

# DSLE 503 MARRIAGE, FAMILY & INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

March 16-19, 2026

Dr. Roy Gaton, DMin., BCCC, Diplm. Psychotherapy

No matter what the environment - marriage, family, friends, coworkers, church - the relationship with people involves conflict. This course examines the dynamics of interpersonal relationships in the family, and students are encouraged to emulate the example of Christ in their interaction with family members and people in their social environment.

## **CLASS & CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Class location:** 

Class meeting dates: March 16-19, 2026

Class meeting times: Monday-Thursday—8-12 m.; 1-4 p.m

Class Location: 9705 Patuxen Woods Dr. Columbia, MD 21046, Columbia Union, NAD

Headquaters

Course Website: learninghub.andrews.edu

Instructor Tel.: Cell. (305) 934-7997
Instructor Email: royg@andrews.edu
Office hours: By Appointment only

### COURSE MATERIALS

## **Required Reading**

- Balswick, J. O. & Balswick, J. K. (2007). *The Family,* (3rd Ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Hill, C.E. (2004). *Helping skills: Facilitating Exploration, Insight, and Action* (3<sup>rd</sup>ed.).
- Scazzero, P. (2016). El Líder Emocionalmente Sano: Cómo Transformar tu Vida Interior Transformará Profundamente tu Iglesia, tu Equipo y el Mundo. Miami, FL: Editorial Vida.
- Goleman, D. (1992). Inteligencia emocional. Digital Version.

## **Recommended Reading**

- Anderson, R.S. & Guernsey, D.G. (1985). On being family: A social theology of the family. Grand Rapids, MI: B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Bolton, R. (1979). People Skills. New, York NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Friedman, E. H. (1985). *Generation to generation: Family process in church and synagogue*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Fuchs, E. (1983). Sexual desire and love. New York, NY: The Seabury Press.
- Hugenberger, G.P. (1998). Marriage as a covenant: Biblical law and ethics as developed from Malachi. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.
- McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R.K., & Petry, S. (2008). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Sedlacek, D. & B. (2008). Cleansing the Sanctuary of the Heart: Tools for Emotional Healing. Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing.
- Thomas, G. (2000). Sacred marriage: What if God designed marriage to make us holy rather than to make us happy? Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Vivas, M., Gallegos, D. & Gonzales, B. (2007). Educando las emociones. Digital Version.
- Zizioulas, J. D. (1975). *Human capacity and human incapacity: Theological exploration of personhood*. Scottish Journal of Theology. Pag. 28, 401-448.

#### OUTCOMES

## **Program Outcomes**

- 1. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to apply the principles of pastoral care to all aspects of the ministry.
- 2. Understand the theological and psychological foundation needed to work within the family system as a primary unit of counseling within the church.
- **3.** Refine the framework for responding biblically and psychologically to common family problems, and relational conflict.
- **4.** To use appropriate methodologies to do counseling and resolve church conflicts.

## **Learning Outcomes for this Class**

- 1. The student will be able to articulate a Christian view of Counseling and psychotherapeutic dynamics through an exploration of contemporary psychological and integration of biblical principles and supporting research from the professional community.
- 2. The student will be able to articulate a Christian view of marriage and family dynamics through an exploration of biblical principles and supporting research from the professional community.
- **3.** To help the pastor to understand how traumas, generational sins, and the emotional dynamic of his family have shaped his life as a father and pastor.
- **4.** To help the pastor in providing essential tools of self-care as he/she continues providing care, emotional, and spiritual support to others. And to provide caring tools for his/her family.
- **5.** Identify generational patterns in the student families of origin (physical, emotional, relational, behavioral) and make their best efforts to address observed irregularities or dysfunctions while affirming and strengthening their healthy ways of relating to others.
- **6.** The students will evaluate their interpersonal skills and make their best efforts to address skill deficiencies and to enhance skill proficiencies.
- 7. The student will be able to understand the family dynamics as functional or dysfunctional from a theological and psychological perspective, understanding the family as an interacting institution within the social and Christian Microsystem on the biblical basis that underlies the principles of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

## **Student Learning Outcomes. The student should be able to:**

Understand the theological and psychological perspective of marriage and family, and how they could use different techniques and skills to counsel and resolve church's conflict. For those that would like to their ministry to another dimension.

# TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Month	Day	Class Topic	Assignments Due Dates
	Monday March 16	Devotional & Prayer Syllabus review Course introduction	Reading Reports.  Mail Book Report document by an electronic file before 6 pm to my personal email to royg@andrews.edu.
March 2026	Tuesday March 17	Devotional & Prayer Introduction of Participants  A Theology of Marriage & Family Marriage & Family Counseling Defining Christian Counseling The Process of Pastoral Counseling Discerning God's Will in Counseling	Group Discussion  Assigment: Your personal history
	Wednesday March 18	Marriage within the biblical framework and theological perspective (Part 2)  - Conceptualization of marriage History of the interpretation of the image of God and the relational image of God in marriage Marriage and Sexuality - Equality and dependency - Becoming one flesh-Sex: procreation vs blessing  Marriage after The Fall  Family Systems Dysfunctional Families Co-Dependency Addictions  - Psychological process of Adam & Eve as they walked from intimacy to shame —Gen 3: 1-6, and emotions: doubt, fear, blame, and shame Shame as the enemy of intimacy - Genesis 3: 7-9 A relationship based on shame Emotional reaction to Shame- Genesis 3: 7 - Cognitive triad: reaction based on emotions, and a reaction based on behavior.  The path from shame to intimacy	Student devotional

	<ul> <li>Vulnerability.</li> <li>Developing shame resilence.</li> <li>Practice self-awareness.</li> <li>Dealing with shame, and inner shaming voice.</li> <li>Practicing self-compassion.</li> <li>Sharing your shame story.</li> </ul>	
	Prevention and crisis effects in marriage.  - Definition of marital crisis, types and intervention strategies.  - Marriage, family and spiritual healing.  - Theological perspective of the couple and the loss of intimacy.  Psychological perspective of marriage  - Concept, and historical review.  - Importance from the perspective of the church.  - Nature of Christian Marriage  - Purpose of Marriage  - Marriage as a family project.  - Characteristics, conditions and requirements for marriage under the Adventist Church.  - Defining the engagement process and the mate selection.  Psychological perspective of the family based on the Attachment Theory.  - Types of family.  - Family with Christian principles.  - Defining normality, and abnormalities in family.  - Attachment and shame in the romantic relationship.  - Rules of couple based on shame.  - Negative Relationship Cycle of Couple-Based Shame  - Genogram as analysis of the family and the roles of the members that constitute it.  Family intervention, purpose and limitations, and roles of mental health professionals, and counselors.	Class Group Discussion: Dysfunctional Relationships in the Church and the Family.

Thursday March 19		Devotional & Prayer Self-Awareness Discovery of the Soul Clergy Sexual Misconduct	Group Discussion	
	Thursday March 19	Depression & Major Mental Disorders Mental Health Self-Care	Group Discussion	
May 2026	Tuesday May 19		Final Project Due Turn it in through my email royg@andrew.edu	

## GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

Course description by hours	(3 Credits)
Lectures/Guided Studies	45 hours
Reading	20 hours
Personal story	10 hours
Final Paper	30 hours
Final Project Presentation	30 hours
Total	135 hours

## **Criteria for Grades**

- **A.** Punctual attendance and class participation -20 points
  - Students exceeding 10% of total course appointments will need a written excuse from the Dean's office.
  - Absences not due to illness also need written approval from the dean's office.
- **B.** Reading report—30 points
  - Students need to invest a minimum of 45 hours reading in preparation for this class.
  - The 20-hours reading should be from several of the required books (see list above)
  - **Pre-intensive**. A four-page report should be submitted **of at least four books** with the following information: (a) the name of the student, (b) the author and title(s) of the book(s) read, and (c) the number of hours read.
  - This report is due on March 16, 2026 —The first day of class.
  - There is a 5-point deduction for submitting this report late.

