful self-examination.

These practices strengthen awareness and reduce impulsive reactions.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators play an important role in helping candidates grow in self-mastery. Effective accompaniment requires sensitivity and understanding. Formators should:

- avoid moralizing or shaming responses to difficulties
- explore underlying motivations and emotional patterns
- support gradual and realistic growth.

Growth in self-mastery rarely occurs through rigid discipline alone. It requires understanding the deeper dynamics that influence behaviour. Formators should encourage:

- setting realistic goals
- developing accountability structures
- reflecting on setbacks without discouragement
- recognizing progress over time.

Helpful accompaniment questions include:

- “What emotions were present in that situation?”
- “What helped you remain calm or lose control?”
- “What practices might help you respond differently next time?”

These questions help candidates interpret their experiences and develop greater awareness of their inner life.

Assessment Tool

Self-mastery can be evaluated periodically through reflective assessment tools.

Self-Mastery Inventory

Item	Rating
I can delay gratification when necessary	
I regulate my emotional reactions	
I maintain healthy daily habits	
I remain calm under stress	
I fulfil responsibilities consistently	
I manage distractions effectively	

This tool helps candidates and formators identify strengths and areas requiring further growth.

Spiritual Integration

Self-mastery is deeply rooted in the spiritual tradition of the Church. Scripture frequently emphasizes the importance of self-control and disciplined living.

The Book of Proverbs offers a powerful image: “**A person without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.**” (Proverbs 25:28)

This image illustrates the vulnerability of a life without inner governance. Just as a city without protective walls becomes exposed to external threats, a person lacking self-mastery becomes vulnerable to impulses, temptations, and emotional instability.

Christian spirituality understands self-mastery as a fruit of the **work of grace within the human person**. Through prayer, reflection, and disciplined living, the individual gradually becomes capable of aligning desires with God’s will.

In missionary life, self-mastery strengthens the capacity to live the evangelical counsels faithfully and to persevere in service despite challenges.

Formation Insight

When self-mastery develops within the formation process, the missionary becomes capable of **living a coherent and disciplined life that reflects inner freedom and spiritual maturity**. Emotional reactions become more balanced, habits more stable, and commitments more reliable.

Such maturity allows the missionary to serve others with patience, clarity, and generosity. Self-mastery therefore becomes not merely a personal virtue but a foundation for **credible witness, stable community life, and sustained apostolic mission**.

3. Spontaneity

Definition: Spontaneity refers to the **capacity to express feelings, thoughts, and responses in a natural, authentic, and life-giving way without excessive self-censorship or rigid control**. It is the ability to respond to situations with freshness, openness, and emotional honesty while remaining grounded in respect and responsibility. Spontaneity reflects several interconnected qualities:

- **Emotional openness** – the willingness to experience and express genuine emotions.
- **Naturalness** – the ability to be oneself without artificial behaviour or excessive self-consciousness.
- **Creativity** – the capacity to respond flexibly and imaginatively to situations.

A spontaneous person is able to engage life with **authentic presence and vitality**. Rather than carefully calculating every reaction or hiding behind rigid behavioural patterns, the person allows emotions and thoughts to be expressed in ways that are sincere, appropriate, and relationally meaningful.

In psychological terms, spontaneity reflects a **healthy integration between inner experience and outward expression**. It allows the individual to communicate emotions and ideas naturally, creating an atmosphere of trust and authenticity in relationships.

Importance of Spontaneity in Formation

While discipline and self-mastery are essential for missionary life, an excessive emphasis on control or formality can sometimes lead to rigidity. When emotional expression becomes overly restricted, religious life may appear:

- emotionally sterile
- overly formal or mechanical
- relationally distant or guarded.

Such rigidity can gradually weaken community life and pastoral relationships. People may experience the missionary as distant, unapproachable, or lacking emotional warmth.

Healthy spontaneity helps counterbalance this rigidity by bringing **life, joy, and authenticity** into relationships and community life. It allows individuals to express emotions naturally, respond creatively to situations, and engage others with warmth and sincerity.

In formation settings, spontaneity contributes to several important aspects of personal development:

- **Joyful community life** – spontaneous humour, appreciation, and emotional sharing strengthen fraternal bonds.
- **Authentic relationships** – emotional honesty fosters trust and openness.
- **Emotional vitality** – the ability to experience and express feelings supports psychological well-being.
- **Pastoral effectiveness** – people are often more receptive to ministers who relate naturally and authentically.

When spontaneity is integrated with maturity and discernment, it enriches both community life and apostolic mission.

Spontaneity and Authentic Human Presence

Authenticity is a central quality of effective missionary presence. People often recognize authenticity not through formal discourse but through the **naturalness of a person's behaviour and emotional expression**.

Spontaneity allows the missionary to be present to others with sincerity and warmth. It enables him to:

- share joy and encouragement with others
- express gratitude and appreciation naturally
- respond creatively to unexpected situations
- engage people with empathy and emotional availability.

In pastoral ministry, spontaneity often communicates more than carefully prepared words. A simple gesture of kindness, a spontaneous prayer, or a genuine expression of concern can deeply touch the lives of others.

Thus, spontaneity contributes to the development of **human warmth and pastoral sensitivity**.

The Balance Between Spontaneity and Self-Mastery

Authentic spontaneity does not mean uncontrolled impulsivity. It must always be balanced with discernment and emotional awareness. Healthy spontaneity:

- expresses emotions appropriately
- respects relational boundaries
- remains attentive to the needs of others.

Unhealthy impulsivity, by contrast, may involve:

- speaking without reflection
- expressing emotions in ways that harm relationships
- disregarding the context or sensitivity of others.

Formation therefore aims to cultivate **mature spontaneity**, where emotional expression is both authentic and responsible.

This balance allows the missionary to remain emotionally alive while maintaining the self-control necessary for responsible relationships.

Examples of Spontaneity in Formation and Community Life

Spontaneity becomes visible through simple and natural expressions of emotion and creativity. Examples include:

- sharing personal experiences and emotions during prayer sharing or faith-sharing groups
- laughing freely during moments of community recreation
- expressing gratitude spontaneously to community members or collaborators
- offering words of encouragement to someone facing difficulty
- improvising a prayer or reflection during pastoral encounters
- responding creatively to unexpected pastoral situations.

These expressions contribute to an atmosphere of **warmth, joy, and authenticity within the formation community**.

Obstacles to Spontaneity

Some individuals find it difficult to express spontaneity due to psychological or cultural factors. Common obstacles include:

- **Fear of vulnerability:** Some individuals avoid expressing emotions because they fear being judged or misunderstood.
- **Excessive self-consciousness:** Constant concern about how others perceive them may inhibit natural expression.
- **Cultural expectations of formality:** In certain contexts, emotional restraint is strongly valued.
- **Past emotional wounds:** Individuals who have experienced rejection or criticism may become cautious in expressing feelings.

Formation therefore seeks to create a **safe and supportive environment** where individuals gradually learn to express themselves with greater authenticity.

