**Core Essential Elements Discussion Paper**

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**Assignment #1 – Core Essential Elements**

 Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

Weekend Residency: Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the week of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage with other students during the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL.

i. Student selected element defined with direct quotation and citation

ii. Selected element paraphrased – translate the definition in your own words

iii. Contextualization – discuss how the Essential Element relates to or could be connected to your professional context or personal life.

**Core Essential Elements Discussion Paper**

Over the past year, I have participated in the Women’s Leadership Development Institute (WLDI) at Bridgeway Community Church. WLDI is a nine-month program that instills spiritual and leadership principles essential for kingdom leadership. The principle that resonated most was spiritual discipline because it challenged me to evaluate my spiritual maturity. After completing a brief assessment of the abstinence and engagement disciplines, one glaring deficiency was exposed; I scored one out of ten in bible reading, studying, and memorization. I realized that neglecting the Bible hindered me from growing in my relationship with God and my growth as a kingdom leader. This experience has shifted the trajectory of my spiritual journey to more intentionally pursue growth in all spiritual disciplines.

According to Carr-Chellman and Kroth (2017), “spiritual disciplines are practices of transformation intentionally pursued through the day-to-day actions of deeper living” (p. 25). In other words, spiritual disciplines invest in your quality of life. Furthermore, the word intentionally stands out because making the conscious decision to act purposefully leads to better outcomes and a more positive experience. Like self-discipline, spiritual disciplines can instill a greater sense of purpose, reduce anxiety, and improve the quality of your relationships and decision-making skills. Examples of spiritual disciplines include prayer, fasting, service, and worship. In Galatians 5:16-17; 22-25, Paul wisely counsels us to be led by the Spirit because it is freeing while being led by our flesh ensnares us in our sinful nature.

Growing in spiritual maturity by committing to practicing spiritual disciplines will help me professionally because I desire to lead social change through a conflict empowerment movement. Effective conflict management requires discipline because skills and tools must be cultivated to support a collaborative environment for the participants. However, many barriers exist to achieving this goal, including our society’s negative perceptions of conflict and predominant culture of division. However, strengthening my relationship with God and remaining focused on my goals will support my success. As I progress through the Doctor of Social Leadership program, I am grateful for the opportunity to be challenged to continue growing in my faith, spiritual maturity, intellect, and leadership skills.

**References**

Carr-Chellman, D. J., & Kroth, M. (2017). The Spiritual Disciplines as Practices of Transformation. International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology, 8(1), 23–35.