

LD 4.4 – Coaching for Character Development

A) UNDERSTANDING THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHARACTER: The first part of this article is to develop a working understanding of what Character is and by extension how to recognize its presence in an individual.

1. **A working definition of Character – Moral-Ethical Character** refers to a particular individual's stable moral and ethical qualities. Meaning who they are when no-one is really looking; or in the Apostle Paul's terms, who they are in the "Inner person."
 - a. The concept of character can imply a variety of attributes or virtues. Such include empathy, courage, fortitude, honesty, and loyalty, and all of such characteristics commonly defined as good behaviors and habits.
 - b. Character primarily refers to the assemblage of such qualities that distinguish one individual or community from another. On a cultural level, these shared qualities can be said to unite and define a community or group as distinct from another. The word "character" is derived from an Ancient Greek word that refers to the imprint a coin-press implants upon a coin.
 - c. Typically, there are three approaches to dealing with moral-Ethical character:
 - i. **MORAL ETHICS** – Involve moral standards that exhibit a form of right or wrong conduct. It is a test of proper behavior and determining what is right and wrong.
 - ii. **APPLIED ETHICS** – Involve specific and controversial issues involved with a moral-ethical choice, and tend to involve situations where people are either for or against the issue at hand.
 - iii. **BIBLICAL ETHICS** – Involve those values God has established as normative a moral and ethical standard of character and conduct that all of humanity is expected to operate under. To do otherwise makes an individual less than human.
2. **A Formative Explanation of Character** – There are writers and people we meet that say things and write things that make us think. Jesus certainly challenged those around Him to stretch and think outside their normative box; some people enjoyed the challenge, others were threatened by it. The same dynamic continues in the Christian and worldly communities. Thinking of course is only a means to an end, and not necessarily an end in itself. However, thinking well can enable us to act well. Moral and ethical integrity are each the result of mental and spiritual disciplines. Philosophy and Theology have much in common especially when the locus and focus of thought are similarly aligned.
 - a. Years ago I read a book by Dennis Prager that was given to me by a business friend entitled Think a Second Time. Prager's premise is that many people develop a world view in their formative years, and never take the time to rethink and realign their underlying premises and world view as they grow older and are exposed to new views. His argument was not necessarily about jettisoning our old thought process, but instead to reevaluate the truths we hold in light of new illuminations and discoveries. To be encouraged to refine and occasionally to redefine your world view. Nicodemus strikes me as a Biblical character who allowed Jesus not only to challenge him, but to move him out of his comfort zone.
 - b. Recently I read the following article by David Brooks. It is an op-ed that appeared in the New York Times on August 29 2014.¹ This assessment of the mental character qualities that make up or underlie moral-ethical qualities bears careful reading. Also bear in mind what the

¹ http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/29/opinion/david-brooks-the-mental-virtues.html?emc=edit_th_20140829&nl=todaysheadlines&nliid=50637717&r=1

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Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2)

- c. Character development matters to God... so it should also matter to us! In a world that focuses almost exclusively upon form rather than our substance, we need thoughtful reminders of what is most important to God. God cares far more about how and upon what we think and act, and He cares when our Spiritual Life more closely reflects Jesus’ Character and Nature. Philosophical and Theological thought development can open doors to the mind and heart where God can break through and bring insight and clarity. It is good to think upon the deeper thoughts asking God to bring clarity and illumination, and transform us into the person He created us to be. Hope you enjoy the read!**

We all know what makes for good character in soldiers. We’ve seen the movies about heroes who display courage, loyalty and coolness under fire. But what about somebody who sits in front of a keyboard all day? Is it possible to display and cultivate character if you are just an information age office jockey, alone with a memo or your computer? Of course it is. Even if you are alone in your office, you are thinking. “Thinking well” under a barrage of information may be a different sort of moral challenge than “fighting well” under a hail of bullets, but it’s a character challenge nonetheless.

In their 2007 book, “Intellectual Virtues,” Robert C. Roberts of Baylor University and W. Jay Wood of Wheaton College list some of the cerebral virtues. We can all grade ourselves on how good we are at each of them.

First, there is love of learning. Some people are just more ardently curious than others, either by cultivation or by nature.

Second, there is courage. The obvious form of intellectual courage is the willingness to hold unpopular views. But the subtler form is knowing how much risk to take in jumping to conclusions. The reckless thinker takes a few pieces of information and leaps to some faraway conspiracy theory. The perfectionist, on the other hand, is unwilling to put anything out there except under ideal conditions for fear that she could be wrong. Intellectual courage is self-regulation, Roberts and Wood argue, knowing when to be daring and when to be cautious. The philosopher Thomas Kuhn pointed out that scientists often simply ignore facts that don’t fit with their existing paradigms, but an intellectually courageous person is willing to look at things that are surprisingly hard to look at.

