Accountability and Personal Growth

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The word *discipleship* and the word *discipline* are the same word -- that has always fascinated me.

Once you have made the choice to say, "Yes, I want to follow Jesus," the question is, "What disciplines will help me remain faithful to that choice?"

If we want to be disciples of Jesus, we have to live a disciplined life.

- Henri Nouwen
Workshop Outline

1. Dynamics of Spiritual Formation
2. Accountability
3. Models of Voluntary Honesty
4. Spiritual Formation and Personal Growth
Spiritual Formation and Personal Growth

The quest for Spiritual Formation falls in the academic field of spirituality.

The Oxford Dictionary defines “spirituality” as the quality or condition of being spiritual.

In turn it defines “spiritual” as devout, holy, pious, morally good.
Spiritual Formation and Personal Growth

Christian Spirituality is about a process of formation. We are formed by, and in, Christ.

It is a form of Christ-[ening] – being clothed with Christ, and so being transformed.”

Spiritual Formation and Personal Growth

Christian Spirituality is "one’s unique and personal response to the call of Christ through the Spirit in the world of inner and outer realities."

- Roy Fairchild, San Francisco Theological Seminary
Spiritual Formation and Personal Growth

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that they might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

(Romans 8:28-29 - NKJV)
Spiritual Formation and Personal Growth

The Quest for con-[trans]-formation is the quest to find our truest identity in Christ.

“Who are you Lord, and who am I?”

– Francis of Assisi
Dynamics of Spiritual Formation

“And we all, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord as within a mirror are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

(2 Corinthians 3:18)
Dynamics of Spiritual Formation

“And we all, (community) with unveiled faces, (accountability) beholding the glory of the Lord (devotional focus) as within a mirror are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

(2 Corinthians 3:18)
Dynamics of Spiritual Formation

Community

Devotional Focus

Accountability
Dynamics of Spiritual Formation

Within the discipline of community are the disciplines of forgiveness and celebration. Forgiveness and celebration are what make community, whether a marriage, a friendship, or any other form of community.

- Henri Nouwen
We make ourselves real by telling the truth.

- Thomas Merton
Dynamics of Spiritual Formation

“Place your mind in the mirror of eternity; Place your soul in the splendor of glory; Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance; And, through contemplation, transform your entire being Into the image of the Divine One Himself.”

- Clare of Assisi
Goal of Transformation

“And we all, (community) with unveiled faces, (accountability) beholding the glory of the Lord (devotional focus) as within a mirror are being transformed (process) into the same image (icon) from glory to glory, (process) just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (Agent of Change) (2 Corinthians 3:18)
Goal of Transformation
“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

- James 5:16
Accountability

Good Confession

Full Disclosure

Fear of God

Clear Conscience

Augustine of Hippo
Models of Voluntary Honesty

- Marriage
- Spiritual Director
- Family
- Accountability Partners
- Small Groups
- Friendship
There is healing in being known in my vulnerability and impatience and weakness. Suddenly I realize that Henri is a good person also in the eyes of people who don't read books and who don't care about success. These people can forgive me constantly for the little egocentric gestures and behaviors that are always there.

- Henri Nouwen
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What is accountability?

- Method for realizing goals too important to entrust to your own motivation
- A special kind of friendship
  - Goal-focused
  - Regular
  - About receiving feedback you NEED (vs. WANT)
  - Based on mutual respect
  - Not necessarily reciprocal, but reciprocal is good
  - Is NOT enforcement
Setting up a relationship

- Identify your goals
  - List of questions
  - Can start informally – You mentioned... How’s that going?
- Select your model
- Select your people – “God with skin”
- Identify your parameters
- Start
Getting started

- In what areas of my life do I need accountability?
  - What are my specific goals?
- Who do I know who is a potential accountability partner?
- What specific action steps will I take to pursue accountability? By when?
Accountability and Personal Growth

Please give us your feedback.