

Design Process for Potential Change

Cost: Saving the Soul

We've looked at time and energy. We have analyzed and designed a change process that includes these two factors in our change equation of **Change = Commitment (time + energy + cost) x capacity (the ability to change)**. We will now look at cost.

Cost is measured in two ways. First, it is measured as a limited commodity as trust. Second, it is measured in an unlimited commodity as love. In order for us to love we must trust. If we don't trust it is hard for us to love and love becomes sacrificial.

First, let's examine trust.

Trust

- 1. Who do you trust?*
- 2. How did you develop that trust?*
- 3. Has trust ever been betrayed in your life?*
- 4. Do you trust your parents? If not, why not?*
- 5. Do you trust your spouse or significant other? How much?*
- 6. Do you trust your friends? To what degree or extent (how far)?*
- 7. Whom would you trust with your life?*
- 8. Whom would you trust with your money?*
- 9. Who do you not trust and why?*
- 10. Do you trust God? Why or why not?*

Answer the above questions below:

Our trust is based and built upon our relationships. If we have developed solid caring relationships, we learn to trust and then to love others and our selves. If we do not or did not, we learn to mistrust others and our selves. For example, if our trust was betrayed through abandonment, neglect, or abuse we feel betrayed. Betrayal leads to bitterness and mistrust. Mistrust and bitterness prevents or blocks non-sacrificial love from growing and developing. As a further example I might suggest that if I didn't have a trusting foundation based on a loving relationship with one or both of my parents it may be difficult to impossible for me to develop caring companionship relationships later where I can fully trust and love another person or even my self as well as be able to accept or comprehend God's love. That's heavy! Let's reflect on that.

How did my relationship with my parents develop and where is it today? Do I love and trust them? What did they do or not do to develop and maintain my trust and therefore my non-sacrificial love?

Record your thoughts on the above:

*Since a parent's love is foundational to my ability to trust and love, and furthermore since I must fill that part of me with either their love or a substitute, is there anything I might have put in place of or used instead of my parent's love to fill that part of my **Soul Hole**?*

As I think back over my life, what might I have put in place of my parent's love? What have I spent my money on to buy fulfillment? Have I spent my money on others as in relationships to fill the parental needs of the Soul Hole as in purchasing a relationship? In other words, have I used my wealth to buy the love and appreciation of another? Have I tried to fill the hole that the absence of my parent's love left with things? Have I acquired possessions or accumulated wealth or businesses in order to demonstrate my adequacy or proof my worth to my self or my parents? What am I using to fill the Soul Hole at the Parental Love level? Am I using substances? Just like food can be a source of energy, it can be a substance as in gluttony. There can be many other substances like

drugs or alcohol I can use to try to fill the hole the absence of my parent's love might have left. Just as no parents are perfect, no parental love is perfect. We all are subject to addictions developing at this level in the Soul Hole. Examine your life below to determine whether or not you have or previously had any addictions that substituted for and tried to counterfeit your parent's incomplete or inadequate love. Be honest!

For example: When I don't feel loved, I eat. I substitute food for parental love. In fact as I think about it, that is how my mom showed love. She gave me food as a substitute for her time and attention.

Now your turn, how did you substitute for lack of parental love in your life?

In addition to Parental love, we have companionship love. How has the companionship love and trust area developed in your life? Do you feel you have developed normal and healthy companionship relationships? Do you or have you had people or individuals in your life that you can fully trust and rely on and feel loved by and can love them in return? When this happens we feel loved and complete or filled in the companionship love area of our Soul Hole. When it doesn't or is not completely filled, we begin to look for substitutes again. Are there substitutes in this area of your life? These are areas or items (things) that masquerade for love of another. Do you have any substitutes or counterfeits in this area of your Soul Hole?

For example: I frequently spend my money on other people to buy their love or trust in the form of friendship. When we go out I always buy. Or I am a member of a club or association I don't even really like (or maybe I do), but I am there to buy adulation, love, or some type of positive regard to fill this emptiness within. I may even contribute to my church or to charities in order to be thought of as wonderful and buy temporary friendship or positive emotional regard. And of course, the affairs I have, emotional or physical, whether real or imaginary (as in pornography) fall in this area.

Now it is your turn. What person, place, or thing do you use or have you used to fill this area of your life? It can even be your children, work, or church if used inappropriately.