Self-Reflection Questions

Formees can explore their capacity for spontaneity through reflective questions such as:

- Do I feel comfortable expressing my emotions in community settings?
- Do I tend to hide my feelings in order to appear composed or controlled?
- Am I afraid that emotional openness might make me appear weak?
- When do I feel most free and alive in my interactions with others?
- What situations allow me to express myself naturally?

Reflecting on these questions helps candidates recognize both strengths and areas where greater openness may be possible.

Formation Strategies for Developing Spontaneity

Formation programs can encourage spontaneity through experiences that promote emotional expression and creative engagement.

Creative Expression Workshops: Workshops involving art, music, writing, or drama help candidates express emotions and ideas in creative ways. These activities encourage freedom of expression and reduce excessive self-consciousness.

Storytelling Circles: Participants share meaningful life experiences or vocational stories in small groups. Storytelling fosters emotional openness and strengthens interpersonal connections.

Improvisation Exercises: Improvisational activities—such as spontaneous dialogue or role-playing—encourage flexibility and creativity in responding to situations.

Spontaneous Prayer: Encouraging spontaneous prayer during community gatherings helps candidates develop comfort with expressing faith and emotions naturally before God and others.

Recreational Activities: Games, sports, and informal community gatherings create spaces where spontaneity and joy can flourish naturally.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators can help candidates develop healthy spontaneity through supportive accompaniment. They should encourage:

- greater emotional awareness
- authenticity in self-expression
- appropriate sharing of personal experiences
- creativity in pastoral engagement.

At the same time, formators should guide candidates to maintain balance so that spontaneity does not become impulsivity. They should avoid encouraging patterns such as:

- emotional suppression or excessive control
- rigid formalism that discourages natural expression
- uncontrolled emotional outbursts.

Helpful accompaniment questions may include:

- “How comfortable do you feel sharing your emotions with others?”
- “What prevents you from expressing yourself more freely?”
- “When do you experience the greatest sense of joy and vitality?”

Such questions help candidates explore the deeper dynamics that influence their emotional expression.

Assessment Tool

Spontaneity can be evaluated periodically through reflective assessment tools.

Spontaneity Reflection Scale

Statement	Rating
I express joy easily in community life	
I can show emotions honestly and respectfully	
I feel comfortable being myself with others	
I can respond creatively to unexpected situations	
I share appreciation or gratitude naturally	

This assessment helps identify areas where greater openness and authenticity may be cultivated.

Spiritual Integration

Spontaneity also has a spiritual dimension. The Christian life is not meant to be rigid or mechanical but animated by the **joy and freedom of the Spirit**.

Saint Paul encourages believers: “**Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.**” (Romans 12:15)

This exhortation highlights the importance of emotional participation in the lives of others. Authentic Christian community involves sharing both joy and sorrow with sincerity and compassion.

Throughout the Gospel, Jesus himself demonstrates spontaneity in his interactions with people. He responds with tenderness to those who suffer, expresses joy with his disciples, and engages others with warmth and authenticity.

Spontaneity therefore reflects the **freedom of the Spirit at work in the human heart**. When guided by love and discernment, it allows the missionary to live relationships with genuine warmth and emotional vitality.

Formation Insight

When spontaneity develops within the formation process, the missionary becomes capable of relating to others with **naturalness, joy, and emotional authenticity**. Community life becomes more vibrant, relationships deepen, and pastoral ministry becomes more human and approachable.

Such missionaries embody a balanced personality in which discipline and freedom coexist. Their spontaneity communicates warmth, hope, and authenticity—qualities that help others encounter the Gospel not merely through words but through the **living presence of a joyful and genuine disciple of Christ**.

4. Relational Presence

Definition: Relational presence refers to the **capacity to be fully attentive, emotionally available, and genuinely engaged with another person**. It is the ability to encounter others not merely at the level of conversation or task, but at the level of attentive human presence. A person who possesses

relational presence communicates through words, gestures, and attitudes that the other person is valued, heard, and respected. This capacity includes several essential relational abilities:

- **Empathy** – the ability to perceive and understand the feelings and perspectives of another person.
- **Deep listening** – the capacity to listen attentively without interrupting, judging, or preparing immediate responses.
- **Genuine engagement** – an authentic interest in the experiences, struggles, and hopes of the other person.

Relational presence is not simply a communication technique. It is an **attitude of attentive openness** in which the person becomes emotionally and psychologically available to others. In such presence, the individual is able to set aside distractions, self-preoccupation, and defensive reactions in order to focus fully on the person before him.

Psychologically, relational presence reflects the capacity for **emotional attunement**, where one's attention and sensitivity become aligned with the emotional experience of another. This ability allows individuals to create relational spaces characterized by trust, safety, and genuine connection.

Importance of Relational Presence in Formation

Relational presence is essential for missionary life because the vocation itself is fundamentally relational. Missionaries are called not only to proclaim the Gospel but also to **encounter people personally and compassionately**. Several dimensions of missionary life depend heavily on this capacity:

- **Pastoral sensitivity** – the ability to recognize and respond to the emotional and spiritual needs of others.
- **Community life** – the building of relationships characterized by trust, dialogue, and mutual support.
- **Accompaniment and spiritual guidance** – helping individuals discern God's action in their lives.

Without relational presence, pastoral ministry risks becoming mechanical or functional. The missionary may perform tasks and responsibilities efficiently, yet people may still feel unseen, unheard, or emotionally distant. When relational presence is lacking, ministry can become:

- impersonal
- overly task-oriented
- emotionally distant.

In contrast, when relational presence is cultivated, the missionary becomes a **living sign of compassionate attention**, capable of creating spaces where individuals feel understood and supported.

This capacity is particularly important in pastoral contexts where individuals seek not only advice but also understanding, encouragement, and hope.

Relational Presence and the Experience of Being Heard

One of the most powerful experiences a person can have is the feeling of being **truly heard and understood**. In many situations of suffering or confusion, individuals do not initially seek solutions but rather attentive presence.

Relational presence allows the missionary to provide this attentive space. Through genuine listening and empathetic engagement, the missionary communicates that the person's experiences and emotions matter. Such presence can:

- reduce feelings of isolation

- strengthen trust in relationships
- open pathways for deeper dialogue and healing.

In many cases, the experience of being heard becomes the **first step toward emotional or spiritual healing**.

Relational Presence in Community Life

Relational presence is equally important within formation communities. Community life involves daily interactions that require patience, understanding, and openness.

When members practice relational presence, community relationships become characterized by:

- attentive listening
- mutual support
- respectful dialogue
- shared emotional experiences.

Without this presence, community life may become superficial, with individuals coexisting physically but remaining emotionally distant from one another.

Formation therefore encourages candidates to cultivate relational presence so that community life becomes a **school of attentive communion**.

Examples of Relational Presence

Relational presence becomes visible through concrete behaviours that communicate attentiveness and empathy. Examples include:

- listening attentively when someone shares personal difficulties or concerns
- maintaining eye contact and focused attention during conversations
- responding with empathy rather than quick solutions or judgments
- being emotionally available to community members experiencing stress or sadness
- offering time and attention to someone who feels isolated or discouraged.

