

commissioning a lifestyle of integrity

# INTEGRITY

Supremicies (mus

The Best Foundation

BY BILL PIPKE

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Many professions have technical terms or trade words. These terms provide a specific meaning within a given a field of expertise. Integrity and theology have trade words. The author has been careful to use these terms in a way that helps the reader to intuitively understand them. Where the terms need further definitions, there is a short glossary at the end of the Notes.

For additional copies of this manual and other Commissioning a Lifestyle of Integrity materials, visit www.cli.international

Bill's Blog: integrity-trust.com

# The Authors' Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge Gloria Akuetteh who spent many hours editing our manual. Thank you Gloria for taking the work of a novice writer and helping me create a manual with flow and harmony. Your skills and perspectives helped shape the message.

We appreciate the creative artwork of Kathy Jimenez. Her icons and the cover design help enrich the message. Kathy your interest in this project has inspired us.

Next, we would like to acknowledge our friends who studied this material, and offered valuable insight. Our dialogue with them helped clarify the presentation of concepts. In our eyes, each peer reviewer is a champion of integrity. They brought a wealth of expertise and experience to this project. We owe Dr. Victor Chanda, Garry Fess, Colleen Dyck and Dr. John Kerr a great debt of gratitude.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation to my wife for tolerating the crazy schedule and long hours necessary to accomplish this project. Shirley prayed me through, gave me objective feedback, and kept life going. Thanks for your loving support. You enabled us to press on.

May this manual help equip all who study it to live with integrity! Bill Pipke

#### Endorsements

Bill Pipke has given us a great gift: personally, to business and government, with this thought-provoking and educational approach to the important concept of integrity, active in every part of our lives. What a change agent to our world!

#### **Gordon Peters**

Presidents & CEO of ARI Aviation Resources Ltd., Skyward Aviation Ltd., Arrow Avionics Ltd., Kelly Western Jet Centre Ltd., Kelly Aviation Ltd. & Sunshine Resources Ltd. Mayor of the Town of Lac du Bonnet.

Pastor, District Supt in the PAOC & Regional Director for Missions in South & Central America and the Caribbean.

The Commissioning a Lifestyle of Integrity manual couldn't have been written at a better time in history! As our world continues to grapple with issues of race, privilege and equity, this manual teaches us what honour looks like and more importantly, inspires the reader to believe that integrity and honour fits EVERYONE! Boiling down core competencies such as dignity, trust, authenticity in a way that is easy to relate to and practical. Our world is hungry for purpose and so many people get lost or intimidated with the broader overarching issues that seem impossible to solve. This manual illustrates how small consistent action can create a lifestyle that starts a domino effect that can most definitely change the world.

#### **Colleen Dyck**

President and Creator of GORP Clean Energy Bars and Mixes 2019 Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers

In Integrity the best foundation, Bill raises the stakes high. You choose integrity you contribute to building a healthy society. You reject integrity, you choose a pathway that leads to destruction and shame. Without integrity all aspects of societal life collapse. In this work which revolves around the six pillars of integrity, Bill tells

stories that demonstrates the importance of integrity. Those of us who come from countries which are ravaged by poverty, can testify that much of the poverty could have been avoided if leaders who hold public office had exhibited high levels of integrity. This book is a welcome addition to the fight against corruption both in public and personal lives. I therefore, highly recommend this book.

#### **Dr. Victor Chanda**

Vice-Chancellor. Trans-Africa Christian University

Our greatest problem in Africa is the inability to hold integrity supreme. This inability reflects in every facet of our lives, and it has been the cause of our underdevelopment. This book is everything we need to establish a life of dignity, truth and honesty as children, parents, teachers and leaders alike. It's a highly recommended book.

#### Eben K. Botwe.

Educationist and Business Owner

As a business coach, every business owner and executive that I talk with wants their organization to exemplify a "healthy corporate culture." Leaders use words like trust, influence, authenticity, dignity, honour and truth to identify the values they expect. Although they intuitively perceive the six pillars of integrity, they often struggle to know how to measure and implement them.

I use the cli Manual and cohort groups in teaching integrity. Cohort interactions assist individuals in growing healthier in a lifestyle of integrity. Integris owners, leaders and employees can build a healthy corporate culture. Bill Pipke's book Integrity, the best foundation, is easy to read, teach and implement.

#### **Blair Andrews**

Instinctive Solutions. Blair was a business owner, executive and employee for 31 years before becoming a business coach. He is a strategic planner and Kolbe Consultant.

In writing this book, Bill has been able to infuse living a life of

integrity and love for our Saviour. As I read this manual, I was continually reminded of Matthew 22:37-40. There Jesus tells us the two most important commandments, love God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself. The most significant revelation for me was that love motivates integrity.