Now we can examine God's role in our life. If we don't feel loved by our parents or others, whom we can see, how can we feel loved by God or trust a God whom we can't see, feel, or experience in some visible meaningful way? Good question! This is hard, but important. God says, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven". Whew! How then can we know and experience the love of God? On our money it says **In God we Trust**. Some wag added, "All others pay cash". Now at first blush that might seem funny, but that is our alternative. We can depend on God or learn to trust in God, or on everything else. What a choice! You mean I can either put my trust in a God I haven't seen or in money I have seen, but know is not adequate to meet my love needs? What role does God's love play in your life? Do you trust Him? Do you hedge your bets as in "I trust Him but"?

Regarding the "the camel through the eye of a needle", some theologians consider the reference to mean humbling our selves and giving our wealth to Christ on our knees. You see the eye of the needle was one of the twelve gates in the wall surrounding Jerusalem. It was the merchant gate. In order for camels to go through it they literally had to get down on their knees and crawl through the gate. That is how we must approach God with our wealth. However humbling it might be and even more how risky it might seem. But that is trust. Do we trust Him enough that we would even give him all our wealth and possessions? "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

In what or whom do I love and trust? And in whom or what do I want to love and trust?

This type of love is sacrificial. It is based on extending trust to whom I have not seen (God) and in whom I am risking my life and resources. God first demonstrated this to us. He trusted us first knowing we would betray His trust. Scripture says, “For God so loved the world He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believed (trusted) in Him would be saved and have (inherit) eternal life (better than gold)” We betrayed that trust and killed his son. Each of us have sinned and come short of the “glory of God (His trust is us). But Christ’s death on the cross and resurrection substituted His love for us in the hope and desire that we his beloved who had yet to love Him by placing our trust in Him would do so after we saw how he died for us. He trusted us first knowing we were going to betray him. This is sacrificial love.

Are you willing to trust Him who died for you? Or what would you rather place your trust in? For “where your heart is, there will you love be also”.

Whom do I trust? Whom do I love?

What changes would I make in the above, if any?

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Commitment: Exercising Freewill

We are at the point in the design process for potential change where it is important for you to pull together all the ingredients from time, energy, and cost to complete your desired change process design. This is your design for change, so determine now what you want to change, if anything, and what you want to leave alone or alone for now.

Here are the changes I desire to make in my life and me at this time:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

(Use the other side if more space is required)

Next we want to examine your capacity for change. Change is hard! Under the best of circumstances it is not easy. We all desire change, but usually find it difficult to do so. What seems to limit our ability to change is capacity and commitment. Capacity means do I currently have the resources to make the necessary changes. I may want to change but literally be unable to do so. For example: I may want to go to school but not have the money. Or I may want to run a marathon but not have the physical ability due to a handicap. Therefore, in addition to counting the cost and putting forth the effort, we need to be certain we have the capacity to change the things we desire to change, or we will certainly set ourselves up for failure.

Next, from your Design for Potential Change lists, examine the items you have identified for potential change and do a capacity analysis.

1. Which items do I know I could change given the time, money, energy or effort, and commitment? Items # _____
2. Which items do I know at this time I do not have the capacity to change even if I had the time, money, energy, and commitment? Items # _____
3. Which items am I not sure I can change? Items # _____
4. Which items that I do not believe I can change at this time due to either lack of capacity in #2 or uncertainty in #3 I know for certain I could change if my life depended on it? Items # _____
5. Which items from #2 and #3 above I know I can't change even if my life depended on it? Items# _____
6. Now which items are left from #1 and #4 as items I could change if my life depended on it and I wanted to? Items# _____
7. As I consider the items from #6, these are the items I desire or am willing to change at this time: Items# _____

Number 7 above identifies the items that I could make a commitment to change if I wanted to. Here, we enter into the territory of freewill. Do you really want to change? I know you have spent a lot of effort, time, and perhaps money reaching this point, or you wouldn't be here. You have also asked and answered the capacity question, so you have no excuses about your ability to change. Therefore, all that is left is to make a commitment to change and create and implement your Change Plan. Do you want to or are you ready to make any changes in your life at this time? If you are, we can move on to a Commitment Contract. If you are not ready, that is not the end of the world. You would be better off waiting until you are ready then to proceed before you are. What do you want to do?