These actions may appear simple, yet they often have profound effects on relationships and pastoral encounters.

Obstacles to Relational Presence

Several factors may limit the ability to practice relational presence. Common obstacles include:

- **Distraction and multitasking:** Constant engagement with digital devices or internal preoccupations may prevent attentive listening.
- **Self-centeredness:** When individuals focus primarily on their own concerns or agendas, they may struggle to attend to the experiences of others.
- **Fear of emotional involvement:** Some individuals may avoid deeper engagement with others to protect themselves from emotional discomfort.
- **Premature problem-solving:** The tendency to offer immediate advice or solutions may interrupt the process of genuine listening.

Formation programs therefore emphasize the importance of **cultivating attentive awareness and emotional openness**.

Self-Reflection Questions

Candidates can explore their capacity for relational presence through reflective questions such as:

- Do people feel genuinely heard when they speak with me?
- Do I give others my full attention during conversations?
- Am I often distracted or preoccupied when others are speaking?
- Do I tend to interrupt or quickly offer advice?
- Do people feel comfortable sharing their concerns with me?
- How do I respond when someone expresses emotional pain or vulnerability?

These questions help candidates recognize patterns in their relational behaviour and identify areas for growth.

Formation Strategies for Developing Relational Presence

Formation programs can strengthen relational presence through experiences that develop listening and empathetic engagement.

Active Listening Training

Workshops on active listening teach practical skills such as:

- maintaining attentive posture and eye contact
- paraphrasing what the other person has said
- asking clarifying questions
- resisting the impulse to interrupt or judge.

These practices help candidates develop disciplined listening habits.

Empathy Exercises

Exercises designed to increase empathy may include:

- reflecting on the emotional perspective of another person
- sharing personal experiences in small groups
- role-playing pastoral situations that require sensitivity.

Such exercises strengthen the capacity to recognize and understand the emotional experiences of others.

Pastoral Immersion Experiences

Direct pastoral experiences—such as visiting hospitals, prisons, or marginalized communities—help candidates encounter real human suffering and develop compassionate attentiveness. These experiences deepen sensitivity to the emotional and spiritual needs of others.

Reflective Dialogue

Group reflection sessions allow candidates to practice attentive listening and respectful dialogue within the formation community.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators play an important role in cultivating relational presence within the formation community. They should encourage candidates to:

- listen attentively without interrupting
- remain present during conversations
- engage others without judgment
- respond with compassion and patience.

Formators can model relational presence through their own interactions with candidates. When formators listen attentively and respond empathetically, they create an environment where such behaviour becomes normative.

Formators should also help candidates recognize patterns that weaken relational presence, such as:

- distraction
- defensive listening
- impatience
- emotional withdrawal.

Through constructive feedback and encouragement, formators can help candidates grow in relational awareness and empathy.

Assessment Tool

Relational presence can be evaluated periodically through reflective assessment tools.

Relational Presence Inventory

Item	Rating
I listen attentively without interrupting others	
I show empathy when others express emotions	
People feel comfortable sharing personal concerns with me	
I remain present and attentive during conversations	
I respond with understanding rather than immediate judgment	

This assessment can help candidates and formators identify areas where relational sensitivity can be strengthened.

Spiritual Integration

Relational presence has profound spiritual significance within the Christian tradition. The ministry of Jesus is characterized by attentive presence and compassionate encounter.

A powerful example appears in the story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24). After the resurrection, the disciples are walking in confusion and sorrow. Jesus approaches them and walks alongside them, listening to their story before offering interpretation and guidance.

This narrative reveals an important pastoral principle: **presence precedes explanation**. Jesus first listens and accompanies before speaking.

Relational presence therefore reflects a Christ-like way of encountering others. By walking with people in their experiences, the missionary becomes a sign of God's compassionate presence.

Formation Insight

When relational presence develops within the formation process, the missionary becomes capable of accompanying others with attentiveness, empathy, and patience. People feel understood rather than judged, supported rather than ignored.

In this way, relational presence transforms ministry from a series of tasks into a **living encounter between persons**. The missionary becomes a mediator of God's compassionate presence, demonstrating through attentive listening and genuine engagement that every person's story matters.

Often, such presence heals before words are spoken. Through attentive listening and compassionate engagement, the missionary reflects the relational love of Christ and becomes a credible witness to the Gospel in everyday human encounters.

5. Intimacy

Definition: Intimacy refers to the **capacity to enter into deep, authentic relationships characterized by trust, openness, and appropriate vulnerability**. It involves the ability to share one's inner world—thoughts, emotions, hopes, struggles, and personal experiences—with another person in a way that fosters genuine connection and mutual understanding.

Intimacy does not simply mean emotional closeness; it implies a relationship in which individuals feel **safe to reveal their true selves without fear of rejection or judgment**. Such relationships are marked by sincerity, respect, and mutual responsibility.

At the psychological level, intimacy reflects the ability to move beyond superficial interactions and engage others at a deeper personal level. It involves the willingness to:

- reveal personal feelings and experiences
- receive the experiences of others with empathy
- sustain relationships characterized by mutual trust.

Healthy intimacy requires both **emotional openness and appropriate boundaries**. While individuals share their inner experiences, they also respect the autonomy and dignity of the other person.

Thus, intimacy is not emotional dependency or possessiveness. Rather, it represents **a mature capacity for relational depth grounded in trust and freedom**.

Importance of Intimacy in Formation

Religious and missionary life is fundamentally relational. Community life, pastoral ministry, and spiritual accompaniment all require the ability to form authentic and meaningful relationships. Healthy intimacy supports several important dimensions of formation:

- **Fraternal life** – community relationships deepen when members can share experiences, struggles, and hopes openly.
- **Authentic friendships** – meaningful friendships provide emotional support and encouragement.
- **Spiritual communion** – sharing faith experiences strengthens mutual growth in spiritual life.

When individuals possess the capacity for intimacy, they are able to build relationships characterized by trust, openness, and mutual care. Such relationships strengthen both community life and missionary collaboration.

In contrast, when the capacity for intimacy is underdeveloped, individuals may struggle with relational difficulties such as:

- emotional isolation
- superficial or distant relationships
- fear of vulnerability
- difficulty trusting others.

These patterns can lead to loneliness even within community life. Individuals may live physically close to others yet remain emotionally disconnected.

Formation therefore seeks to cultivate the capacity for intimacy so that missionaries can experience **authentic fraternal relationships and pastoral closeness with others**.

Intimacy and Emotional Maturity

Developing intimacy requires emotional maturity. Mature intimacy involves the ability to share one's inner experiences without losing personal autonomy or becoming emotionally dependent. Several elements contribute to mature intimacy:

- **Trust:** The ability to believe that others will respond with respect and understanding.
- **Vulnerability:** The willingness to reveal personal experiences and emotions.
- **Respect for boundaries:** Recognizing that closeness does not eliminate personal freedom or individuality.
- **Reciprocity:** Healthy relationships involve mutual sharing rather than one-sided dependence.