#### **Earl Funk**

Mayor City of Steinbach Owner of Earls Meat Market

One cannot overstate the relevance of the subject of this manual. In an age when trust has eroded on every front, those who strive to lead in a Christ-like manner must watch their life and doctrine closely. The scrutiny of every word and action makes it is so easy to lose one's reputation and for trust to break down. This manual will help us ensure that our private and public lives, our inner and outer lives are integrally linked. Bill Pipke is a learned and seasoned leader and pastor. He brings into focus the importance of integrity.

#### **D.** Murray Cornelius

Executive Director of PAOC International Missions

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INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

#### Foreword



Lies don't become truth, Wrongs don't become right, Evils don't become good. Even if they've become acceptable to the majority.<sup>i</sup>

While attending university, I met a beautiful, intelligent, fun-loving young woman named Shirley. I desired to get to know her. Each day, I walked three kilometres from my home to the university she attended just to be with her. I made that journey even in the coldest Canadian winter weather. I arrived at the campus as Shirley finished her classes so we could spend time together.

I must have walked a thousand kilometres before I rallied the courage to ask Shirley to marry me. In retrospect, my pursuit was worth every step. My desire for a relationship with Shirley influenced every aspect of my life. She affected my thoughts, my speech, my use of time, and my budget. Shirley captured my heart. Love for her inspired me so much I gladly hiked through snow, ice, wind and cold just to be with her. Now, forty years later, I confess I would do it all again. My loving pursuit of Shirley changed my life. It was worth every step!

When integrity captivates you, it influences every aspect of your life. Its inspiration will be as undeniable as my love was for Shirley. Your relationship with integrity also involves a relentless pursuit. It should guide your steps, and counsel your decisions. A half-hearted pursuit will prove disappointing. The more you cherish integrity, the more grateful you will be for this wonderful value.

The French philosopher, Blaise Pascal, spoke of three orders of greatness. His third order of true greatness existed in integrity. Pascal believed that pure love far exceeded the grander of all else. He thought this greatness was attainable by everyone.<sup>*ii*</sup>

The need for integrity has never been greater! Some believe corruption is so pandemic that they question whether a culture of integrity is possible. However, I am optimistic that an "integrity movement" is possible. That movement will lead toward a culture of integrity. Just as salt arrests decay, integrity prevents the spread of corruption. It is time for integrity to penetrate our world.

#### The Birth of Commissioning a Lifestyle of Integrity

Several years ago, a dream to address corruption birthed in Don Mann's heart. A clear vision compelled him, and he knew his efforts would not be the only ones. Just as many laboratories are necessary to find a cure for cancer, so does integrity require many initiatives to overcome the corruption pandemic. Despite the daunting challenge, Don pursued his dream. He taught at seminars, addressing the issue. Attendees' feedback proved overwhelming. African leaders indicated, "Africa needs the message of integrity," and they asked for more training.

I first met Don while visiting Zambia. He invited me to join his teaching team for a conference entitled Lead with Integrity. As I studied for that event, the significance of integrity overwhelmed me. Two things emerged in my research. First, I observed the far-reaching consequences of corruption. Second, I noticed the substantial benefits of integrity. Why had I been so unacquainted with this topic?

The call to integrity began to seize me. As I joined Don Mann'conference team to teach integrity, I was astounded by how the message of integrity profoundly influenced each attendee regardless of age, gender, or position. The post-conference feedback forms confirmed the relevance of our conference theme.

Several years later, Don and I delivered another Integrity Conference. The night that followed our first day of sessions, we both experienced a defining moment. Perhaps it was a divine appointment, but we both felt a compelling call to commit ourselves to the vision of raising people of integrity. The following morning, we both shared our late-night 'awakenings' with each other. That morning, in the Nairobi Kenya Java House "Commissioning a Lifestyle of Integrity", (cli) was born. From that moment, we devoted ourselves to launching an "integrity movement" across Africa.

Will corruption be eradicated? Nelson Mandela said, "People always say it's impossible until it's done." May it be accomplished!<sup>iii</sup>

cli is more than an anti-corruption program; it is a pro-integrity movement. It is a character-based approach, as opposed to a policy or best practice approach. We believe that integrity begins in the heart. Values are not external; they are internal. When a person passionately pursues integrity from their heart, love for what is good will guide their behaviour and transform their lives. Our strategy is to engage individuals from every sector of society. INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

#### Introduction



Integrity is not like an app on your smartphone; integrity is the operating system.

