LEADING TRANSFORMATION #15:   
CHARACTER FORMATION PROCESS

Our minds are filled with categories of concepts to which we attribute meanings. The meanings attributed to these concepts influence how we behave in relation to those themes in our lives. Examples of conceptual categories are God, creation, life, authority, power, success, significance, leadership, service, and being. The meanings and values we place on these concepts are determined by a variety of factors including culture, religion, critical experiences, and relationships. The experiencing of mindset and life transformation requires the transformation of the meanings, significance and values we place on those concepts.

The uncovering of one’s conceptual understanding involves exploring the factors that have shaped it. Understanding those factors in turn helps in developing strategies and creating environments that can lead to the gaining of new understandings, and hence new behaviors. The process for shifting meanings and values of concepts involves the following seven steps.

1. SELF-AWARENESS  
2. CLARIFYING CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF CHARACTER SHAPING CONCEPT  
3. DETERMINING THE RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT (I.E. TRUTH)  
4. ENGAGING THE RIGHT AND CURRENT UNDERSTANDINGS OF CONCEPT IN TRANSFORMATIVE INTERACTION  
5. ALIGNING ACTIONS TO RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF CONCEPT  
6. ACTING IN CONFIDENCE  
7. TRUSTING GOD FOR THE POWER TO CHANGE

1. SELF-AWARENESS  
• The first step in the character transformation process is the gaining of self-awareness of one’s current state of being (evidenced by character traits), and the desired character.   
• The clearer the differences between the current and desired character traits, the higher the possibility of appreciating what it would take to experience the needed character transformation.

Lack of self-awareness is the most serious limitation to character transformation.

2. CLARIFY CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF CHARACTER-SHAPING CONCEPT  
• Identify current understanding of a selected concept.  
• Explore people, places, events and experiences that could have influenced the current understanding.  
• Identify the right understanding of the selected concept. Explore reasons for the misunderstanding.   
• Clarify what you have learned about yourself that needs to change for you to avoid the misunderstanding(s).

3. DETERMINE THE RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF CONCEPT  
• Identify the right understanding of the concept.  
• Investigate the rationale for the right understanding.  
• Clarify the benefits of shifting to the right understanding.

4. ENGAGE EXISTING AND THE RIGHT CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS IN TRANSFORMATIVE INTERACTION  
• Ask questions about which understandings are influencing particular thoughts, desires, promptings, impulses, decisions and actions.  
• Ask questions about which understandings will yield better thoughts, desires, promptings, impulses, decisions and actions.  
• Ask questions about what needs to change for the right understandings to prevails practically over the current non-constructive understandings  
• Plan for and make the changes needed regarding relationships, environment, entertainment of thoughts, exposures to relationships etc.  
• Keep catching yourself using the wrong understandings and keep shifting to the right conceptual understandings.

5. ALIGN ACTIONS TO TRUTHFUL UNDERSTANDING OF CONCEPT  
• Form new habits and behaviors.   
• Begin to act based on understanding of new behaviors.  
• Consistent thoughts lead to action.  
• Consistent action leads to habit.  
• Consistent habit leads to character.  
• Good character is the root of integrity.

6. ACT IN CONFIDENCE  
• Have confidence that change is possible.  
• Worldview transformation is the root to lasting character formation.

7. DEPEND ON GOD FOR THE POWER TO CHANGE  
• Thank God by faith that He has already given you the power to chose the right understandings, make the right decisions, and take the right actions.  
• By faith choose the right thoughts, make the right decisions and take the right actions  
• Celebrate success and thank God for His faithfulness.  
• When you fail, acknowledge it and thank God for His forgiveness. Re-enter the process of choosing the right understandings; making the right decisions and taking the right actions.  
• Remember that those who do not quit cannot fail.