Twitter Thread by Ike Miller



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Pastors who grew up in dysfunctional families also share a crushing sense of responsibility.

We learned early on that if we performed like we should, we could control our environment, prevent catastrophes, & temporarily "fix" our circumstances. Now, we do this in ministry. 1/

We take responsibility for everything out of, ironically, an over-inflated sense of importance to the situation-"if I don't do it, it will all fall apart." This is part of why we gain a sense of significance from ministry-we are doing what always gave us purpose-fixing things. 2/

However, in ministry this means:

1) we struggle to share responsibility b/c we have never experienced a collaborative environment. So we take on more than is truly possible and set ourselves up to fail, which, not surprisingly, deals us an even deeper emotional blow. 3/

When we fail, we cannot see that the problem was not our inability, but the amount of pressure we put on ourselves and our unwillingness to share the load. 4/

2) We have difficulty trusting responsibility to those around us. It's easier, even safer, to do it ourselves. This is both b/c of our sense of "control" over the situation, & our fear of being let down by another's promises. This undermines the productivity of the whole team. 5/

3) We are incapable of giving space for failure to those around us, especially those who work for us. Their failure is seen as a reflection on our own performance and our own level of responsibility. To this end, we struggle to tolerate failure in others as well. 6/

We can start with 3 things: 1) understand the liberating truth that you do not have to manage everyone else's feelings and reactions. For at the very least, you *really* do not have that much control. 7/

2) Create enough emotional distance between your action and others unhealthy reactions that you can see that other's unhealthy reactions are not a reflection on you. (Of course, this requires us to be acting from a place of health in the first place). 8/

3) Embrace the truth that the church was intended to be a body w/ many parts & we are not a failure because we cannot be both a hand & a mouth. The interdependency goes against every fiber of our being, but if we keep thinking we must be every part of the body, we won't last. 9/

Finally, ministry is not about coercing people to help us, it is about inviting others into ministry alongside of us. When we can embrace that we help others grow when we hand them responsibility, we begin to experience the joy of ministry as a body, as we were intended to. 10/10