> If the foundations be destroyed, what can people of integrity do? <sup>iv</sup>

Try to imagine a world without integrity. Remove this core value from science, engineering, leadership, commerce, law, education, news, religion, sports, etc. and they can't survive. Integrity sustains. It is the foundation upon which you build life. The six Pillars of Integrity provide a consistent, uncompromising, caring basis for living. When credibility of character exists, so does the possibility of integrity. As you study this book, you will discover the six Pillars of Integrity transcend culture, religious views, and socioeconomic differences. All six pillars provide the foundation upon which we can build a better world. The most reliable foundation for society is integrity

If integrity lays a solid foundation for healthy living, corruption erodes that solid foundation. Destroy the foundation and nothing built will last. Corruption undermines confidence in leaders, sustainable development, peak performance, delivery of healthcare services, implementation of policies, protection of the law, the trustworthiness of communication, reliability of faith, etc. In a nutshell, corruption increases inequality, decreases accountability, and produces rising hardships. It must concern us. However, the powerless and poor experience the most grievously harmful effects. Cultures of corruption threaten both the quality and sustainability of lives. I believe our greatest global humanitarian crisis is not poverty, Aids, or human trafficking, but corruption. Unfortunately, corruption has risen to pandemic levels. It is 'the monster'. Transparency International reports that 92% of the world's population contends with serious corruption issues every day.<sup> $\nu$ </sup> Things will not get better unless someone responds.

If the foundation of integrity is being destroyed by corruption, what can you do? If corruption is left unchecked, it will continue to spread. Hope begins with you. Be a person of integrity, be "the one" who stops the spread of corruption. One person can make a difference. Across human history, the power of one again and again prevails.

Just as the World Health Organization thinks an end of the Aids epidemic is in reach, we think an end to the pandemic of corruption is possible.vi Do we believe the threat of corruption can be limited? This manual will help you be "the one" to bring a positive change. The six Pillars of Integrity restore crumbling private and public foundations. Perhaps one of the most critical questions of our time is, "Are you prepared to re-establish the collapsing foundational pillars of culture?"

About 3000 years ago, a popular song contrasted the lives of two powerful men. Comparing the influence of these two men would be like assessing the South African presidency of Jacob Zuma versus Nelson Mandela, analysing the leadership of India's Governor-General and Viceroy or Lord Linlithgow with that of Mahatma Gandhi. The ancient chorus revealed the legacy and character of two Israeli kings. Their life stories are narrated in Psalm 1. The song places King Saul in juxtaposition to King David. It inspires a nation to choose integrity.

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked. or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law, day and night.
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither whatever they do prospers.
Not so, the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.
Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.<sup>vii</sup>

The difference between the two men is decisive. Saul lacked an accurate internal compass. He paraded huge intention, but demonstrated little accomplishment. However, David's inner compass worked accurately.

He courageously pursued achieving good.

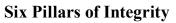
One man followed the counsel of integrity while the other practiced the advice of corruption. One man trusted the direction of integrity while the other subscribed to the ways of corruption. One man rested in the wisdom of integrity while the other man foolishly scoffed at integrity.

An indication of character is not the absence of mistakes but how people respond when missteps are exposed. Saul excused his mistakes, avoided responsibility, and minimized behavioural change. David repented of his mistakes, accepted his accountability, and changed his behaviour. He learned from his blunders. Saul's story ends with dishonour and fruitlessness while David's story ends with honour and fruitfulness.

# Logo of cli

Our logo at cli is a tree.

The inspiration for this image is Psalm 1. A person of integrity is like a tree planted by rivers of living water, producing fruit in season. Abraham Lincoln said, "Character is like a tree and reputation is like its shadow.<sup>viii</sup>



cli teaches that six Pillars of Integrity form a foundation upon which people build a life. We choose the metaphor of a pillar because in ancient city sites like Ephesus, the pillars are the part of the city still standing. Ephesian pillars endured as attractive, strong, lasting and foundational witnesses to a culture. The cli Pillars of Integrity are listed below:



Saul disregarded the Six Pillars of Integrity and as a result:

TRUST – Saul broke trust by promising his daughter to David but giving her to another.

INFLUENCE – Saul was prepared to kill his son to protect his self-image.

TRUTH – Saul consistently broke his promises and compromised the truth.

HONOUR – Saul could not rejoice when others received honour.

DIGNITY – Saul assumed that position, power, and money were the sources of dignity.

AUTHENTICITY – Saul tried to fake his way, and was unwilling to be accountable.