When these elements are balanced, relationships become sources of encouragement, emotional support, and spiritual growth.

Intimacy in Community Life

Formation communities provide a privileged environment for developing relational intimacy. Daily interactions, shared prayer, common responsibilities, and informal conversations gradually create opportunities for deeper connection. In healthy communities, intimacy emerges through practices such as:

- open dialogue and respectful communication
- sharing personal experiences during community gatherings
- mutual support during moments of difficulty
- celebrating joys and accomplishments together.

These interactions strengthen the sense of belonging and mutual trust within the community.

Without such relational openness, however, community life may become merely functional, with individuals sharing space and responsibilities but lacking deeper emotional connection.

Intimacy in Pastoral Ministry

The capacity for intimacy also enhances pastoral ministry. People often seek spiritual guidance or pastoral support during moments of vulnerability or crisis. In such situations, they need ministers who are capable of **empathetic presence and authentic relational engagement**.

When missionaries possess the capacity for intimacy, they can accompany others with compassion and understanding. Their presence communicates genuine concern rather than professional detachment.

However, pastoral intimacy must always remain guided by **appropriate boundaries and ethical responsibility**, ensuring that relationships remain respectful and balanced.

Examples of Healthy Intimacy

Healthy intimacy becomes visible through behaviours that reflect trust, openness, and relational depth. Examples include:

- sharing personal struggles or doubts with a trusted companion or spiritual director
- maintaining close friendships within the community that foster mutual encouragement
- discussing personal experiences and faith journeys during group sharing sessions
- offering emotional support to community members during difficult times

- celebrating important moments of joy or achievement together.

These experiences help individuals develop deeper connections and strengthen the relational fabric of the community.

Obstacles to Intimacy

Several psychological or cultural factors may inhibit the development of intimacy. Common obstacles include:

- **Fear of vulnerability:** Individuals may fear rejection or misunderstanding if they reveal their inner experiences.
- **Past relational wounds:** Experiences of betrayal or rejection may lead to emotional withdrawal.
- **Excessive independence:** Some individuals prefer self-reliance and avoid relational dependence.
- **Confusion between intimacy and dependency:** Individuals may fear that emotional closeness will lead to loss of autonomy.

Formation therefore seeks to help candidates gradually develop trust and openness within a supportive environment.

Reflection Questions

Formees can deepen their awareness of intimacy through reflective questions such as:

- Who truly knows my inner life and personal struggles?
- Do I feel comfortable sharing my emotions with others?
- Do I fear being emotionally known or understood by others?
- How easily do I trust people with personal information?
- Do my relationships remain superficial or do they involve deeper sharing?
- Am I able to maintain closeness without becoming dependent?

Reflecting on these questions helps candidates identify patterns in their relational behaviour and areas where deeper openness may be possible.

Formation Strategies for Developing Intimacy

Formation programs can intentionally encourage relational depth through structured experiences that promote trust and emotional openness.

Peer Sharing Groups: Small group sharing sessions provide opportunities for candidates to discuss personal experiences, faith journeys, and vocational challenges. These groups foster mutual understanding and emotional connection.

Trust-Building Exercises: Activities designed to strengthen trust—such as guided dialogue or reflective group activities—help participants become more comfortable with vulnerability and openness.

Affective Maturity Workshops: Workshops focused on emotional awareness and relational skills help candidates understand the dynamics of intimacy, boundaries, and healthy attachment.

Personal Accompaniment: Regular accompaniment by a spiritual director or formator allows candidates to explore personal experiences in a confidential and supportive environment.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators can foster the development of intimacy within the formation community by encouraging open and respectful dialogue. They should:

- promote environments where personal sharing is welcomed
- respect the confidentiality of personal disclosures
- model authenticity and empathy in their own interactions
- guide candidates in maintaining appropriate relational boundaries.

Formators should also help candidates distinguish between **healthy intimacy and emotional dependency**, ensuring that relationships remain balanced and respectful.

Through patient accompaniment, formators help candidates develop the relational maturity necessary for authentic community life and pastoral ministry.

Assessment Tool

The development of intimacy can be evaluated through reflective self-assessment.

Intimacy Reflection Inventory

Statement	Rating
I feel comfortable sharing my feelings with trusted people	
I can trust others with personal experiences	
I maintain healthy emotional boundaries in relationships	
I feel connected to members of my community	
I am able to support others emotionally	

Discussing these responses during accompaniment can help identify areas of relational growth.

Spiritual Integration

The Christian tradition places deep importance on relationships characterized by love, friendship, and communion. Jesus himself models a form of relational intimacy with his disciples.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus says: “**I have called you friends.**” (John 15:15)

By calling his disciples friends rather than servants, Jesus establishes a relationship marked by trust, openness, and shared understanding. He reveals his mission to them and invites them into a relationship of mutual love and fidelity.

This passage highlights that authentic Christian relationships are meant to reflect **communion rather than distance**.

For missionaries, the capacity for intimacy becomes a reflection of the relational nature of God’s love. Through authentic relationships, missionaries witness to the possibility of communion, solidarity, and shared faith.

Formation Insight

When intimacy develops within the formation process, community life becomes a space of genuine connection rather than mere coexistence. Individuals feel supported, understood, and encouraged in their vocational journey.

Such relational depth strengthens both personal well-being and missionary collaboration. Missionaries who are capable of intimacy can accompany others with compassion, build trusting

relationships within communities, and create pastoral environments where people feel welcomed and valued.

In this way, intimacy becomes not only a personal capacity but also a **sign of the Gospel lived in relationships**, reflecting the friendship and communion to which Christ calls his disciples.

6. Self-Soothing

Definition: Self-soothing refers to the **capacity of an individual to calm, regulate, and stabilize oneself during moments of emotional distress, tension, or inner turmoil**. It involves the ability to respond to difficult emotional states—such as anxiety, anger, sadness, or frustration—in ways that restore inner balance rather than intensifying distress.

Psychologically, self-soothing represents the capacity for **internal emotional regulation**. Instead of relying exclusively on external support or reacting impulsively to discomfort, the person learns to manage emotional experiences through constructive internal resources. This capacity allows individuals to:

- recognize emotional distress
- pause before reacting impulsively
- regulate emotional intensity
- restore psychological equilibrium.

Self-soothing is not the suppression or denial of emotions. Rather, it involves **acknowledging emotional experiences while responding to them with awareness and care**. Through this process, individuals develop greater emotional resilience and stability.

Healthy self-soothing practices may include reflective prayer, breathing exercises, physical movement, journaling, or other constructive activities that help calm the mind and body.

Importance of Self-Soothing in Formation

Missionary life involves a wide range of emotional experiences. Community living, pastoral ministry, and intercultural environments can generate moments of stress, conflict, disappointment, or loneliness. Candidates in formation may encounter situations such as:

- interpersonal tensions within community life
- emotional challenges in pastoral encounters
- feelings of isolation during mission assignments
- internal struggles related to vocation and identity.