Third, there is firmness. You don’t want to be a person who surrenders his beliefs at the slightest whiff of opposition. On the other hand, you don’t want to hold dogmatically to a belief against all evidence. The median point between flaccidity and rigidity is the virtue of firmness. The firm believer can build a steady worldview on solid timbers but still delight in new information. She can gracefully adjust the strength of her conviction to the strength of the evidence. Firmness is a quality of mental agility.

Fourth, there is humility, which is not letting your own desire for status get in the way of accuracy. The humble person fights against vanity and self-importance. He’s not writing

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those sentences people write to make themselves seem smart; he's not thinking of himself much at all. The humble researcher doesn't become arrogant toward his subject, assuming he has mastered it. Such a person is open to learning from anyone at any stage in life.

Fifth, there is autonomy. You don't want to be a person who slavishly adopts whatever opinion your teacher or some author gives you. On the other hand, you don't want to reject all guidance from people who know what they are talking about. Autonomy is the median of knowing when to bow to authority and when not to, when to follow a role model and when not to, when to adhere to tradition and when not to.

Finally, there is generosity. This virtue starts with the willingness to share knowledge and give others credit. But it also means hearing others as they would like to be heard, looking for what each person has to teach and not looking to triumphantly pounce upon their errors. It's a moral enterprise and requires good character, the ability to go against our lesser impulses for the sake of our higher ones.

Montaigne once wrote that "We can be knowledgeable with other men's knowledge, but we can't be wise with other men's wisdom." That's because wisdom isn't a body of information. It's the moral quality of knowing how to handle your own limitations. Warren Buffett made a similar point in his own sphere, "Investing is not a game where the guy with the 160 I.Q. beats the guy with the 130 I.Q. Once you have ordinary intelligence, what you need is the temperament to control the urges that get other people into trouble." Character tests are pervasive even in modern everyday life. It's possible to be heroic if you're just sitting alone in your office. It just doesn't make for a good movie.

- 3. Character Matters to God – the presence or absence of moral and ethical integrity is a key barometer of a Christian's Spiritual Life development and Character Maturity. The Apostle Paul in Romans 2:6-16 notes that God expects moral and ethical character in everyone, that there is a fundamental standard of moral and ethical absolutes for all people:**

For [God] will repay according to each one's deeds: to those who by patiently doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; while for those who are self-seeking and who obey not the truth but wickedness, there will be wrath and fury. There will be anguish and distress for everyone who does evil, but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good. For God shows no partiality.

All who have sinned apart from the law will also perish apart from the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous in God's sight, but the doers of the law who will be justified. When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

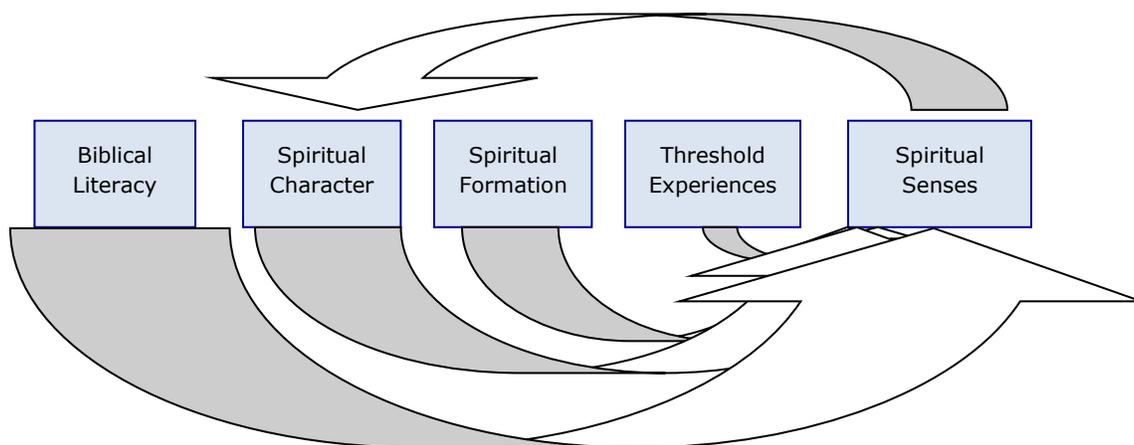
Paul writes in Romans 12:1-2 how the mind contributes to Christian character development:

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Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Author and Christian Pastor Chip Ingram commented that, “God gave you a brain and He expects you to use it.” It is alarming to me in our age of rapidly accessible information technology, that people seem all too willing to allow others to think for us and follow blindly without thought or question instead of doing the hard work of investigating and learning for themselves. A passive response is neither noble or prudent, while a thoughtful and prayerful response is both. As individuals imbued by our Creator with reasoning processes and as moral and ethical agents in our world, we have a responsibility to know what we believe, to be able to articulate our own defense of our beliefs, and then to act accordingly in a consistent manner. I believe that God’s justice will hold each person accountable for the integrity of our thoughts and actions. We need to think for ourselves, to develop the art of critical thinking.

