LDR 815-32 Transforming People Problems

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Professor

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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, incorporating 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, 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 course's effectiveness in meeting your professional, religious, and educational goals.

To truly understand leadership, we must gain an understanding of man's nature. By definition, man's nature combines thinking, acting, and reacting learned in social situations. Applying that to leadership in law enforcement, we all come to the table with a preconceived mindset of our world. These preconceived values affect how we respond and relate to others. As a leader, these values have to be put aside and the goal is to guide, motivate, and be the example to subordinates.

Leaders who lead strictly because of position tend to negatively affect an organization's morale, unity, and trust. Positional leaders utilize power, control, and the impact on subordinates, and lead by fear and disrespect the title and position. This affects police officers’ proactive behavior. By analyzing man's nature, we can better understand the mindset of leadership and accountability, which can strengthen an organization's effectiveness, especially in law enforcement.

**Personal Growth**

Police departments have a clear hierarchical structure of leadership. This is necessary in law enforcement due to the nature of work, and is an effective way to disseminate information that allows officers to handle crises quickly. Despite having this hierarchical structure, leaders can fall into several leadership levels. As mentioned, positional leaders gain control in a hierarchical police department because subordinates must do so by policy. When I entered the police academy, this was one of our first indoctrinations. In a sense, it was also the most intimidating. As my classmates and I progressed through the academy and throughout my career, I learned that title did not always equate to effective leadership.

As I began to get promoted and move up the hierarchical ladder and went through leadership training, I learned the five levels of leadership: position, permission, production, people development, and personhood. These molded me, and more importantly, most of the leaders I had above me during my career modeled this.

What I have learned looking at these levels through the lens of man’s nature from a theological, sociological, and psychological perspective provides a greater understanding of motivation, relationships, and personal growth. Applying level one through five to my leadership style as I moved up the ladder within the agency has allowed me to grow and more importantly, help others succeed. Even though I am in a position of authority based on my title, and people follow because they have to, I view this as a steward of responsibility. As a result of being in this position, I can build relationships to create a more relaxed, fun environment, showing compassion and understanding, and remember that individuals need positive relationships to thrive, however, I have to understand that this can cause those of the type “A” people that are goal-oriented to lose motivation. I have learned that hard work pays off, by utilizing my God given gifts to fulfill my work mission, and leading by example, people will follow because of the effort and dedication shown. Another is sowing into those under my command. My goal is to build up and develop leaders, this is my form of discipleship on the job.

The most important aspect of leadership is earning the respect of those under my command. I do not want my respect based on my title. I want people under my command to see and understand what I represent at work and in my personal life. Despite the tough job of being a police officer, I want those under my command to see me as a man of compassion and integrity with a hard work ethic. My motto is not to ask anyone under my command to do anything I have not done or am unwilling to do.

**Reflective Entry**

Thirty-eight years ago, when I applied to the Maryland State Police, I had no idea what to expect. Yes, I grew up around family and coaches who were police officers, but I never got to see behind the curtain what their jobs entailed. I just had the utmost respect for them and knew that’s what I wanted to do for a career. Once I was accepted, it was an exciting time. When I entered the Maryland State Police Academy on our family orientation day, the agency's hierarchical plan and chain of command were quickly established.

As a trooper candidate, I walked into the academy building in Pikesville for my interview panel. Upon completion, as I walked down the steps, Doug Deleaver met me with a smile and a handshake, congratulated me, and sent me away for my X-rays. That first meeting left an impression, he was one of Maryland's Finest. I learned many valuable lessons from him during my career. We ignite others when we are passionate, fervent, pumped, excited, moved, and zealous. He was able to ignite anyone he met to do great things. He worked with zeal, so it rubbed off on all of us.

While studying and completing research for this class, Colonel Deleaver came to my mind many times. He was that transformational leader that took the time to sow into everyone willing to listen. When I applied him to the concept of the nature of man from theological, sociological, and psychological perspectives, he hit them all. He commanded respect because of his position, but he had an uncompromising work ethic you rarely see from someone in his position. He was a leader by example; there were many calls for service, and you would hear his voice on the radio. Car #1 responded for backup. He seemed to be everywhere. He was someone you could talk to on a personal level; he could bring a unit together after a tragic event through his faith and stewardship. During my promotion ceremonies he was always the first to provide encouragement and direction. He was a leader who taught me never to forget where I started and to continue building those under my command. Applying the many lessons he taught me during my career and conducting my research here at OGS into social change, he has laid a foundation that I hope to emulate as I work to change the world within my reach.