Without the ability to manage these emotional experiences constructively, individuals may react in ways that undermine both personal well-being and vocational stability.

When self-soothing capacities are weak, individuals may develop maladaptive coping strategies such as:

- addictions or compulsive behaviours
- emotional withdrawal or isolation
- excessive irritability or defensiveness
- avoidance of difficult situations
- burnout and emotional exhaustion.

These patterns often arise when individuals lack the inner resources necessary to regulate emotional distress.

Developing self-soothing capacity therefore becomes an essential element of human formation. It enables missionaries to **navigate emotional challenges with resilience and composure**, maintaining psychological balance even during difficult circumstances.

Self-Soothing and Emotional Resilience

Self-soothing contributes significantly to the development of **emotional resilience**, the ability to recover from stress and adversity. Individuals with strong self-soothing abilities can:

- remain calm during emotionally intense situations
- regulate their reactions before responding
- recover more quickly from disappointment or conflict
- sustain emotional stability during demanding pastoral responsibilities.

This resilience allows missionaries to continue serving others without becoming overwhelmed by emotional strain.

Furthermore, individuals who can soothe themselves effectively are less likely to depend excessively on external reassurance or escape mechanisms. Instead, they develop **internal resources for emotional stability**.

Self-Soothing and Self-Awareness

An important aspect of self-soothing is the development of **emotional awareness**. Individuals must first recognize the presence of emotional distress before they can respond constructively.

Formation therefore encourages candidates to become attentive to signs of emotional tension such as:

- physical tension in the body
- racing thoughts or anxiety
- irritability or impatience
- feelings of sadness or discouragement.

Recognizing these signals allows individuals to intervene early, applying calming practices before emotional distress escalates.

This awareness helps transform emotional difficulties into opportunities for **self-understanding and personal growth**.

Examples of Self-Soothing in Formation

Self-soothing often appears in simple but meaningful practices that help restore emotional balance. Examples include:

- turning to prayer during moments of anxiety or uncertainty
- taking a reflective walk after experiencing conflict or tension
- writing in a journal to process emotional experiences
- practicing deep breathing to calm physical tension
- speaking with a trusted companion or spiritual director
- engaging in creative activities such as music or art.

These practices allow individuals to process emotions constructively rather than reacting impulsively.

Obstacles to Healthy Self-Soothing

Some individuals struggle to develop effective self-soothing strategies due to various psychological factors. Common obstacles include:

- **Emotional avoidance:** Individuals may attempt to ignore or suppress emotions rather than acknowledging them.

- **Dependence on external soothing:** Some individuals rely exclusively on others to regulate their emotions.
- **Impulsive coping strategies:** Behaviours such as excessive digital use or substance dependence may temporarily distract from distress but do not resolve emotional tension.
- **Lack of emotional awareness:** Individuals who struggle to identify their emotions may find it difficult to regulate them.

Formation therefore seeks to help candidates develop both **awareness and practical strategies for managing emotional experiences**.

Self-Reflection Questions

Formees can deepen their awareness of self-soothing through reflective questions such as:

- How do I usually react when I feel anxious, angry, or overwhelmed?
- What situations most often trigger emotional stress for me?
- Do I have healthy practices that help me calm myself during difficult moments?
- Do I tend to avoid emotions or confront them directly?
- What activities help restore my inner peace?

Reflecting on these questions helps candidates identify patterns in their emotional responses and develop healthier coping strategies.

Formation Strategies for Developing Self-Soothing

Formation programs can support the development of self-soothing through practices that cultivate emotional regulation and inner calm.

Breathing and Relaxation Practices: Simple breathing techniques can help regulate physical tension and emotional agitation. These practices teach candidates to pause and calm themselves before reacting impulsively.

Reflective Journaling: Writing about emotional experiences allows individuals to process feelings and gain insight into their reactions. Journaling helps transform emotional tension into reflective awareness.

Contemplative Prayer: Prayer practices centred on silence and attentive presence before God encourage inner stillness and trust. Such practices strengthen the capacity to remain calm and centred even during periods of stress.

Physical Activity: Activities such as walking, exercise, or outdoor recreation help release physical tension and restore emotional balance.

Community Support: Healthy community relationships provide opportunities for sharing emotional experiences and receiving encouragement from others.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators can play a significant role in helping candidates develop self-soothing capacities. They should encourage candidates to:

- recognize emotional stress signals
- practice healthy coping strategies
- seek support when necessary

- reflect on emotional experiences rather than suppressing them.

Formators should also help candidates identify unhealthy coping mechanisms and explore alternative strategies. During accompaniment, helpful questions may include:

- “What helps you calm yourself during stressful situations?”
- “What emotions were present in that experience?”
- “What practices could help you respond more calmly next time?”

Through such reflection, candidates gradually develop greater emotional awareness and resilience.

Assessment Tool

Self-soothing capacity can be evaluated through reflective self-assessment.

Self-Soothing Reflection Inventory

Statement	Rating
I manage stress in constructive ways	
I can calm myself when emotionally upset	
I recognize when I am becoming emotionally overwhelmed	
I have healthy practices that restore inner peace	
I recover from emotional tension without harming relationships	

Discussing these responses during accompaniment sessions helps identify strengths and areas for further development.

Spiritual Integration

Self-soothing also has a profound spiritual dimension. Christian spirituality emphasizes the importance of **inner stillness and trust in God during moments of anxiety or turmoil**.

The Psalmist expresses this invitation: “**Be still and know that I am God.**” (Psalm 46:10)

This passage highlights the spiritual foundation of emotional calm. In moments of distress, the believer is invited to return to an attitude of trust and stillness before God.

Prayer, meditation on Scripture, and contemplative silence help individuals reconnect with this deeper source of peace.

Through spiritual practices, emotional distress can become an opportunity to rediscover **God’s presence as a source of comfort and stability**.

Formation Insight

When self-soothing develops within the formation process, missionaries become capable of maintaining inner balance even during demanding circumstances. Emotional challenges no longer overwhelm them but become opportunities for reflection and growth.

Such stability allows missionaries to remain patient and compassionate toward others, even when facing personal difficulties.

Ultimately, the development of self-soothing strengthens the missionary’s capacity to live with **interior peace, resilience, and trust in God**, enabling him to serve others with calmness and generosity even in moments of stress or conflict.

7. Humour

Definition: Humour refers to the **capacity to perceive life with perspective, playfulness, and lightness**, allowing individuals to recognize the paradoxes, imperfections, and unexpected moments of human experience without becoming overwhelmed by them. It is the ability to laugh appropriately at situations, including one's own limitations, and to approach life with a spirit of joy and balance. Humour involves several important psychological and relational qualities:

- **Perspective** – the ability to see situations from a broader viewpoint rather than becoming trapped in immediate tension or difficulty.
- **Playfulness** – an openness to lightness, creativity, and spontaneous enjoyment.
- **Emotional flexibility** – the ability to shift from seriousness to joy when appropriate.