David assimilated the Six Pillars of Integrity and as a result: TRUST- David kept his word to Jonathan, even after his friend had died.
INFLUENCE – David used his skill and ruled for the benefit of the nation.
TRUTH – David pursued truth with God and man.
HONOUR – David honoured others and raised them to succeed.
DIGNTY – David behaved like a king long before he became a king.
AUTHENTICITY – David wanted a pure heart.

The six Pillars of Integrity form an integrated foundation. If there was just one Pillar of Integrity, you might question its stability or strength. However, six pillars create confidence in the foundation. Each pillar gains strength from the other five. When I exercise dignity, it requires trustworthiness, truthfulness, authenticity, honour, etc. All of the pillars support the others. Together they provide a reliable base. You can build a strong character by applying the six Pillars of Integrity to your daily life.

#### **Categories of Integrity**

Dennis Cook suggests three levels of integrity in his book on integrity. I want to broaden his ideas into four categories of integrity.<sup>*ix*</sup>

#### Category 1

#### Stay out of trouble integrity

Stay out of trouble integrity refers to people who fear getting caught or reprisals. They do the right thing because of concern for being found out not because of character.

#### Category 2

#### **Selective integrity**

Selective integrity refers to people who prioritize and practise integrity in selected areas. Sometimes people focus on one area of character but are blind to another.

#### Category 3 Step-by-step integrity

Step-by-step integrity refers to people who are intentional about developing character. They realize it takes dedication and devotion to advance.

#### Category 4 Sustainable integrity

Sustainable integrity refers to people with established character, practice integrity, and guard their reputation. Their lives illustrate the benefits of integrity.

Which levels of integrity apply to your life? It is valuable to identify where you are on this spectrum.

One day, our cli team was on its way to a Summit in Zambia. A policewoman flagged our car, and accused us of failing to stop at a railway crossing. Before she wrote our ticket, she offered to cancel the charge for a small amount of money. We felt the pressure of a waiting crowd. Paying our fine required driving the officer to the regional office, making a cash payment, waiting for a proper receipt, and then driving the officer back to their original post. It felt much easier to pay a bribe to avoid being late for our meeting. However, the conference was integrity. How could we stand in front of a crowd to speak about the six Pillars of Integrity if less than an hour earlier we had paid a bribe? Our best teaching was our example. There is always a cost to integrity; a cost beyond money.

Often, the short-term advantages available through corruption appear to offer cheap and easy solutions. Don't believe it. Corruption is no bargain. In reality, the consequences of dishonesty are incredibly high. It is much better to choose the long-term sustainable benefits of integrity. Choose to be a person of integrity. The rewards of integrity pay far more than any costs incurred. Before I conclude the first section of this book, I take time to unpack a few of the many benefits of integrity. Please take time to consider the significant advantages that compensate a person who lives above reproach.

The information in this book requires application. Information alone fails to change a community. In the second section of this book, cli gives you practical tools to become a person of integrity. We encourage the development of cohorts. Cohorts are sources of help and places where people can learn to apply the Pillars of Integrity. cli also provides on-line resources and lesson plans to assist each group.

cli is more than an anti-corruption program; it's an integrity movement. We measure our success one person at a time, and each person of integrity matters. We are committed to supporting your pursuit of integrity. Our training manual, cohorts, and inspirational summits enable the cli movement to grow in all sectors of society. As someone born in Canada, I understand the 'snowball effect'; each time the snowball turns, it picks up more and more snow. One snowflake doesn't seem to make much difference, but a million stop traffic. Be the one. Join together. Become a force for good.

As I close this introduction, I want to share a story often told to Canadian engineering students. Contained in this narrative are clues to why the disaster occurred. As you read, let me encourage you to underline those clues.

In 1887, a group of Quebec City entrepreneurs decided to increase local business by erecting a bridge over the Saint Lawrence River. They formed the Quebec Bridge Company and selected a renowned American bridge designer named Theodore Cooper as the consulting engineer. Cooper had few equals in engineering. In February 1906, during Cooper's examination of bridge drawings, he discovered a miscalculation. The weight of the manufactured steel far exceeded earlier estimates. By then, six anchor arm towers were in place. Rather than stop the project, Cooper decided to forge ahead, hoping the increased structural stress would be safe. Copper depended solely on people at the site to keep him informed.

Then in June 1907, Theodore Cooper received notice of alignment errors on the bridge's southerly anchor arm. His telegraphed reply, "Make as good a work of it as you can. It's not serious."

By the end of August, the misalignment became critical. On the morning of August 29, engineer Cooper sent an urgent telegraph, "Add no more load to the bridge until due consideration of the facts." He assumed the message was forwarded to the project foreman and he believed the work on the bridge stopped. But neither happened.