4. We do ourselves and the world around us a disservice when we fail to do the hard work of developing a well ordered mind and heart. “Biblical Literacy – Forming the Mind of Christ” is the best way I know to develop a well ordered mind, and “Spiritual Formation – Forming the Heart of Christ” is the best way to develop a well ordered heart. Invest the time and effort to explore God’s truth and experience Spiritual life for yourself.
5. Spiritual Maturity is a barometer of a healthy Christian Spiritual Life, and Spiritual Character is a key driver. The diagram below demonstrates how the Spiritual Life Components of Biblical Literacy, Spiritual Character, Spiritual Formation, and Threshold Experiences all feed into and shape our Spiritual Senses... which then combine and feed back to strengthen and shape our Spiritual Character. Spiritual Character is where the fruit of the Spirit takes shape as our nature and character are increasingly conformed into that of Jesus’.



6. This diagram above shows the ongoing circular interactive process of Spiritual Maturity through these Spiritual Life Components. Brief definitions of these Spiritual Life components follow below:

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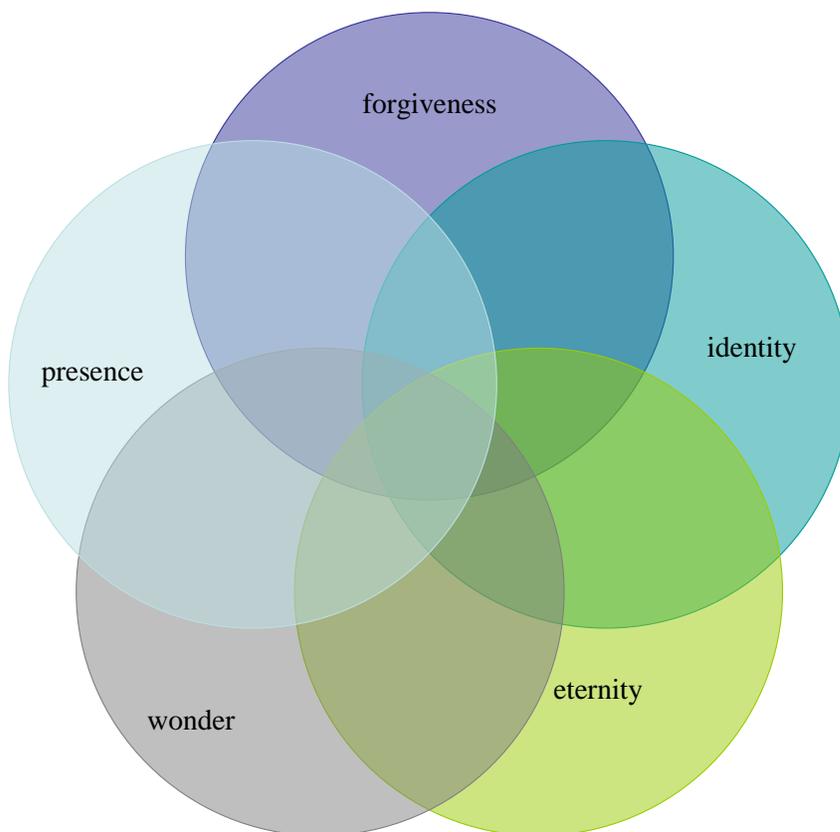
- a. **Biblical Literacy** – this involves both the cognitive process of the study and learning of God’s Word. It involves knowing what The Scripture says, why it was written, and how to apply it to our own life and our present world. It involves the relational process where the Scripture masters the disciple by working into their life, and it involves a greater desire for knowing and loving God that is ignited under the guidance of the Spirit. Scripture provides the Spiritual conduit where the forgiveness cycle of “conviction, remorse, repentance, restoration, and reconciliation” occur – and where personal transformation results. [See link below for more on Authentic Discipleship’s website about forgiveness and discussion on the forgiveness cycle <http://www.authenticdiscipleship.org/pdfs/2-spiritual-formation/Spiritual%20Disciplines/SF%201.11%20Prayer%20Practicum%209%20-%20Forgiveness%20Study.pdf>]
- b. **Spiritual Character** – this involves Jesus’ character and nature being formed within the disciple where we increasingly reflect the image our Lord Jesus [Imago Christi]. As a disciple of Jesus, we remain uniquely individual as God’s creation who uniquely reflects our Creator [Imago Dei]. Unlike many Eastern metaphysical faiths where the individual is “absorbed” into the God head, our own personality remains distinct as we become increasingly reflective of Jesus’ nature and character in the “inner-man” or “inner-person.” This constitutes a Spiritual Transformation and is the heart of Spiritual formation.
- c. **Spiritual Formation** – this involves a wide variety of spiritual formation practices where we learn to consciously engage God, and cooperate with what the Spirit. As we mature, we purposefully learn to restrain our own natural impulses, and act instead to intentionally cooperate with the Spirit who delights in performing in our inner-transformation. Transformation is becoming someone new that we were not before the Spirit indwelt us. Conformation is more behavioral modification. While both transformation and conformation are good, transformation is better. The Spirit gives the power for transformation, while conformation tends to be more of an act of willpower. The nature of this conundrum is what Paul discusses in Romans 7:7-8:17.
- d. **Threshold Experiences** – are those experiences where we recognize God has intervened in our life and where we realize we are changed by the experience. Some of these will be major trajectory changes where our life purposefully heads off in another direction at the intervention of the Spirit – Paul’s experience on the Damascus Road completely changed the direction of his life. Most often we will experience nudges and sometimes pushes where God gently redirects and refocuses us. These are often more observable in the “rear-view mirror” of our Spiritual development as we look back and see the choices we’ve made, the forks in the road we have taken, and how God’s Grace was revealed more personally to me.

