LDR 807-12

Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development

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**Assignment #4 – Course Learning Journal**

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course. The Learning Journal integrates 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 insights gained as a result of the course. The course

learning journal should be 3-5 pages in length and should include the following sections:

1. **Introduction** –Summarize 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.

2. **Personal Growth** - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or

challenged you– and your progress in mastery of course content and skills during

the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.

3. **Reflective Entry -** Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or

adaptation and relevant application) of new learning in your professional field.

What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result

of your study?

4. **Conclusion** – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional,

religious, and educational goals.

“God always is ready to help the lone individual” (Tozer, 2011, p.170).

Transforming Self-Concept for Leader Development (TLD) focuses on shaping a change agent’s self-concept, spiritual and moral development. This holistic approach strives to shape and refine individuals, empowering them to become catalysts of positive change. Therefore, a person’s self-concept explains how they perceive themselves, intertwine with their spirituality, and how they lead others. This study allows leaders to learn how to integrate the disciplines of faith and moralism influenced by biblical principles applicable to their vocational calling.

Learning about the ability to develop one’s self-concept by aligning it with the spirit of God is imperative and transforms the leader early into the habit of spiritual leadership. A spirit-filled leader is necessary to create a fellowship that honors God. Learning (TLD) early in the program encourages one to relinquish one’s ideologies of the self and transfer the focus to a leader who cares for his fellow man and society.

The course prompted the researcher to contemplate her initial religiosity, which, although infused with skepticism, God used as a spiritual formation. Beginning with singing hymns in parochial schools, this reflection allowed the author to focus on the relationship to the Holy Spirit and appreciation of his role. Formation Science posits every individual possesses an immutable essence that remains constant from birth until death (vanKaam, 2017).

Formation Science gives students a unique perspective on their developed self-concept, which empowers them to cultivate spiritual and moral leadership. Muto and Letterman (2017) advise that one must grow inward to gain the strength and knowledge to give outward ministerial work a *two-sided Christian coin*. Tozer (2021) emphasized, “To lead like Christ, the first thing we need to do is to *know Christ*” (p.157.)

The course challenged the author’s beliefs about one’s self-concept, its impact on a leader’s character, and the criteria determining one’s leadership abilities. Maxwell (2019) asserted that character defines identity, while identity influences perception and behavior. Hence, it is impossible to dissociate a leader’s character from their actions.

The author encountered a challenge from the increasing demand to study the attributes of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third distinct person of the triune God, who empowers believers to live and lead the life of Christianity. In his work, Sproul (2012) eloquently reminds believers of the profound nature of the Holy Spirit. Through the scriptures, he emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is none other than God Himself, possessing omniscience and eternality. (English Standard Version Bible, 2017, Act 5: 1-4; 1 Cor. 2:10–11; Heb 9:14).

McEwen (2023) reflects on the concept of dispositional living as described by Muto. The author agrees that to experience the impact of spiritual formation, individuals must relinquish aspects of their habits associated with the familiar qualities and norms of life. Instead, McEwen (2023) argues that the leader must embrace a spirit-guided life. But how can Christians differentiate between religious virtues (religiosity) and those manifested in their personal relationship with God to lead others? Tozer (2021) provides a solution for further study: “When we use the world’s methods, we push aside the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit, and nothing else, who runs and energizes our spiritual leadership” (Tozer, 2021.p.136-147).

Yet, many modern-day Christians find themselves *spiritually stagnant*, needing more scriptural knowledge and the transformative call to become spiritual disciples, leading in the reflective image of Christ (Van Dongen, 2023). A transformed self-concept allows leaders to lead others that magnify God. The author acknowledges that focusing on a spiritually transformed self-concept compels one to share the message of hope in times of despair. Rosenberg (1979) stated that individuals’ self-concept is their point of reference. Their self-perception defines them.

The predicament adolescents encounter through their distorted perception of themselves. The author aims to educate them on developing their self-concept and knowledge of the influence of significant others. According to Rosenberg (1979), through the looking-glass principle, individuals perceive themselves as society sees them. Stigmatization and self-stigmatization are common occurrences in the plight of improving mental wellness. By centering on an altered self-concept influenced by spiritual formation, a leader can reassure others in hopeless situations.

By developing a solid self-concept early in their leadership journey, leaders can draw followship showing reverence to God. In the spiritual journey through leadership, the leader embraces the commitment to love their neighbor as themselves (Mark 12:31). Both principles establish a connection between formation science and leadership that embodies the qualities of Christlikeness.

Tozer (2021) affirms that spiritual leaders must relinquish worldly knowledge and instead allow the Holy Spirit to guide them. This shift in mindset and perspective is crucial for their spiritual growth and effectiveness in leading others. Davis et al. (2023) asserted that positive psychology and the scientific study of religion and spirituality enhance individual, relational, and community well-being. Lapierre et al. (2012) suggest that cultivating a relational self-concept can enhance the bond between mentors and followers, resulting in a strong and significant connection.

The bond formed between mentor and mentee, marked by reciprocal trust and awareness, is essential for enabling successful mentorship and promoting development and growth for both individuals. Flourishing leadership, rooted in moral and spiritual development, benefits leaders and followers (Davis et al., 2023). Transforming a leader’s self-concept to lead awakens the author’s Christianity. According to Tozer (2011), this is a personal revival. The educational aim enables the leader to persist in researching and conducting a literature review of biblical leaders and books that inspire and elevate life in the ministry of Christ.

Further, this course develops the author’s quest to lead young people to understand objective truths in self-concept, morality, and spirituality. The author can guide young people to hope in a world that promotes substances to cope with the hopelessness of depressive symptoms. According to Crout (2021), young people’s self-perceptions and perceptions of morals and beliefs are subjective. Cultural relativism and the fear of criticizing the belief of others shape their ideologies. Kohlberg (1971) argues that people’s morals are formed by the “shoulds” and “should nots” they are taught in school and the choices they make for themselves (p.42).

Morality guides everyone, but different people may get their morals from different places. This study’s effect on the author reminds her that God receives the glory from the one who leads. Educational dialogue and mentoring this new knowledge transform the author into a role model who can teach that morals and beliefs are not arbitrary views (Crout, 2021). The author’s educational objective involved examining Old Testament scholarship that addresses the skepticism surrounding the validity of the authors. Nevertheless, none is more rewarding than to discover the blessing of God through his inspired word (Young, 1989).

 This study explores integrating faith, morals, and biblical principles into leaders' lives and, thus, ministry calling. Aligning self-concept with the spirit of God fosters spiritual leadership and creates a community that honors God. Early exposure to TLD encourages individuals to prioritize caring for others and society over personal ideologies.

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