## C. Personal Story and Journey – 20 Points

## D. Final Project Marriage & Family —30 points

To create and present in a church setting (both after the class was completed) a seminar on Family Life topics of approximately 90 minutes from ideas expressed by the professor during the intensive. Student will provide the professor (1) Instructor manual (word by word); (2) Participants manual (main topics with blank sentences); (3) Power Point presentations; and (4) Two photos showing the student and the participants during the presentation of the seminar. The project is due 90 days after the first day of class—May 19, 2026, before midnight EST, and submitted electronically in a MSWord document following *Andrews University Standards for Written Work*. Available at the following site: http://www.andrews.edu/grad/documents/andrews-university-standards-for-written-work-as-of- october-2011.pdf. Late submission of this assignment is penalized each week with a 40-point deduction.

## Course assignment description

• Please, consider the following steps for requirements during intensive and when writing the book reports, and essay.

# Requisitos previos al intensivo

## A. Reporte de Lectura

- 1. Leer 20 horas de los libros recomendados arriba.
- 2. Este requisito cuenta por 20 puntos del puntaje total del curso y debes entregarlo el primer día de clase— Marzo 16, 2026. Informes que se entreguen tarde serán penalizados con 5 puntos.
- **3.** Los informes deberán entregarse por escrito y cada reporte debe contener los siguientes componentes:
  - a) Nombre del alumno
  - b) Título del libro y nombre del autor
  - c) Número de horas leídas
  - d) Mención del tema o asunto que trata
  - e) Principales ideas de la lectura
  - f) Resumen, síntesis o reseña del texto
  - g) Opinión del contenido de la lectura
  - h) Conclusiones de la lectura.

**B.** Deben entregarse por lo menos 4 reportes de los libros recomendados arriba con un mínimo de **4 páginas por reporte**. (Siga el formato del "*Book Report*" anexado al final del prontuario.

### C. Historia Personal – 15 horas

- 1. Se le anima a utilizar el tiempo suficiente en la reflexión antes de escribir esta asignación. Utilice un lenguaje que realmente describa pensamientos y emociones que harán de este esfuerzo un ejercicio significativo para usted. Limite el papel a ocho (8) páginas en doble espacio.
- 2. Debes tratar de ser honesto y transparente en tus respuestas. Dado que estamos tratando con enfoques sistémicos de consejería matrimonial, es imperativo que el pastor esté conciente de la influencia de su propio sistema familiar en sus relaciones interpersonales con sus feligreses. Además, es crucial que el pastor desarrolle la habilidad de sentir empatía por la gente en cómo se perciben a sí mismos y a sus relaciones.
- **3.** Especifique los daños y las heridas que ha experimentado. ¿Cómo te lastimaste, y por causa de quién? ¿Cómo respondiste a esa herida?

## Ejemplo:

- Jhon: El divorcio de mis padres
- Cómo: Sentí que mi familia no estaba completa. Perdí un modelo masculino.
- Por quién: Culpé a mi madre por mucho tiempo, pero me doy cuenta de que mi padre también es responsable.
- Mi respuesta: Me porté mal en la escuela.
- a) Da cinco referencias de las escrituras y/o los escritos de Elena de White que muestran cómo Jesús fue herido de forma similar a la de tu experiencia.
  - R. Jesús fue traicionado por sus discípulos de la manera en que me sentí traicionado yo.
  - 7. Lucas 22:48 Pero Jesús le dijo: Judas, ¿estás traicionando al Hijo del Hombre con un beso?
- b) Discuta cómo Jesús respondió cuando fue herido.
- c) Describa la experiencia de Jesús en tu propia vida. ¿Cómo te ha servido en tiempos de dolor, quebrantamiento y pecado?
- d) Discuta cómo Jesús respondió cuando fue herido.
- e) Describa su experiencia de Jesús en su propia vida. ¿Cómo te ha servido en tiempos de dolor, angustia y pecado?

- f) Da cinco referencias de las escrituras y/o los escritos de Elena de White que muestran cómo Jesús fue herido de forma similar a la de tu experiencia.
  - R. Jesús fue traicionado por sus discípulos de la manera en que me sentí traicionado yo.
  - 7. Lucas 22:48 Pero Jesús le dijo: Judas, ¿estás traicionando al Hijo del Hombre con un beso?
- g) Discuta cómo Jesús respondió cuando fue herido.
- h) Describa la experiencia de Jesús en tu propia vida. ¿Cómo te ha servido en tiempos de dolor, quebrantamiento y pecado?