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- e. **Spiritual Senses** – these are roughly equivalent to the “five physical senses of perception” through which we interpret the material world. Unlike the five material world’s perceptive senses (e.g.: touch, taste, sight, smell, & hearing), the Spiritual Senses of perception tend to be much more subtle. There are five “Spiritual Senses of Perception” that are the natural outworking of God’s Spirit. These senses comprise who we are in the inner-person, and they are what shape our worship and our entire ministry. These sense perceptions are:
- i. **A Sense of Forgiveness** – this derives from our understanding of our own need and the magnitude of the forgiveness we’ve been provided in Christ Jesus [see Spiritual Formation/Spiritual Disciplines 1.13 - Forgiveness Study and Practicum].
 1. 2 Pet 1:9; 1 Tim 1:15-16; 1 Cor 1:8-10; Eph 2:8-10
 2. A growing awareness of personally having been forgiven and an understanding of the sufficiency of His Grace.
 3. It is knowing how broken and fallen I really am... and understanding the Spiritual balance God provided for me with grace and mercy.
 - ii. **A Sense of Identity** – this derives from how we see our self as a child of God and as a disciple of Jesus... this is how true “Christocentric Faith” [Christ centered] or in other words it is true Christianity, not the “churchianity” [the participatory worship experiences that fail to promote any real transformative change].
 1. 1 John 3:1; 1 Pet 2:5-11
 2. This is understanding who we really are as Christ-followers and disciples.
 3. It is knowing how God sees us as the son/daughter He loves, not how we see ourselves. This involves our moving from the “sinner saved by grace” of the new born experience, to the “saint who sometimes sins” of spiritual maturity.
 - iii. **A Sense of Eternity** – this derives from knowing there is more to life than the obvious here and now, and that our true home is with God in eternity... it is “Kingdom of God” mindedness, rather than worldly mindedness:
 1. 2 Cor 4:16-18; Rom 8:18-26; 2 Kings 6:15-17; Col 3:1-4; 1 Pet 3:10-12
 2. A growing awareness that something bigger is going on that I am caught up into and am made a part of. It is finding our role in the advancement of the Kingdom of God and being a willing participant with the Spirit.
 3. It is seeing the spiritual reality behind the physical event.
 - iv. **A Sense of Wonder** – this derives from being caught up in a love-affair with God and in the cosmic wonder of the Kingdom of God... it is getting caught up and pressing into the “supernatural world” rather than remaining content in the “natural world.” It is the delight of understanding God’s invitation to travel with Him “further up and further in”:
 1. Gal 4:15; Phil 2:12-15, 4:4-7; 1 Pet 1:8-12; Eph 1:18-19; Job 42:1-6