That day at 17:36 pm, the bridge collapsed. It took 15 seconds and claimed the lives of 75 workers. This engineering catastrophe resulted in the worst bridge disaster in Canadian history.

Theodore Cooper slated the Quebec City Bridge as his final and signature project. After a life of excellence in engineering, this bridge was to be his crowning achievement. The bridge would set the record as the longest structure of its kind. Instead of leaving a legacy of a strong bridge, he will be remembered for being responsible for a disaster.<sup>x</sup>

Some start well, but later on they fail. The pathway of destruction often begins with a self-confidence born of success. Forgetting your focus, abandoning your disciplines, relaxing accountability and discontinuing growth are a sure recipe for finishing poorly.

May you finish well, and may the six Pillars of Integrity present you with a foundation for enduring success.

#### **Pillar of Influence**



The selfish use of power results in impoverishment and oppression. The unselfish use of power results in enrichment and opportunity.

Integrity provides the foundation for the proper use of power.

The greatest among you will be your servant.xi

Many people equate power with coercion, might or dominance. This view of power as coercion finds its clearest expression in Niccolò Machiavelli's The Prince, which is read by hundreds of thousands of students in history courses every year and is taught in schools of government, business and public policy around the world. The Prince offers a philosophy of power that must be grabbed and kept by appearing virtuous, even though the leader harbours other intentions. This kind of power quiets rivals, mutes the masses, and dominates through force, assertiveness and dominance.<sup>xii</sup>

Today, our understanding of enduring power is different. Power is best expressed in compassion and enhancing the well-being of others. Warmth and understanding are just as important to strong leadership as forceful, assertive and bold behaviour. Power is not about attention, fame, position or wealth. Power is about making a difference in the world. It is about influence. Power is given, not grabbed. According to the most recent data from the field of psychology, enduring power comes from a focus on others. Enduring power has six characteristics: empathy, giving, expressing gratitude, telling stories that unite, integrity and humility.<sup>*xiii*</sup>

Power is not good or evil. Yet, news reports abound with stories of powerful people misbehaving. It's a depressing yet predictable spectacle. People in positions of power seem powerless to resist the temptations that come with power. They scream at underlings, have sex with subordinates, bribe, extort, assault and bully. The question is, what explains this awful behaviour by people of influence?

Berkeley psychologist Dr. Dacher Keltner refers to a "paradox of power." The very traits that enabled leaders to gain power in the first place disappear once they hold power. We gain power and the capacity to make a difference in the world through practices that advance the interests of others, such as empathy, collaboration, open-mindedness, fairness, and generosity. And yet, once we gain power, success, or wealth, those very practices vanish, leaving us vulnerable to impulsive, self-serving actions and eventually empathy deficits set in motion our fall."<sup>xiv</sup> Be careful when position outranks character or when privilege guides rather than commitment to a cause.

Was Lord Acton right when he said, "Absolute power corrupts absolutely."? <sup>xv</sup> How can power corrupt a seemingly good leader? Why is power so intoxicating? What distinguishes good leaders from the corrupt? The Pillar of Influence is where our answer begins. This Pillar explains how power corrupts. And it also reveals what is necessary for power to accomplish great good. Examples from both life and psychology lab help convince us of how foundational the Pillar of Influence is to the exercise of power.

There is an African proverb about a great tree being destroyed by a very small bug. One day a huge tree fell to ground. The bark on its trunk seemed healthy. But the inside had been eaten away. Someone asked, "How did such a strong tree die?" A wise man answered, "A small bug killed the tree by attacking it internally." The inquirer continued, "But how could an insect enter such a magnificent tree?" The wise man replied, "The bug enters the tree when it was in full bloom."

The story of Joe Jacobson is without equal. His life story is too long for our purposes. However, let me give you the short story.<sup>xvi</sup> Joseph came from an exceptionally dysfunctional family. Jacob his father, had multiple wives and several concubines. Added to that, Jacob showed blatant favouritism among the wives and children which, made things extremely unhealthy. Jacob's favourite wife was Rachel. And he overtly favoured Rachel's oldest son, Joseph.

One day Jacob gave his son Joseph a colourful coat, which conferred special privilege to him. This coat triggered enormous resentment among the rest of the family, especially his ten older brothers.

One day Jacob sent Joseph, his favourite son, to find his brothers who were tending the family flocks. This assignment led to an epic moment where brothers ganged up to take vengeance on their despised brother. As Joseph approached his brothers' camp, they saw him coming in his colourful coat and discussed how to kill him. Thankfully, his oldest brother convinced the brothers not to kill him. Instead, they threw him into a pit and sold him into slavery.