- ❖ I want to proceed with a Commitment to Change Contract. Yes ____ No ____
- ❖ I want to wait until I am ready. I am not ready at this time. Yes ____ No ____
- ❖ There are a few things I need to do first before I am ready to proceed. Please explain: For example, I don't have the money yet. I will have more time in the fall. With all I have going on in my life right now, I don't need any more stress or pressure. I am not sure I really want to make any changes. There are a few things we need to work on first or I want to go over with you first before making any type of commitment to change.

- ❖ *If you answered YES to the first question above, we are ready to proceed. Otherwise we need to stop at this point and either wait until you are ready, or help you to get ready. Let's wait. Yes _____ No _____*
- ❖ *Are you ready to sign a Commitment to Change Contract? Yes _____ No _____*

If you are ready to proceed with a Commitment to Change Contract, this will become a final piece in the design process that locks us in to the changes you will be making. A Commitment to Change Contract is not a legal document in that sense of the word; however, it is even more binding and significant if it becomes a covenant or promise between you and God. Your counselor's role is to act only as your accountability partner. The promise to change is your responsibility for which God and your conscience alone will hold you and you accountable. If you are not willing to do and follow through on the courage of your convictions, those things you now purpose in your heart to do before God and man don't do it!

Here are the items I want in my Commitment to Change Contract.

1. MY FIRST ITEM I WANT TO CHANGE IS:

I feel it will take this much energy or effort for me to do this or make this change (quantify the energy required) For example: I will need this much extra sleep.

I think it will take me this long or this much time to make this change. For example: I will need at least 3 months to accomplish this desired goal for my life.

I believe it will cost me this much money or sacrifice to reach this goal (calculate the cost in either dollars or cents or in some other

measurable way) For example: I will have to invest \$500 in the materials I need to bring about this goal.

I am willing to make the above investment in energy, time and money (or other resources) to reach this goal and make the changes this item requires.

Your signature

Witnessed by

Date of Commitment

2. MY SECOND ITEM I WANT TO CHANGE IS:

❖ Energy required

❖ Time required

❖ Money required

❖ Willingness to change

Signature _____ Witness

Date

3. My third item I want to change is:

❖ Energy required

❖ Time required

❖ Money required

❖ Willingness to change

Signature Witness Date

4. My fourth item I want to change is:

❖ Energy required

❖ Time required

❖ Money required

❖ Willingness to change

Signature Witness Date

5. My fifth item I want to change is:

❖ Energy required

❖ Time required

❖ Money required

❖ Willingness to change

Signature _____ Witness _____ Date _____

6. My sixth item I want to change is:

❖ Energy required

❖ Time required

❖ Money required

❖ Willingness to change

Signature _____ Witness _____ Date _____

(Duplicate this sheet as many times as is necessary to include all the items you want to change) designed 3/22/01 dlb

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND PLAN

As you consider the items from your Commitment to Change Contract, are there items you prefer to start with first? Some items require more energy than others and can be more costly and time consuming so even though you have indicated your willingness, readiness, and commitment to change, you may want to start with one or two items first to see how you are doing. Sometimes it is better to start with an easier item or two to get the change process under way and feel we are accomplishing something and sometimes it is better to get the big thing out of the way first. As you examine your desired items from your Commitment to Change Contract, where do you want to start?

- ❖ **I want to start with item # _____ which is**

- ❖ **My desired starting date is _____.**
- ❖ **My target or goal date to realize my change is _____.**
- ❖ **In addition I want to work on this/these other items # _____.**
- ❖ **My starting and goal dates for each of these are _____ for item # _____ and _____ for item # _____ and _____ for item # _____ (continue on the back side as needed).**
- ❖ **I would be willing to be held accountable by (name the person) _____ and _____ as well as _____.**
- ❖ **I am or have asked them to participate in holding me accountable by both reviewing my change plan as well as following my implementation progress on (the date you asked them) _____.**
- ❖ **I will meet with each of my accountability partners on (name days, dates, and times, be specific) _____; _____; _____.**
- ❖ **I will continue to meet with my counselor on these dates and times for review, support, and necessary implementation changes _____.**

My implementation plan for item number one is as follows:

- ❖ **First I will pray and seek God's will and guidance to be certain this is what He wants me to do at this time.**
- ❖ **Second I will ask my counselor and my accountability partners to pray so they can be certain, in agreement, and an encouragement to me in this process.**
- ❖ **Next I will begin the process itself by**

- ❖ **Followed by**

- ❖ **(Continue to list as many steps as needed on the back side)**