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2. Recognizing that God is more wondrous and amazing and He is beyond all explanation.
 3. His revelation is such a small part of all He is... but it is enough to capture our mind/heart and enchantment, and draw us closer.
- v. A Sense of Presence – this derives from recognizing God’s finger prints through all aspects of our life... of being and becoming more aware that God is everywhere and in everything and the delight of encountering Him in the simple walk of life:
1. 1 Chron 12:32a; Phil 1:21-24; 1 Pet 4:7-11
 2. It is the spiritual equivalent of GPS – it is understanding the role God has given me to play in this body of believers.
 3. Eph 4:3-7 – being renewed and transformed by God continually; and “feeling” His Presence and guidance.
- f. While these senses are distinct, they are not unlike our physical senses of perception because they are interrelated and even integrated. As we grow in our sensitivity in one sense it encourages growth in others. The diagram below provides a visual depiction of this interrelated dynamic:

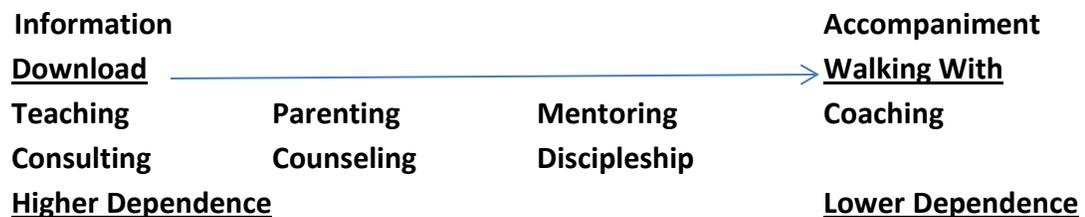


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- g. For more on this dynamic of Spiritual Life, please refer to Authentic Discipleship article “SF – 2.2 – Spiritual Journey Discovery” [<http://www.authenticdiscipleship.org/pdfs/2-spiritual-formation/Spiritual%20Maturity/SF%202.2%20-%20Spiritual%20Journey%20Discovery.pdf>]

B) COACHING FOR CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT:

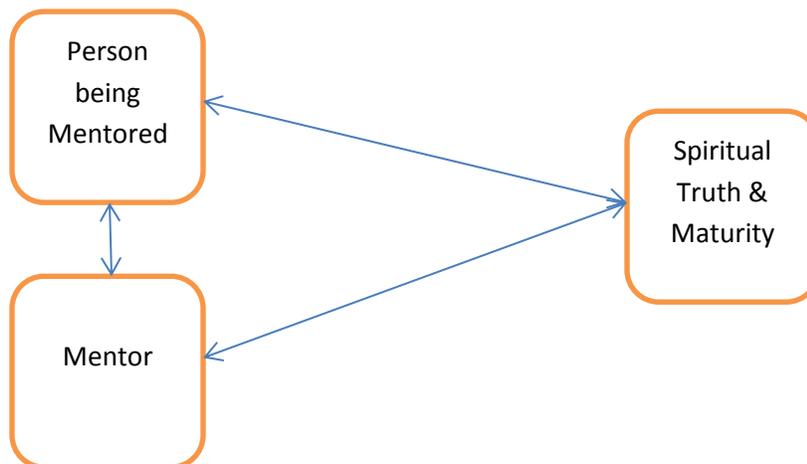
1. Now that we have a working understanding of what Character is and by extension how to recognize its presence in an individual, we now seek to help the person we are coaching to recognize what character is, how it is displayed in their life by their choices and decisions, and calling attention to how the Spirit transforming them.
2. Note the movement in the diagram below of different helping forms from the “director information download” toward the “relational companion walking with” a person:



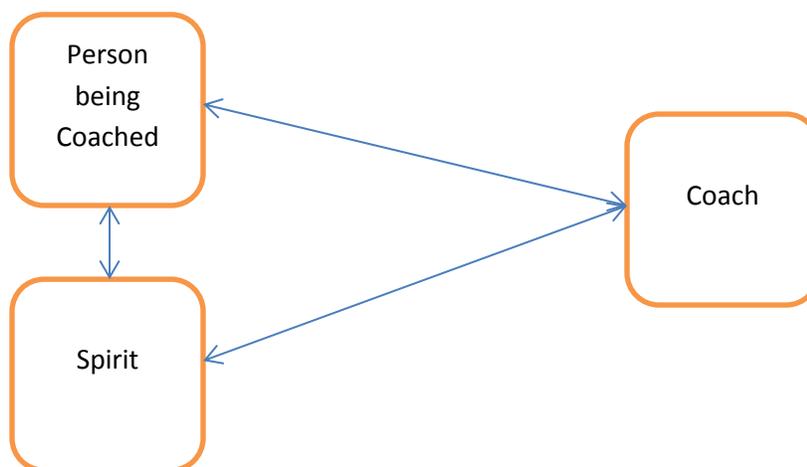
- a. The “lower dependence” roles are a natural progression in developing maturity in others. The lower the dependence the more responsibility the person we are working with must accept for themselves. When we force their reliance upon our role instead of encouraging them to accept responsibility for themselves, we stunt their growth.
 - b. “Higher Dependence” roles involve a much more active role in directing and guidance. High Dependence roles are given a wider range of authority over a person, with the person in our care accepting guidance and direction with little or no resistance. An attorney is a good example of a high dependence role. We hire an attorney because we know they have knowledge and expertise we lack, and we tend to accept their advice pretty much at face value. The questions we ask are more about how to apply their advice, rather than their responsibility to offer it.
3. Coaching and mentoring are wonderful approaches to personal and spiritual development. Coaching and mentoring have many similarities:
 - a. Both coach and mentor engage an individual and ask probing questions to promote personal discovery. It is not the coach’s or mentor’s role to direct personal change and transformation, but instead to help them see where the Spirit is already at work in transforming them.
 - b. Both coach and mentor reinforce the perception that the person in their care is responsible for their own life and their own actions. The last thing they want is a person they are helping to mature become overly dependent upon them.
 - c. The Mentoring role tends to provide more guidance than coaching, as the person in their care knows their mentor has experience they need.

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- d. The coaching role tends to focus more on insight instead of guidance, on helping to provide greater clarity of view so the person being coached can make better more informed decisions. The person being coached will often find themselves in a position where they become “stuck” or otherwise unable to move forward with confidence. The coaching role seeks to provide clarity and insight so the person being coached can keep moving forward.
- e. The positional arrangement of a mentor looks something like this... note that the position of the mentor is to help guide the person being mentored to understanding what is going on in Spiritual life. The mentor is essentially saying “this is how it works.”



- f. The positional arrangement of a coach looks something like this... notice that the position of the coach is to help the person being coached see what the Spirit is doing and is already at work accomplishing in their Spiritual life. The coach is essentially saying “do you see what God is doing?”



- g. The implications are significant – as the mentor tends to take a more active guidance role in the relationship, especially early on where they are helping to fill in the voids of the

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experience and knowledge deficient of the person their mentoring. Instead the coach takes a more passive guidance role and helps the person being coached to see what the Spirit is already doing in their life. As a result, the mentor role often tends to be shorter in duration by its nature, where the coaching role can potentially be viable for a much longer period of time.

- i. Many mentor roles morph with time into coaching roles as their charge matures and their developmental needs change. It is important to understand when the mentoring role must change into a coaching role.
 - ii. Much like a parent raises a child up to be an independent individual and then let them go to lead their own life, a mentor must do likewise. As with the parenting relationship, to hold on and not letting the role morph can cause unnecessary dependence and ultimately stunting the person's growth and development.
 - iii. As the coaching relationship matures, the coach becomes more of a cheerleader and encourager to their charge who has now become more of a peer and a friend to them. The peer relationship is a healthy and stable relationship that can endure for many years. In the best coaching relationships, the person being coached will often eclipse or surpass their coach... to the delight of the coach.
4. Faith coaching is something all disciple makers can accomplish with those they are discipling. For much more about how the coaching relationship works, please study the Authentic Discipleship article on "Faith Coaching Fundamentals" [<http://www.authenticdiscipleship.org/pdfs/3-leadership-dev/LD%20-%204.1%20-%20Faith%20Coaching%20Fundamentals.pdf>].

C) THE CHARACTER MATRIX – Where are you as a Christian Leader and/or Christ Follower? The following insights from the 2003 Willow Creek Leadership Summit from Seminar Session Leader Erwin McManus helps Christ followers and leaders understand that God's Character is the basis for human character.

1. Character names of God – these names are elements of how God relates to and cares for us, and they are also the examples of the character development God is developing in us and that we should expect to employ to develop those we minister to. What follows out of this is a paradigm approach for effective mentoring and coaching. Hear and contemplate these names of God:
 - a. Peacemaker
 - b. Mind Clearer
 - c. Fear Taker
 - d. Sigh Hearer
 - e. Soul Soother
 - f. Hand Holder
 - g. Storm Smoother
 - h. Consoler