As the story unfolds, Joseph ends up a slave to an Egyptian master. Amazingly, Joseph does well in his new situation, until one day he gets falsely accused of sexual assault. The charges resulted in his incarceration as a criminal. At this point, you might excuse him if he chose to become bitter or if he blamed his situation directly on others. But he refused to comfort himself with self-pity. While a prisoner, he continued to guard his integrity and managed to be a positive influence among the inmates. After several long years of imprisonment, Joseph gets hauled out of prison to stand before the Pharaoh and interpret a dream. When he gave the dream's meaning, he also offered the Pharaoh counsel concerning how to apply the vision in governing Egypt. Perceiving Joseph's wisdom, the Pharaoh elevated him to be second only to himself. Under Joseph's influence, the nation prospered. Because of his good sense, Egypt prepared itself to survive a predicted famine And Egypt also stockpiled surpluses in order to provide global aid to other countries.

After the famine struck, Joseph's brothers ended up in Egypt seeking food. Their arrival provided him with an unprecedented opportunity for vengeance. But he restrained himself from retaliation, forgave them and ultimately showed them kindness. His actions led to his family's restoration. At Joseph's invitation, they relocated to Egypt, where he would provide for them until his death.

Joseph Jacobson's story offers an unparalleled opportunity to examine the potential for good that power guided by integrity possesses. In this remarkable story, we observe the implications of the Pillar of Influence. When integrity serves as the foundation for power, the Pillar of Influence is at work.

### The Paradox of Power

The Pillar of Influence functions well in your house or the house of government. Let me turn your hearts toward the home. Often the style of authority exercised in a home is later replicated by the children when they become adults. It is at home that children learn that the way power is used has real consequences. If there is an abuse of power, children grow up feeling unsafe. Unfortunately, in the tents of Jacob, life was exceptionally dysfunctional. Joseph grew up in a home bereft of peace, joy, love or cooperation. What was the root source of this stress? The answer: the inappropriate behaviour of a parent. A father incited jealousy and inflamed anger among family members. Ultimately Jacob's unfair practices led to hostility. Whether at home, at work or in a nation, the misuse of authority destroys the foundation of society.

#### **Influence Limits Favouritism**

Jacob gave his favourite son a coat of many colours. Some people feel like their parents, employer or teacher favours someone else. When people perceive they are not treated fairly by the one in authority, it fosters a sense of resentment. Favouritism demotivates employees and damages team unity. When a leader focuses their attention on "the favourite" they can easily overlook growth opportunities or fail to notice the skill sets offered by others. By not furnishing all employees a chance to shine, a boss restricts the company growth and costs the company money.

# If you are like one of Joseph's ten brothers, how should you react to favouritism?

- a. Figure out if you're the victim. Be sure you are not playing the victim.
- b. Continue working hard. Never allow favouritism to change your performance.
- c. Don't be angry with the favoured person.
- d. Be patient. Be sure you are on top of your game. Your time will come.
- e. Keep the conversation going. Inquire from those in authority if there are ways you can improve or ways to better meet expectations.

If you are like the favoured son, how should you respond?

- a. Avoid arrogance and pride. Choose humility and kindness.
- b. Seek to be a team player.
- c. Honour those around you.
- d. Continue to do your very best.

# *If you are like a father who had a favourite son, how should you respond?*

- a. Remember, you are responsible for the culture in your group.
- b. Listen to feedback from those around you.
- c. Provide incentives for everyone.
- d. Expand the opportunity for others to shine and

develop their skill set.xvii

#### **Influence Motivates Performance**

Why wasn't Joseph working in the fields with his brothers? It's unlikely that his brothers told Joe to stay at home. Was he busy serving his father and doing chores around the camp? And what quality of shepherding were the ten resentful brothers giving their father's flocks?

According to Gallup, there are three classifications of employee engagement;

1) Engaged 33% – involved, enthusiastic, communicators, problem solvers, team players

2) Not engaged 51% –putting in time but not energy or passion, silent, with drawn

3) Actively disengaged 16% - resentful, unhappy, working without actually working  $x^{viii}$ 

Can you imagine the extent to which disengaged employees, students, politicians or church members are affecting the success of a business, school, government or ministry? Who can calculate the immense financial, psychological and social costs incurred by disengagement? The Pillar of Influence helps people to re-engage. Here are a few suggestions of character-based solutions.

# *First, what can the person who has authority do to help people re-engage?*

- a. Identify poor performance a decline in performance is usually the first indicator of disengagement.
- b. Uncover ongoing frustrations listen, have ideas or concerns been acted on?
- c. Recognize poor behaviour Jacob refused to address bad performance.
- d. Assure adequate skills provide training and incentives.
- e. Encourage problem-solving invite ideas and possible solutions to problems.
- f. Reward positive behaviour even a simple "thank-you"

makes people feel valued.

g. Encourage communication – one on one meetings enable follow-up and feedback.

