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11/08/23

**120 Day - Course Learning Journal**

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course and is an integration of the essential elements of the course within your professional field of interest. The objective of the course journal is to produce a degree of acculturation, integrating new ideas into your existing knowledge of each course. This is also an opportunity to communicate with your professor consistent with the Tutorial Methodology to express insights gained as a result of the course of study. Submit the course learning journal via DIAL. The course learning journal should be 5-7 pages in length, and should include the following sections:

**Introduction** – Describe the expectations of the graduate program and the campus residency component for that course. Summarise the intent of the course, how it fits into the graduate program as a whole, and the relevance of its position in the curricular sequence.

**Personal Growth** - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or challenged you– as well as your progress in mastery of course content and skills during the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.

**Reflective Entry** - Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualisation (or adaptation and relevant application) of new learning into your professional field. What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result of your study?

**Future Expectations** - Continue the journal by addressing questions and concerns you now have relating to the graduate program expectations.

 **Conclusion** – Synthesise the three body sections above, evaluating the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional, religious, and educational goals.

The Transforming Self-Concept class I attended during Core week was interesting as I expected it to be an extension of the first Leadership class I did with Dr Mr Clane. Although this class focused on leadership, the true essence of the course was the type of leader one should be and the integrity one should hold in those roles. I had high expectations of the course due to my familiarity with Dr Mc Clane I expected insightful discussions to be had with the other students. I believe, I was fortunate as I would have switched from the PHD, so I was one of the few who did the other version of the class where we focused on a Transformative leader that we looked up to. The class being placed in this Core of the DSL Programme is beneficial as we draw closer to the Action Research and would have actually to implement a project, we need to be clear about how we view ourselves and how God views us as we put this plan into action.

This term was one of coming into my identity and reframing the way in which I see myself. I did this class along with the Ethics class so it reinforced the need for self - accountability when operating in particular spheres and, more importantly, when the Lord is using you as a witness to others and others are accountable to you. Improving my self-concept was a genuine thing I had to deal with as I was asked to mentor a team of young people in a Caribbean fellowship programme. Imposter Syndrome is also something I had to check myself on when I was introduced to the other mentors of the programme and started to compare myself to them. Holy Spirit had to remind me that it was he who qualifies the called and this was not something I applied to doubt was asked, by a new OGS contact actually.

 This particular semester was tough as I struggled to keep up with the coursework and, unfortunately had some late submissions. I also attended the LOC trip during this term which was an experience in and of itself, I initially thought I would be able to get work done during this week, but it was intense and exhausting while rewarding. I took a while to catch up with my assignments while returning to a busy season at work.

 Working as a Youth Development Associate (YDA), I am one of the people working closely with youth in various communities. By the nature of the job, I have become aware of different issues that communities face and the various way I have to navigate and assist. The course is a reminder that my work is not just a job but a vocation that I have been called to. Recently at a youth work conference which is the first I have attended, they spoke about the importance of professionalising the field and best practice research for youth work. One major point was the need for a code of conduct and the ethics that govern the field. I use a collaborative approach when I go into communities to assist youth-serving and youth-led groups. Various stakeholders are called upon depending on the project and particular needs of the community; community policing, guidance counsellors, psychologists, businessmen, and other community stakeholders are sometimes called on to assist, dependent on the objective of the project to be developed. The course would have reinforced the importance of considering the delicate dance that sometimes needs to be made when interfacing with people of different socioeconomic or educational backgrounds. I have always preferred working on community-level projects versus national projects. This season, the Lord is exposing me to more extensive experiences and increasing my appreciation for that level of impact. I have consciously stopped downplaying the work I do as just community-level work.

Currently, in my church I am the Assistant Director for Women's Ministries in my church; as little as five years ago, I would not have thought that I would be so heavily involved in ministry. This role has given me attention and notice that I have had to learn to be comfortable with; it also comes with people scrutinising your life more than previously. These new spheres have imprinted on me the need for personal integrity as the Lord requires me to be a witness to him. My role as a YDA also comes with a level of notability as I have been in many situations where people have seen me in public, said hi to me, and called me by name, when I have no idea who they are. My self-confidence and self-concept need to be healthy having these new experiences because if not, I can mismanage these new relationships and also the people who may be looking up to me for guidance. My public persona and personal life need to be closely aligned as whether I like it or not, young adults and impressionable minds are observing me. As a lot of community work and ministry works entails more intimate and less formal interactions, authenticity is appreciated by individuals, especially young people who are very discerning of others' character.

 I hope that I continue to be an effective change agent who can impact communities that sometimes don't have an advocate on their side; in doing so I hope that ultimately I will be able to point people to Christ as they see the way in which I effectively perform my job. One of the most rewarding occurrences I have had professionally is when a once rude and socially dysfunctional teenager meets you years later and greets you with respect and, through their interaction, lets you know that they are well on their way to being a fully functional adult. This change that is exhibited in young persons rarely occurs unless there is an intervention by adults who previously poured into them and invested their time in mentoring or guiding them.

As I end this course and begin my fifth Core of the Doctorate degree, I look forward to what will come in the future core weeks and more insightful discussions. The Transforming Self-Concept course allows the Christian scholar-practitioner to gain an appreciation for their work as ministry and how we should serve people with authenticity and integrity. I appreciated the self-reflection this class allowed that can be implemented in my personal, professional and spiritual life. It allowed me to examine critically and take note of the work I do in communities and my interactions with both colleagues and clients; differing personalities can sometimes be a challenge to work with, but with an understanding of why I engage in the work that I do, I am better able to function in my calling.

The course has made me further appreciate the privilege that I have been entrusted with where I have been afforded the opportunity to directly impact and change the mindset of communities and their youth. The Bible verse that states he who has begun a good work in you will continue to perfect and complete it until the day of Christ Jesus, is a comfort to me in this season of my life, although I may not fully be experiencing life in the fullness that the Lord has for me yet, but I can see glimpses of me advancing towards it. The work of the community, youth, pursuing a doctorate or anything that the Lord has charged us to do is important, and despite the hiccups that may arise, we are reminded that we represent Christ and should let his light shine through us. Educationally OGS has exceeded my expectations. The coursework allows for insightful discussions and thoughts about our work and how it aligns with kingdom building. It encourages evaluation of your work and ways to implement it to ensure effectiveness. As Christians, we are responsible for working with excellence in whatever sphere we are called to.