Healthy humour does not ridicule or demean others. Rather, it reflects an **attitude of joyful realism** that acknowledges the complexity of life without becoming cynical or bitter. Through humour, individuals learn to approach their own weaknesses and life's challenges with humility and acceptance.

Psychologically, humour functions as an **adaptive coping mechanism**. It allows individuals to manage stress and emotional tension while maintaining a balanced outlook on life.

Importance of Humour in Formation

Religious and missionary life involves serious commitments, responsibilities, and challenges. While dedication and discipline are essential, an atmosphere that lacks joy and lightness can become emotionally heavy and rigid. Humour plays an important role in formation because it helps to:

- reduce emotional tension and stress
- strengthen bonds within community life
- encourage humility and self-awareness
- prevent excessive seriousness or rigidity.

When humour is absent, community life may become overly formal or tense. Small misunderstandings may escalate unnecessarily, and individuals may struggle to maintain emotional balance during stressful moments.

Healthy humour creates a relational climate in which individuals feel more relaxed and open. It allows community members to interact with greater ease and authenticity.

Within formation communities, humour contributes to an atmosphere of **joyful fraternity**, where members can share both responsibilities and moments of recreation.

Humour and Emotional Resilience

Humour is closely linked to emotional resilience. When individuals possess the ability to laugh at difficulties or view situations with perspective, they are better able to cope with challenges. Humour helps individuals to:

- release emotional tension
- regain perspective during stressful situations
- avoid becoming overwhelmed by problems
- maintain hope and optimism.

By introducing moments of lightness into difficult situations, humour allows individuals to **reframe experiences in ways that reduce emotional burden**.

For missionaries who encounter demanding pastoral situations, this capacity becomes particularly valuable. It helps them remain emotionally balanced and prevents burnout.

Humour and Humility

Another important function of humour is its connection to humility. The ability to laugh at oneself reflects a recognition that human beings are imperfect and limited.

Individuals who can acknowledge their mistakes with humour demonstrate a **healthy acceptance of their humanity**. This attitude prevents defensiveness and promotes openness to growth.

In contrast, individuals who take themselves too seriously may struggle with criticism or failure. They may interpret mistakes as personal threats rather than opportunities for learning.

Humour therefore contributes to the development of **humble self-awareness**, allowing individuals to approach personal weaknesses with acceptance and patience.

Humour in Community Life

Humour strengthens relationships within community life. Shared laughter often creates a sense of closeness and belonging among community members. Moments of humour can:

- ease tensions during difficult conversations
- transform misunderstandings into opportunities for connection
- foster an atmosphere of warmth and fraternity.

Healthy humour encourages members of the community to interact with one another in ways that are relaxed, supportive, and joyful.

However, humour must always remain **respectful and inclusive**. Humour that ridicules, excludes, or embarrasses others can damage relationships rather than strengthen them.

Formation therefore encourages forms of humour that promote mutual joy and solidarity.

Examples of Healthy Humour

Humour often appears in simple and natural expressions of lightness within daily life. Examples include:

- laughing at one's own mistakes or misunderstandings
- sharing amusing stories during community recreation
- using gentle humour to ease tension during stressful situations
- enjoying playful interactions during community gatherings
- celebrating joyful moments together as a community.

These moments of shared laughter help maintain emotional balance and strengthen the sense of community.

Obstacles to Healthy Humour

Some individuals may find it difficult to express humour due to various psychological or cultural factors. Common obstacles include:

- **Excessive seriousness:** Individuals may feel that humour is incompatible with religious commitment.
- **Fear of appearing immature:** Some people avoid humour because they believe it may undermine their authority or credibility.
- **Perfectionism:** Individuals who are highly self-critical may struggle to laugh at their own mistakes.
- **Cultural norms:** In certain contexts, emotional restraint and seriousness may be strongly valued.

Formation therefore seeks to cultivate a balanced attitude in which seriousness about mission coexists with **joyful appreciation of life**.

Reflection Questions

Formees can reflect on their capacity for humour through questions such as:

- Can I laugh at my own mistakes without feeling embarrassed or defensive?
- Do I approach life with excessive seriousness?
- Do I allow space for joy and playfulness in my daily life?
- How do I respond when humour emerges in community settings?
- Do I contribute to an atmosphere of joy and lightness within the community?

Reflecting on these questions helps candidates become more aware of their attitudes toward humour and emotional expression.

Formation Strategies for Developing Healthy Humour

Formation communities can intentionally cultivate humour through activities that encourage joyful interaction.

Recreation and Leisure: Regular recreation allows members of the community to relax and enjoy each other's company. Sports, outdoor activities, and informal gatherings provide natural opportunities for laughter and shared enjoyment.

Storytelling: Sharing humorous or meaningful life stories during community gatherings encourages personal connection and emotional openness.

Storytelling often reveals the humorous aspects of life experiences, helping individuals see situations from a lighter perspective.

Community Games and Creative Activities: Games and playful activities foster spontaneity, creativity, and joyful interaction among community members.

Such activities strengthen bonds within the community and encourage emotional relaxation.

Celebrations and Festive Moments: Celebrating birthdays, feast days, and community milestones provides opportunities for shared joy and gratitude.

These moments reinforce the sense that community life includes both responsibility and celebration.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators play an important role in shaping the emotional atmosphere of the formation community. By modelling joy and appropriate humour, they help create an environment where candidates feel comfortable expressing lightness and playfulness. Formators should encourage:

- joyful interaction among community members
- the ability to laugh at one's own mistakes
- moments of relaxation and recreation.

At the same time, they should guide candidates to ensure that humour remains respectful and constructive. Humour should never become:

- sarcastic or hurtful
- dismissive of serious concerns
- a way of avoiding difficult conversations.

Balanced humour integrates lightness with responsibility.

Assessment Tool

The capacity for healthy humour can be explored through reflective self-assessment.

Humour Reflection Scale

Statement	Rating
I can laugh at my own mistakes	
I contribute to a joyful atmosphere in community	
I maintain perspective during stressful situations	
I enjoy moments of playfulness and recreation	
My humour respects and uplifts others	

This assessment helps candidates reflect on how humour influences their relationships and emotional well-being.

Spiritual Integration

Joy occupies a central place within Christian spirituality. The Gospel repeatedly emphasizes the joy that emerges from encountering God's love and participating in His mission.

The Psalmist proclaims: "**Serve the Lord with gladness.**" (Psalm 100:2)

This verse reminds believers that service to God is not meant to be burdensome or joyless. Rather, it is characterized by gratitude and joyful dedication.

Within the Christian tradition, joy is often understood as a **fruit of the Holy Spirit**. When individuals live in harmony with God's will, their lives become marked by a deep sense of inner joy.

Humour can be seen as an expression of this spiritual joy. It reflects trust in God's providence and the ability to view life's challenges with hope and perspective.

Formation Insight

When humour is integrated into the formation process, it contributes to the development of emotionally balanced and joyful missionaries. Community life becomes more vibrant, relationships deepen, and individuals learn to face difficulties with resilience and perspective.