# Requisitos durante el intensivo

- Asistencia puntual a todas las clases.
- Tríadas de consejería: el estudiante participará en una tríada de consejería, alternando roles entre el ayudante, miembro de la iglesia y el observador. El ayudante pondrá en práctica las herramientas de ayuda y consejería. El miembro, en este caso el pastor, presentará un caso de la vida real que el necesita procesar con el ayudante. El observador llevará el tiempo y hará observaciones de cómo se llevó la consejería.
- Analizar Casos Estudios para elaborar en la mejor metodología de consejería que un pastor pudiera llevar en un contorno eclesiástico.
- Discusiones en grupos para aprendizaje colectivo.

# Rubric for assessing the pre and post-intensive assigments

## A. Rubric for Assessing the Personal History

Content	10 points
Organization	2 points
Reflection	3 points
Reference: Bible/White	2 points
Application	3 points
	20 Points

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Assessment Summary	Points
Reading	20
Class Attendance and participation	10
Test & Question	5
Personal Story	20

# Total 100

# **Grading Scale**

<b>A</b> (95-100%)	<b>B</b> (83-86%)	<b>C</b> (73-76%)
<b>A-</b> (90-94%)	<b>B-</b> (80-82%)	<b>C-</b> (70-72%)
<b>B</b> + (87-89%)	C+ (77-79%)	<b>D</b> (60-69%)

## **Rubric for Assessing Project Plans**

### Student

Criteria (5) Exceptional (4) Proficient (3) Satisfactory (2) Emerging (1) Unsatisfactory Score

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING ASSIGMENTS				

Formato a seguir para el "Book Report"

**Student Name:** 

**Instructor:** 

Class: DSLE 541 – Foundations of Biblical Spirituality

**Book Report** 

"MARGIN, Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded lives" by Richard A. Swenson

If your life is overloaded with work, family demands, church activities, and of course, stress, "Margin" is one of the best books you can read in order be aware of those indispensable elements necessary to find balance in four key areas, good health, financial accountability, relationships and spiritual stability. It is difficult to define "margin" without practical examples of the daily life so the author in simple words puts it like this: "Margin is having breath at the top of the staircase, money left at the end of the month, and sanity left at the end of adolescence." In other words, margin is the space that once existed between ourselves and our limits. It is something held in reserve for contingencies or unanticipated situations. On the other hand, living a marginless life is basically running on empty not for a short period of time, but always.

How to simplify our lives so that we can enjoy those irrelevant things nobody seems to enjoy anymore like: energy at the end of the work day, time with family, checkbook in black, emotional stability (calm), sense of security, time to relax. The answer of our generation has been "progress". "Progress has given us unprecedented affluence, education, technology, and entertainment." Yet, something has gone wrong. Our cars are full of extras, our paycheck is bigger than ever, our washing machines, clothes dryers, dishwashers, and vacuum cleaners

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>"Margin" Richard A. Swenson, page 13

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Ibid, Page 15

declare our prosperous culture. There has never been so much progress; nevertheless, at the end of the day we are exhausted, depress, worn-out. Therapists' offices are full, sleep is less, and depressant pills are part of our daily life.

Margin has been stolen away, and progress was the thief. There can be little doubt that the contemporary absence of margin is link to the march of progress. In general sense, those cultures with most progress are the same as those with the least margin. There are natural consequences of how progress sabotages margin. The author mentions a list of 5 of them:

- 1. Progress works by differentiating our environment, thus always give us more and more of everything faster and faster. The American definition of happiness is, after all, "more than I have now" and progress provides "more" in abundance.
- 2. The spontaneous flow of progress is toward increasing stress, change, complexity, speed, intensity, and overload.
- 3. All human have physical, mental, emotional, and financial limits that are relatively fixed.
- 4. The profusion of progress is on a collision course with human limits. Once the threshold of these limits is exceeded, overload displaces margin.
- 5. On the unsaturated side of their limits, human can be open and expansive. On the saturated side of these limits, however, the rules of life totally change.