Second, what could those under authority do to re-engage? The following ideas apply to the ten brothers as well as to Joe.

- a. Admit where performance is lagging.
- b. Communicate frustrations or problems to their direct supervisor.
- c. Reawaken motivation by setting goals together and affirming values.
- d. Develop skills through training and mentoring.
- e. Work as a team encourage, hold accountable and celebrate success.

f) Choose a positive attitude – do simple things like smiling, speak positively.

g) Solve problems by becoming part of the solution.

h) Express gratitude, saying thank-you impacts mindsets.xix

#### **Influence Values People**

It's very surprising to me that Joseph was happy to go on a search for his brothers. He was oblivious to their hatred of him and their frustration with their father's favouritism. Why would he walk fearlessly into the brothers' camp or assume his brothers would treat him with respect? Blind pride and the paradox of power desensitized this naïve teen. Instead of appreciating what his brothers felt, he had no idea of the depth of their resentment.

The reality television series Undercover Boss addressed the issue of employers being too distant from the real world of employee experience. High-level corporate executives were asked to leave the comfort of their offices and secretively take low-level jobs in their companies to find out how things really worked and what the employees thought of them. This Emmy-winning reality series utilized hidden cameras to furnish an authentic view of executives' journeys as they immersed in the day-to-day operations of their organizations. In the process of this undercover mission, they learned of the perception about their company, the spirit of their workforces and -- maybe -- something about themselves as well.<sup>xx</sup>

Power gets to our heads. When people feel powerful or powerless, it affects their perception of others. The dynamics of power can profoundly influence how we think. As people climb the ladder of status, inner arguments get warped, and natural sympathy for others vanishes. One of the greatest traps of authority is that it renders leaders less sympathetic to the concerns of others. Rather than being concerned about the effects of an action, the powerful just forge ahead and act. Studies have found that those with power are more likely to rely on stereotypes and generalizations then informed information. Being self-absorbed, out of touch, or insensitive are symptoms of an absence of the pillar of integrity and of a leader heading for trouble. And Joseph was heading for trouble.<sup>xxi</sup>

#### **Influence Enables Recovery**

Joseph's brothers removed him from his position. They did it in the worst way! His brothers threw him into a pit and then sold him into slavery. It was far more radical than showing up at work to be dismissed and walked out the door. How would Joseph respond? Anyone who experiences a dismissal will feel like a failure, encounter a typhoon of emotions from shame, worthlessness to depression, want to blame others or speak scathingly about them and carry resentment. However, there is no record of Joseph embracing destructive behaviours. He picked himself up. Just like Joseph did, you can find the courage to bounce back.

#### How to get back in the game

- a. Grieve Joseph had time to grieve. From the pit to Egypt, he processed his losses and dealt with his complicated emotions. After a limited time, he faced the world.
- b. Reframe he overcame rejection and turned a loss into a new opportunity.
- c. Learn from it he reviewed his shortcomings and

remembered his strengths.

- d. Plan Joseph figured out how he could improve and become more effective
- e. Exercise physical exercise and feeling healthy are a boom to mental wellness.
- f. Act in faith Joseph rose to the opportunity and trusted God.
- g. Remember your dream although his hopes seemed crushed, he refused to let them die.*xxii*

#### **Influence Maintains Values**

People generally know the right thing to do. Cheating is wrong, but a sense of power makes it easier to rationalize away an ethical lapse. For instance, when psychologists asked subjects in "low-power and high-power" positions how they would judge those who drove too fast when late for an appointment, people in the high-power group consistently said it was worse when others committed those crimes than when they did themselves. In other words, the feelings of eminence led people to conclude that they had a good reason for speeding. (They felt entitled, the things they were doing seemed more important than obeying posted signs. But they thought everyone else should follow the signs.).<sup>xxiii</sup>

At some point, before Joseph arrived in Egypt, he determined his core values. Living in Egypt and serving in Potiphar's house would challenge those values. In some ways, he was like a university student away from home and, for the first time, completely responsible for his own choices. How would he conduct himself? Unless he predetermined his values and embraced them, he risked becoming vulnerable and disorientated.