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- i. Light Shiner
 - j. Wound Binder
 - k. Lost Finder
 - l. Tear Drier
 - m. Cloud Lifter
 - n. Strength Giver
 - o. Deliverer
 - p. Provider
 - q. Heart Toucher
 - r. Heart Healer
 - s. Truth Lover
 - t. Kind Father
 - u. My Savior
2. Here are some key Coaching Questions for leaders and disciples – of these names, which of them are what you think you need to experience from God today? Take some time and prayerfully contemplate each name... then date the names that speak to you now. Do this exercise at least quarterly [every 3 months].
- a. The problem with building churches and Christian communities in general is that we do so with depraved and fallen human beings. While character always matters, my own character is never without flaw nor is this less true for any involved with me in this or any other project. Take the time as individuals in your group to ask and answer these questions. Then take the time to share your thoughts and pray for each other. This process builds humility, interdependence and trust.
 - b. Answer these 4 questions at least quarterly, and probably no more than monthly:
 - i. How am I doing... REALLY? If I were a Spiritual Plane... am I gaining or losing altitude in the following spheres:
 - 1. In my ministry
 - 2. In my Spiritual life
 - 3. In my home
 - 4. With my Wife
 - 5. With my family
 - 6. With my friends
 - ii. FEAR is a critical battleground for all leaders and followers. These are the areas where we are especially in need of God's supernatural help, which is why God tells us repeatedly to fear not. So the question is:
 - 1. What is it I am afraid of?
 - 2. What is it preventing me from trusting God?

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3. What do I really need... to be doing something, or just being with God or a person?
- iii. **PERSONAL LOSS** is another critical battleground for all... especially for leaders because we all need God's supernatural comfort for our broken hearts. We are told in Scripture to count the cost. The question that applies in the midst of pain, suffering, and personal loss is always "what do I think it will cost me to follow God? Will I continue to accept His invitation into vulnerable discipleship and leadership? How will it play out in my life?
 1. In terms of being obedient
 2. In terms of peace of mind
 3. In terms of my loved ones
 4. In terms of my health and career
- iv. **CLARITY OF MIND, VISION & HEART...** we all need God's supernatural discernment and strength to see and respond clearly into the world we live to offer the hope of Christ to others. Realizing I can't give what I don't have:
 1. What is my identity in Christ?
 2. What passion has God ignited in me?
 3. What invitation am I hearing?
 4. How do I need to get prepared to move forward?
- c. In terms of the preceding questions, remember that God commands us to do things, and promises us that He'll do things:
 - i. One of the problems we have as Christ Followers and Disciples is that we mistake God's commands and with His promises. There are things He expects us to do in obedience, and things we need to step up in faith and trust Him because they are promised in His Character.
 - ii. There is something about accepting leadership responsibility where we find ourselves running head long either into Christ's will and purpose where we are set free, or into our own fear and need where we remain in bondage.
 - iii. Freedom and liberty occur only in the presence of God. The lie we believe is that apart from Him we are not constrained... that left to ourselves we are liberated. This lie is documented in the Genesis account of Adam & Eve. Pride and selfishness keeps us from true humility and servant hood... where we are properly constrained and liberated.
3. Philippians shows that the highest calling of Christian Discipleship is to "trust and obey"... where we are thereby being progressively transformed by the renewing of our minds to reflect the character of God... who is at His core a Lover and a Servant. The hard thing for us to grasp, is that by serving others, we are actually set free. By serving others we love them with the love God has for us...

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because God loves the people we serve. If you doubt or are not experiencing God's love personally and vitally, you will struggle loving them in your own strength.

- a. Trusting – Phil 1:6 demonstrates that God's invitation into faith and ministry is always guaranteed by God's promises to perfect us. My effort is more about understanding and cooperating with what the Spirit is already doing in my life and in my community.
 - b. Obedience – Phil 2:12-13 demonstrates how spiritual vitality is engaged and set free in me. The critical key is knowing and experiencing the Greatness of God. Once this becomes real and vital, and not merely something we read or someone told us... when we truly believe it, it changes us. [See AD article on Spiritual Vitality Philippians 2:12-13 article SF 1.3 Prayer Practicum 1.3 Developing Spiritual Vitality [<http://www.authenticdiscipleship.org/pdfs/2-spiritual-formation/Spiritual%20Disciplines/SF%201.5%20Prayer%20Practicum%203%20-%20Developing%20Spiritual%20Vitality.pdf>]]
4. There is a process to being made whole... and it doesn't come from merely meeting our own needs or the needs of others. We need to be wise and establish reasonable expectations and healthy boundaries when we serve others. This is for the protection of all involved... ourselves, our families, our community, as well as those we serve. Mentors and coaches are a key component in keeping us balanced and effective both in our walk and ministry.
- a. There are some people who knowing that Christians are called to love and care for others, they will attach themselves to a Christian almost like a leech. They are meeting their own needs through your good intentions. Many well-intentioned Christ-Followers who desiring to do God's work to meet another's needs, find they wind up getting taken advantage of as more and greater demands are made upon them. Then they get frustrated and wonder what they're doing wrong.
 - b. Then when the person who is being helped by the believer who feels they haven't received what they need or perhaps they don't improve as expected. Some of these non-believers will actually blame the believer for this failure and the believer goes away and wonders what happened.
 - c. There are people who are predators who seek out and receive temporal help because they are working the system. They don't demonstrate long term healing... because they are meeting their own perceived needs by seeking out and manipulating well intended Christians. This happens way too often.
 - d. There are broken people in the world, and those who will do things to decent people out of their selfish dysfunctional need. But for those who genuinely seek healing, the key to the process of being healed is not just receiving God's love, not just receiving a Christian-counselor's love, but for them to be obedient and start giving love away rather than trying to hold on to it for their own protection or validation.
5. Scripture demonstrates that in giving love we are healed... it is by being a conduit of God's Love we are healed ourselves and are an instrument for healing others.

