

## Lesson 14: Self Change Skill

Mystery #5: What would make it possible for me to really change?

### I. Introduction

- a. Change in behavior may be gradual, almost imperceptible and unconscious. When change over such a long time occurs, it often results in some sort of **degradation**. *I used to enjoy jogging, but no longer do it.*
- b. Spiritual change in ones behavior may occur **spontaneously**, for example, when the Holy Spirit performs His miraculous work. *Acts 9:4-6 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? KJV*
- c. Change can also occur intentionally and according to a **plan**. These behavior changes may also take time to accomplish but they occur because of disciplined and conscious decision making.
- d. For most of us, conscious change does not occur easily and is often like **fighting** against ones self to get it done. This is similar to the process of sanctification in the believer. *1 Cor 9:27 No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. NIV*
- e. The first step to our behavior change is the **recognition** that something needs to change. If I need to change it is because I have fallen short of a standard. I.E. Godliness *1 Tim 4:7-8 exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. KJV*
- f. When I acknowledge that a change toward **godliness** is necessary, I am humbling myself before God. *James 4:6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." NIV*
- g. It is then that the Holy Spirit **empowers** the change. *Ps 119:173 Let thine hand help me; for I have chosen thy precepts. KJV*
- h. At the same time, something in my brain is released that affects my intention and my creativity to find a replacement behavior and I become **favorably** disposed to doing something differently.

### II. How To Change

- a. See change as a gradual process which will involve **repeated** attempts to get it right.
- b. When you fail to do what you meant to do, see it as a missed opportunity and get **back on track** with your commitment to change. *Prov 24:16 for though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again, NIV*
- c. Create a **clear picture** of how you want to change and imagine yourself doing what you intend to do. Doing this is the first step in connecting your brain with your will.
- d. Create a **word picture** of what your goal is. For example, "When I have finally mastered regularly expressing my appreciation for my spouse I will feel successful and will be manifesting Christ in a real way."
- e. Establish a specific plan for what you would like to change. Be realistic and be incremental. **Write** down what you will do and when you will do it.
- f. Knowing that behavior change happens over time, use **reminders**. Revise your plan if you see it is not working.
- g. Write down **how you will know** that you have accomplished the change and what the anticipated results will be.
- h. Solicit **feedback** from your spouse. Make sure the feedback that is given is helpful rather than unhelpful. I.E. UNHELPFUL: "Did you...yet?" "You forgot!" I'm waiting ....." HELPFUL: "I appreciate how seriously you are taking this change project." "I can see by your effort that you are really trying to change."
- i. Help your partner think of ways to remind you that will not **upset you**.
- j. **Do not** offer excuses or act defensive when you have been reminded.
- k. Show your appreciation to others when they remind you as they agreed to do. **Skillfully** remind them of your wishes if they use reminders that annoy you.
- l. **Notice** your positive feelings when you do what you said you would do to follow through.
- m. Ask for appreciation from others when you have been doing well on **executing** your change plan.

### III. Making the Change

- a. Once you become aware that something you do or fail to do in your communication patterns with others is a problem, follow the self change model. For example: I fail to express my appreciation for my spouse/friend.
- b. Create a clear picture of how you want to change and imagine yourself doing what you intend to do. Doing this is the first step in connecting your brain with your will. *At least 5 days a week I will take my wife by the hand and look into her eyes and express my appreciation for her.*
- c. Create a word picture of what your goal is. For example, "When I have finally mastered regularly expressing my appreciation for my spouse I will feel successful and will be manifesting Christ in a real way."

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- d. Establish a specific plan for what you would like to change. Be realistic and be incremental. Write down what you will do and when you will do it. *I will create a list of at least 100 attributes, qualities or characteristics that I appreciate about my wife. I will express them to her at least five times per week; and I will start on August 19, 2010.*
- e. Knowing that behavior change happens over time, use reminders. Revise your plan if you see it is not working.
- f. Write down how you will know that you have accomplished the change and what the anticipated results will be. *I will know that I have completed my project when I have developed my list of appreciations and I have developed the habit of expressing my appreciation for her regularly and consistently. (At least 5X per week) I anticipate that both my wife and I will feel that our relationship is more alive and satisfying.*
- g. Solicit feedback from your spouse. Make sure the feedback that is given is helpful rather than unhelpful. *"I love hearing you express your appreciation for me"; "When you express your appreciation for me it makes me feel that our relationship is important you".*

#### IV. Application

- a. Using the form below, identify one communication behavior change that you can make in your relationship and create a plan that you will accomplish.

<b>Who will change what behavior:</b>	
<b>Goal for new behavior:</b>	<b>Reminders from partner:</b>
<b>Anticipated completion date:</b>	
<b>Plan to reach that goal:</b>	<b>Reinforcements from partner:</b>
<b>Anticipated results of working on this problem:</b>	