Such missionaries communicate hope and joy through their presence. Their humour does not diminish the seriousness of their vocation but rather expresses a **deep confidence in God's goodness and the beauty of life lived in His service**.

In this way, humour becomes a sign of spiritual maturity—a reminder that the missionary vocation, while demanding, is ultimately a path of joy, gratitude, and shared humanity.

8. Adaptability

Definition: Adaptability refers to the **capacity to adjust constructively to change, uncertainty, and new contexts while maintaining inner stability and purpose**. It involves the ability to respond flexibly to evolving circumstances without becoming disoriented, resistant, or discouraged.

At the psychological level, adaptability reflects a dynamic balance between **stability and flexibility**. While individuals remain grounded in their core values and commitments, they are also able to modify their behaviours, expectations, and strategies in response to new realities. Adaptability includes several related capacities:

- **Openness to change** – the willingness to encounter new situations without excessive resistance.
- **Cognitive flexibility** – the ability to interpret situations from different perspectives.

- **Emotional resilience** – the capacity to remain calm and stable during uncertainty.
- **Creative problem-solving** – the ability to generate new responses when familiar solutions are no longer effective.

In formation contexts, adaptability enables individuals to remain rooted in their vocation while engaging the complexities of real-life missionary situations. It allows missionaries to navigate transitions, cultural differences, and pastoral challenges with confidence and creativity.

Importance of Adaptability in Formation

Missionary life rarely unfolds in predictable or stable environments. Those who embrace missionary vocations often find themselves working in contexts that are culturally, socially, and pastorally diverse. Missionaries frequently encounter situations such as:

- **cultural diversity**, where customs, languages, and social norms differ from their own
- **changing pastoral realities**, where new social challenges require new pastoral approaches
- **unpredictable challenges**, including resource limitations, political changes, or unexpected pastoral needs.

In such circumstances, rigid attitudes or resistance to change can hinder both personal growth and missionary effectiveness.

Adaptability allows missionaries to respond constructively to these realities. Rather than perceiving change as a threat, adaptable individuals interpret change as **an opportunity for learning and growth**.

In formation, cultivating adaptability helps candidates develop the resilience necessary to face the dynamic nature of missionary life. It prepares them to remain committed to their vocation even when circumstances require adjustment or creativity.

Adaptability and Missionary Resilience

Adaptability is closely connected to resilience—the ability to recover and continue functioning effectively after encountering difficulty or disruption. Missionaries who possess adaptability are better able to:

- remain calm during uncertain situations
- reinterpret unexpected challenges in constructive ways
- modify pastoral strategies when necessary
- sustain motivation even when circumstances change.

Without adaptability, individuals may experience frustration, discouragement, or resistance when confronted with unfamiliar environments.

By contrast, adaptable missionaries can **remain faithful to their mission while creatively adjusting to changing contexts**.

Adaptability and Cultural Sensitivity

One of the most significant expressions of adaptability in missionary life is the ability to engage with diverse cultures. Serving in a new cultural environment often requires learning:

- new languages
- unfamiliar social customs
- different expressions of faith and spirituality.

Adaptable missionaries approach these differences with curiosity and humility rather than judgment or resistance. They recognize that authentic evangelization requires **respectful engagement with the cultural context in which people live**.

Through adaptability, missionaries develop the ability to listen, learn, and integrate their message in ways that resonate with the lived experiences of the communities they serve.

Adaptability and Personal Growth

Adaptability also contributes to personal development. Encountering unfamiliar situations often challenges individuals to reconsider their assumptions, expand their perspectives, and discover new strengths. When individuals embrace adaptability, they become more capable of:

- learning from new experiences
- developing creative pastoral approaches
- engaging diverse people and situations.

Such openness fosters **continuous learning and vocational growth**, both of which are essential for lifelong missionary formation.

Examples of Adaptability in Missionary Life

Adaptability becomes visible through concrete actions and attitudes that demonstrate flexibility and openness. Examples include:

- serving effectively in a new cultural environment and learning to appreciate its customs and traditions
- adjusting pastoral methods when community needs change
- responding calmly when ministry plans must be modified unexpectedly
- learning new skills required for pastoral work in different contexts
- collaborating with people from diverse cultural or social backgrounds.

These actions reflect the ability to remain committed to mission while adapting creatively to circumstances.

Obstacles to Adaptability

Several psychological tendencies may hinder the development of adaptability. Common obstacles include:

- **Rigid thinking:** Individuals may cling to familiar methods or perspectives even when they are no longer effective.
- **Fear of uncertainty:** Change often generates anxiety, leading some individuals to resist new situations.
- **Attachment to comfort zones:** Remaining within familiar environments may feel safer than engaging new challenges.
- **Cultural ethnocentrism:** Individuals may unconsciously assume that their own cultural patterns are superior to others.

Formation therefore seeks to help candidates cultivate openness, humility, and curiosity when encountering new contexts.

Reflection Questions

Formees can explore their adaptability through reflective questions such as:

- How do I usually react when circumstances change unexpectedly?
- Do I feel comfortable entering new cultural or social environments?
- Do I resist new situations or welcome them as opportunities for learning?
- How do I respond when my plans must change?
- What situations challenge my ability to remain flexible?

These questions help candidates identify patterns in their responses to change and uncertainty.

Formation Strategies for Developing Adaptability

Formation programs can cultivate adaptability through experiences that expose candidates to diverse contexts and encourage reflective learning.

Intercultural Experiences: Exposure to different cultures—through study, exchange programs, or missionary placements—helps candidates develop sensitivity and openness to cultural diversity. Such experiences encourage candidates to recognize the richness and complexity of human cultures.

Mission Immersion: Pastoral immersion experiences place candidates in real ministry contexts where they must respond to concrete pastoral needs. These experiences help candidates develop practical flexibility and problem-solving skills.

Reflective Evaluation: After new experiences or pastoral placements, candidates are encouraged to reflect on questions such as:

- What did I learn from this experience?
- What challenges did I encounter?
- How did I adapt to unfamiliar situations?

Reflective evaluation transforms experience into deeper learning and growth.

Collaborative Learning: Working in teams with people from diverse backgrounds encourages candidates to develop flexibility and appreciation for different perspectives.

Accompaniment Guidelines for Formators

Formators can support the development of adaptability by encouraging candidates to approach new situations with openness and curiosity. They should:

- help candidates interpret change as an opportunity for growth
- encourage reflection on experiences of uncertainty
- support candidates when they feel overwhelmed by unfamiliar contexts
- challenge rigid attitudes or resistance to change.

Through accompaniment, formators help candidates develop the confidence needed to engage unfamiliar situations constructively. Helpful accompaniment questions include:

- “What did this experience teach you about yourself?”
- “How did you respond when things did not go as expected?”
- “What new perspectives did you gain?”

These questions encourage candidates to interpret their experiences in ways that strengthen adaptability.

Assessment Tool

Adaptability can be evaluated through reflective self-assessment.