The author does not see progress as our enemy but for sure we need room to breathe, freedom to think and time to heal. "Discerning Christians have long known that God is not impressed with our wealth, education, or power. Nevertheless, we have labored eagerly in those fields. What if, instead, we were to measure our progress not by our wealth but by our virtue, not by our education but by our humility, and not by our power but by our meekness?"<sup>3</sup>

We really need to go back to a simpler and balanced lifestyle. The spiritually minded have long sought it as a way of giving importance to what really matters most, the lordship of Christ. This means seeking God's kingdom first, thus giving over our plans, our expectations,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>Ibid, page 33

our future, our family, our reputation and our possessions to Him. "The simple life sounds attractive when you are in love with the Truth." Then, after you have freed yourself to pursue a different path, you will not desire more from your days on earth than simply to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God (1Tim. 6: 6).

The balanced life today seems inaccessible, too many activities, too many choices, too many decisions, too many commitments, too many expectations, too much change. Overloads, stress, complexity, all are unbalancing pressures. In essence, we need to recognize that everything begins with priorities. In order to find balance we need to have our priorities well defined and we need to find the strength to stay in the plan. Moreover, we need to understand that we are limited by our own finite condition. Although we belong to a culture that preaches that everything is possible, the reality is another. God gave us limitations in order to help us find balance. "We should work hard to please our Master, but we also rest confidently knowing that He understands our condition." <sup>5</sup>

Part of living with margin is rest. We are a tired generation, we are sick of "hurry" we are burning up the engine. We are in need of rest: physical rest, emotional rest, and spiritual rest.

God has instructed us that life is more than work. It includes relationships, worship, and of course, rest. Gordon Macdonald notes: "We do not rest because our work is done; we rest because God commanded it and created us to have a need for it." "When our bodies find rest, we feel refreshed. When our emotions find rest, our countenance is lifted. When we find spiritual rest we find acceptance of God."

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Ibid, Page 181

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Ibid, Page 192

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Ibid, Page 200

## CLASS POLICIES

## **Classroom Seating**

In order to facilitate learning everyone's name, please select a permanent seat until instructed otherwise.

## **Disability Accommodations**

If you qualify for accommodation under the American Disabilities Act, please contact Student Success in Nethery Hall 100 (<u>disabilities@andrews.edu</u> or 269-471-6096) as soon as possible so that accommodations can be arranged.

## **Late Assignment Submission**

All late assignments incur the penalties specified under the heading Grading and Assessment.

#### **Additional Policies**

During the preaching practicum, when students preach a sermon before their peer, the classroom door will be closed to avoid distractions to the preacher. Once closed, students will not be allowed into the classroom until the sermon ends.

#### **Examinations**

"Credit is not granted in courses unless the required examinations are completed by the student. Students are expected to follow the published examination schedule. In cases where the schedule requires a student to complete four exams in one day, arrangements may be made with the dean to complete one of the examinations at another time."

AU Bulletin

#### **Class Attendance**

Regular attendance at all classes, laboratories and other academic appointments is required for each student. Faculty members are expected to keep regular attendance records. The syllabus notifies students of the attendance requirements.

AU Bulletin

#### **Teacher Tardiness**

"Teachers have the responsibility of getting to class on time. If a teacher is detained and will be late, the teacher must send a message to the class with directions. If after 10 minutes no message has been received, students may leave without penalty. If teacher tardiness persists, students have the right to notify the department chair, or if the teacher is the department chair, to notify the dean."

AU Bulletin

#### **Class Absences**

"Whenever the number of absences exceeds 20% (10% for graduate classes) of the total course appointments, the teacher may give a failing grade. Merely being absent from campus does not exempt the student from this policy. Absences recorded because of late registration, suspension,

and early/late vacation leaves are not excused. The class work missed may be made up only if the teacher allows. Three tardies are equal to one absence.

Registered students are considered class members until they file a Change of Registration form in the Office of Academic records."

AU Bulletin

#### **Excused Absences**

"Excuses for absences due to illness are granted by the teacher. Proof of illness is required. Residence hall students are required to see a nurse on the first day of any illness which interferes with class attendance. Non-residence hall students should show written verification of illness obtained from their own physician. Excuses for absences not due to illness are issued directly to the dean's office. Excused absences do not remove the student's responsibility to complete all requirements of a course. Class work is made up by permission of the teacher."

AU Bulletin

## **Academic Integrity**

"In harmony with the mission statement (p.18), Andrews University expects that students will demonstrate the ability to think clearly for themselves and exhibit personal and moral integrity in every sphere of life. Thus, students are expected to display honesty in all academic matters.

Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) the following acts: falsifying official documents; plagiarizing, which includes copying others' published work, and/or failing to give credit properly to other authors and creators; misusing copyrighted material and/or violating licensing agreements (actions that may result in legal action in addition to disciplinary action taken by the University); using media from any source or medium, including the Internet (e.g., print, visual images, music) with the intent to mislead, deceive or defraud; presenting another's work as one's own (e.g. placement exams, homework, assignments); using material during a quiz or examination other than those specifically allowed by the teacher or program; stealing, accepting, or studying from stolen quizzes or examination materials; copying from another student during a regular or take-home test or quiz; assisting another in acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., falsifying attendance records, providing unauthorized course materials).

Andrews University takes seriously all acts of academic dishonesty. Such acts as described above are subject to incremental discipline for multiple offenses and severe penalties for some offenses. These acts are tracked in the office of the Provost. Repeated and/or flagrant offenses will be referred to the Committee for Academic Integrity for recommendations on further penalties. Consequences may include denial of admission, revocation of admission, warning from a teacher with or without formal documentation, warning from a chair or academic dean with formal documentation, receipt of a reduced or failing grade with or without notation of the reason on the transcript, suspension or dismissal from the course, suspension or dismissal from the program, expulsion from the university, or degree cancellation. Disciplinary action may be retroactive if academic dishonesty becomes apparent after the student leaves the course, program or university

Departments or faculty members may publish additional, perhaps more stringent, penalties for academic dishonesty in specific programs or courses."

## AU Bulletin

# **Emergency Protocol**

Andrews University takes the safety of its student seriously. Signs identifying emergency protocol are posted throughout buildings. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting that specific location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during any evacuation or sheltering emergency.

## INSTRUCTOR PROFILE

Dr. Roy Gaton is a pastor, Marriage and family therapist, chaplain, and professor, currently Dr. Gaton serves as Chair of Practical & Applied Theology and Professor of Pastoral Care & Counseling and Director of counseling services at the 7<sup>th</sup>-day Adventist Theological Seminary Andrews University. Prior to joining the faculty at the Seminary, he served as Director of Pastoral Care for Baptist Health South Florida, Senior Pastor at New Community Church, and as a professional counselor in private practice in Miami, FL with specialties in Marriage & Family counseling, spiritual counseling, and life coaching. In addition to his work as chaplain pastor and counseling practice Dr. Gaton holds teaching appointments at Loma Linda University, Loma Linda University Medical School, and Florida International University Medical School). Before going south Florida, Dr. Gaton served as Administrative Director of Spiritual Life & Pastoral Care at Castle Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii and as Family Ministries Director for the Hawaii Conference of Seventh-day Adventist. Before moving to Hawaii, Dr. Gaton served as Senior Chaplain at Glendale Adventist Medical Center in Glendale, California. Dr. Gaton is a certified Pastoral Counselor, Marriage & Family Counselor, and Certified Bereavement Facilitator and Educator. He also has specialized training in clinical ministry (Clinical Pastoral Education), chemical dependency treatment, spiritual formation, life coaching, and marriage and family counseling.

Dr. Gaton has also the distinction of serving as Team Chaplain for the Los Angeles Dodgers (Major League Baseball) and Glendale Police department in Glendale California. Dr. Gaton received a BA with double majors in Theology & Spanish Literature, and a Master of Divinity from Andrews University. And Doctor of Ministry degree in Pastoral Care & Counseling from the Claremont School of Theology. Dr. Gaton completed a clinical residency in Clinical Pastoral Education at Florida Hospital in Orlando, FL and is a Diplomate in psychotherapy with the College of Pastoral Supervision and Psychotherapy. Dr. Gaton is also a Board-Certified Clinical Chaplain.

Dr. Gaton is also well sought after as a speaker, writer, television and radio personality, and consultant to business and religious organizations in the areas of marriage and family life, leadership and spiritual growth. His works have been published in hundreds of publications including Los Angeles Times, Los Angeles Daily News, Honolulu Advertiser, Adventist Review, El Centinela, and Pacific Union Recorder.

Dr. Roy Gaton is married to Lois Padilla Gaton, and they have three Kids Chloe Elena, Kira Marie, and Roy Alexander.

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