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- a. Luke 7:36-50 shows a person who really appreciates what God has done, and has gratitude pouring out of their heart... gratitude leads to wholeness.
- b. Realizing the real need that God has already met in us leads to healing and to giving back to others in the true spirit of love and appreciation.

D) DISCIPLESHIP LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:

1. A Christian's Integrity is communicating on the outside what exists and is going on in the inside. It is being consistent in demonstrating both who we are and who we serve in humility. God has invited us to serve His people, it is a great joy when we are refreshed by the Spirit who is continually flowing through me. When we operate in our own strength we'll tire and run dry. The former is an example of humble dependence; the latter is an example of prideful strength.
 - a. Humility develops integrity, and integrity develops character, and character develops courage... it is an ongoing developmental process. Humility is a key component because it gets me past my self-interest where I can see the needs of those we serve as being as important as our own.
 - b. Courage is not the absence of fear... instead it is the absence of self. Courage is doing God's will as He asks for it, and not necessarily in doing what we want in our own strength. Courage is not needlessly placing ourselves in harm's way, though occasionally God will ask us to do so. Wisdom asks us to count the cost, and courage invites us to stand on principled faith wherever God has placed us.
 - c. We need to affirm humility in leaders, not just their talent. We live in an era of celebrity preachers and teachers, of showmen and performers... we really need more Holy men who are on fire for Jesus and speaking in the power of the Spirit.
 - d. All leaders are shepherds... beware those who proclaim they are not shepherds. To be a pastor is to be a shepherd... it is a spiritual endeavor of walking with people. This is what makes discipleship in general and mentoring and coaching in particular so powerful.
 - e. James 1 – "consider it all joy...." Wisdom is born out of obedience. Obedience is born out of trials. Strength and courage are the result.
 - f. Trials come because of the truths you know and believe will necessarily rub up against life's challenges and problems. This is where we need to do the little things, day by day in humble, faithful, prayerful dependence and obedience.
 - g. As we obey in the little things, we become more faithful in the bigger things... and life patterns emerge... and God's Character becomes more clearly established in us. When we see it in ourselves, we model it to others who can then look for it in themselves.
2. A leader cannot give what they don't have... this is at the essence of integrity. God is capable of using whatever is submitted to Him. The Parable of the loaves and fishes demonstrates what Jesus can do to maximize our most feeble efforts (Matt 14:16-21). As Christ-Followers, Disciples, Disciple-Makers, and Spiritual Leaders we should come with whatever we have yielded completely. When

LD 4.4 – Coaching for Character Development

our ministry is an out working of a mind strengthened by Biblical Literacy, a Heart softened by Spiritual Formation, and leaders purposefully advancing the Mission of Christ... amazing things will happen. If you are sharing your life as it has been impacted by God, with your ministry constantly being strengthened and renewed by the Spirit, which you can model to others... this is always Spiritually impactful and has the potential to spark personal transformation.

3. A leader should not be passive or lukewarm... personal Spirit life has to be ignited and sustained. Biblical Literacy and Spiritual Formation both develop and sustain our passion for God. Leaders need to learn to “guard their hearts” by keeping fresh their love and devotion to God. God will use and bless whatever it is we give Him, but to love Him is to bring our best, and we can’t do that if we are not being refreshed and our Spirit life sustained.
4. Leaders who know all of what we have been talking about, with the Spirit’s insight can see this life developing in others. Our job is to encourage them and promote their growth, so they can find their place in advancing the Mission of Christ.