Adaptability Reflection Inventory

Statement	Rating
I adapt well to new environments	
I remain calm during uncertainty or change	
I approach unfamiliar situations with curiosity	
I learn from new experiences	
I adjust my strategies when necessary	

Discussing these responses during accompaniment sessions helps identify areas where flexibility and openness can be strengthened.

Spiritual Integration

Adaptability has deep roots within the missionary tradition of the Church. Throughout the history of Christian mission, missionaries have continually adjusted their methods in response to changing circumstances.

A powerful example appears in the Acts of the Apostles. In Acts 16, the Apostle Paul modifies his missionary strategy after discerning new guidance from the Holy Spirit. Instead of continuing along his planned route, he responds to a vision inviting him to preach in Macedonia.

This event illustrates an important principle of missionary life: **mission requires discernment and openness to new directions**.

Adaptability therefore reflects an attitude of **missionary availability**—a readiness to respond generously wherever the Spirit leads.

Such openness requires trust in God's providence and the willingness to move beyond personal preferences or familiar plans.

Conclusion

The development of these self-capacities is essential for the growth of human maturity and missionary readiness. Capacities such as self-activation, self-mastery, spontaneity, relational presence, intimacy, self-soothing, humour, and adaptability form the psychological foundation that supports authentic vocational life.

When cultivated intentionally within the formation process, these capacities enable missionaries to:

- grow in **interior freedom**, acting from conviction rather than compulsion
- build **healthy and authentic relationships** within community and pastoral contexts
- persevere with **resilience during challenges and uncertainties**
- serve the Gospel with **creativity and generosity**.

Human formation therefore becomes a process of **integration**, in which psychological maturity, spiritual depth, and missionary commitment gradually converge. Through reflective growth, relational learning, and spiritual discernment, the person becomes increasingly capable of living his vocation in a balanced and authentic way.

As these capacities mature, the missionary becomes better equipped to embody the Gospel not only through words but through the quality of his human presence. His life reflects authenticity, resilience, and joyful dedication.

In this way, the journey of human formation contributes to the gradual transformation of the person into a **credible witness of Christ and a compassionate servant of the mission**, capable of responding faithfully to the needs of the Church and the world.

Appendix

Formator Observation Rubric: Evaluating Self-Capacities in Human Formation

This rubric is designed to help formators **observe, evaluate, and accompany the development of key self-capacities** in formees. It provides structured criteria that can guide formative dialogue, discernment, and evaluation during accompaniment sessions.

The rubric is **not intended as a rigid grading system**, but as a formative tool that helps identify patterns of growth, areas needing support, and possible interventions within the formation process.

Rating Scale

Level	Description
1 – Limited Development	Capacity rarely visible; behaviours indicate significant difficulty or immaturity.
2 – Emerging Development	Capacity occasionally present but inconsistent; requires frequent guidance.
3 – Developing	Capacity present in many situations; still needs conscious effort and support.
4 – Mature Development	Capacity consistently evident; individual demonstrates reliability and stability.
5 – Integrated Maturity	Capacity deeply integrated; person models this capacity and supports others.

1. Self-Activation

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Takes initiative in community responsibilities					
Identifies needs and proposes solutions					
Accepts responsibility for personal growth					
Acts from personal conviction rather than external pressure					

Observation Notes for Formators

Signs of growth:

- proposes ideas during meetings
- initiates apostolic activities
- takes responsibility without being asked.

Warning signs:

- persistent passivity
- waiting for constant instructions
- fear of initiative.

2. Self-Mastery

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Manages emotions during stress or criticism					
Maintains disciplined habits (prayer, study, responsibilities)					
Demonstrates impulse control					
Perseveres in commitments despite difficulties					

Observation Notes

Signs of maturity:

- calm responses during conflict
- consistent daily habits
- responsible use of technology.

Warning signs:

- impulsive emotional reactions
- difficulty maintaining discipline
- avoidance of responsibilities.

3. Spontaneity

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Expresses emotions appropriately					
Engages naturally in community interactions					
Demonstrates creativity in activities or ministry					
Contributes to joyful community atmosphere					

Observation Notes

Signs of growth:

- open participation in discussions
- natural communication style
- creative initiative.

Warning signs:

- emotional rigidity
- excessive self-control or inhibition
- difficulty expressing feelings.

4. Relational Presence

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Listens attentively to others					
Demonstrates empathy and understanding					
Maintains attentive presence in conversations					
Builds trusting relationships within the community					

Observation Notes

Signs of growth:

- attentive listening
- people feel comfortable approaching the person
- patient engagement with others.

Warning signs:

- distraction during conversations
- tendency to interrupt
- emotional detachment.

5. Intimacy

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Builds authentic friendships					
Shares personal experiences appropriately					
Demonstrates trust in relationships					
Maintains healthy emotional boundaries					

Observation Notes

Signs of maturity:

- healthy openness in sharing experiences
- strong peer relationships
- balanced emotional closeness.

Warning signs:

- emotional isolation
- superficial relationships
- dependency or boundary difficulties.

6. Self-Soothing

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Manages stress constructively					
Remains calm during emotional difficulty					
Uses healthy coping strategies					
Recovers after emotional conflict					

Observation Notes

Signs of growth:

- reflective responses during conflict
- prayerful coping with stress
- emotional recovery after difficulties.

Warning signs:

- emotional withdrawal
- avoidance behaviours
- unhealthy coping patterns.

7. Humour

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Maintains healthy sense of humour					
Can laugh at personal mistakes					
Contributes to joyful community atmosphere					
Uses humour respectfully					

Observation Notes

Signs of growth:

- positive humour
- ability to ease tensions
- joyful engagement with community.

Warning signs:

- excessive seriousness
- sarcastic humour
- humour that excludes others.

8. Adaptability

Indicator	1	2	3	4	5
Responds constructively to change					
Adjusts to new environments					
Remains calm in uncertainty					
Learns from new experiences					

Observation Notes

Signs of growth:

- openness to new assignments
- cultural sensitivity
- willingness to learn.

Warning signs:

- resistance to change
- rigidity in routines
- anxiety in unfamiliar situations.

Integrative Formator Reflection

At the end of the evaluation, formators may reflect on broader patterns observed in the candidate.

Key Observations

Areas of Strength: Formees may demonstrate particular maturity in certain capacities that support community life and mission.

Areas Requiring Growth: Identify capacities that require intentional accompaniment or formation interventions.

Suggested Formation Interventions

Examples:

- spiritual accompaniment
- community dialogue
- pastoral exposure
- psychological support if necessary.

Final Formative Insight

The purpose of this rubric is not merely evaluation but **accompaniment toward growth**. Self-capacities develop gradually through experience, reflection, and supportive relationships.

When formators observe these capacities attentively and provide constructive feedback, formation becomes a process that helps candidates grow in:

- emotional maturity
- relational depth
- interior freedom
- missionary availability.

Through this ongoing process of observation, dialogue, and guidance, the formation community becomes a living environment where the person is gradually shaped into a mature missionary disciple capable of serving the Gospel with authenticity, resilience, and joy.