Joe's position as head of Potiphar's household staff conveyed both benefits and temptations. There were easy, appealing opportunities to take advantage of his position and serve his interests. A time came when his boss was absent, and his beautiful wife made frequent forceful sexual advances toward him. Too often people with power expect sexual favours or make demands that are sexually abusive. And sometimes in order to gain advantage, people without privilege will use sexual favours to secure benefits. But not Joseph, he cherished integrity more than position. Instead of excusing himself by yielding to the inviting pleasures of illicit sex, he fled. Because he had established his core values, it was possible to maintain integrity. Joe did not need sex, power or money to satisfy an inner emptiness. He was content. Therefore, he was equipped to shield himself in times of temptation.

When strong temptation presents itself to those with power, remember the big picture and your core values. Joe remembered that the invitation came from the wife of the man who had given him his job and been kind to him. In the heat of the moment, he also recognized the dangers lurking in the shadows. Although sexual desire is one of the strongest temptations men and women face, it also begets some of the most severe consequences. Joseph kept his integrity intact, and the paradox of power failed to claim him as another victim.

#### **Influence Sustains Honour**

When Potiphar returned home, his wife showed him Joseph's coat. She accused Joe of sexual assault. The truth was Joseph ran from her advances escaping her clutches by pulling away. He fled even though it meant leaving his outer coat in her hands. Her false accusation defamed Joseph's character. It cost him his job and resulted in imprisonment.

There is a possibility that while working, you might face a false accusation regarding something behavioural or verbal. Do what Joseph did. He stayed calm, prayed, and hoped for an opportunity to present his side. If he could plead his case, perhaps Potiphar would understand. Probably you will be given an opportunity to defend your actions, but Potiphar sentenced Joseph without giving him any chance of defence. Potiphar's justice was no justice at all.

Integrity requires that the first person you are honest with is yourself. Joseph still had the rest of his life ahead of him. Would he let a false accusation be his defining moment? Joe Jacobson resolved to overcome an awful, unjust situation by reinvesting himself in his next possibility and by building new relationships. Character required that he forgive his accuser. Unforgiveness would have kept him from being able to move ahead with his life. He knew the truth. Time and character were on his side.

#### **Influence Impacts People Around Us**

As the prison door slammed shut behind him, a new chapter of his life began. Would prison shape him, or would he influence the prisoners? One great hindrance to the movement of integrity is the false assumption that influence is reserved for position and power. Joseph's new limitations never removed his influence. Would he learn the ways of evil by listening to the counsel of criminals or would he exercise his personal integrity by influencing felony hardened prisoners? "I don't have to be a person of authority to be influential. Most of the influential people in my life are probably not even aware of the things they taught me."<sup>xxiv</sup>

Without position or authority, Joseph influenced the people around him. He never assumed influence belonged solely to the powerful, rich or famous. One small light changes the darkest place. His integrity shone brightly in prison. An interesting dynamic of his influence is how far it reached. In time the warden took note of Joseph. The storyteller writes a funny, almost incredulous statement concerning the confidence the prison officials placed in Joseph. They assigned a prisoner charge over all the prison. Imagine the insanity of that decision! Insane, if the prisoner lacked integrity. Joseph, we trust you to do whatever you want because you will be guided by integrity. You have earned this high level of trust!<sup>xxv</sup>

The actions of others impact us. As a teen, I enjoyed playing sports. Fortunately, I had good hand-eye coordination, which enabled me to excel. I remember one of my coaches who sought to impress his team by foul speech, dirty jokes, stories of drinking and sexual exploits. He thought being "the man" meant breaking the rules and mocking weaker people. At first, our coach's cavalier attitude attracted some of my young teammates. However, one day we arrived at practice to discover our coach was not there. We were informed that he would no longer be our coach. He was facing charges of drunk driving. When the police stopped the coach, there was a woman in the car with him who was not his wife. As a result, his wife was filing for divorce. My coach's wild ways no longer seemed smart to any of us. I think the team learned more from his failure than our coach ever knew. To this day, none of the team have ever embraced his wild lifestyle. Each of us has pursued a lifestyle of integrity.

#### **Influence Produces Benefits**

During his incarceration, Joe assisted many prisoners. Some of them promised that upon their release, they'd try to help him. Nobody followed through on their promise until one day, the Pharaoh's cupbearer remembered his promise.xxviIntegrity eventually paid off.

Corruption promises immediate, easy substantial benefits. Integrity, on the other hand, promises sustainable benefits over time. Corruption is like never changing the oil in a motor. Initially, the engine runs smoothly, but eventually, it will stop. Warren Buffet, chairman and CEO of Berkshire-Hathaway says, "In looking for people to hire, look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence and energy. If they don't have the first one, the other two will kill you."<sup>xxvii</sup> The effects of corruption like dirty oil in a motor gradually destroy. Warren Buffet hires people of integrity because it promised future sustainable success for his companies. He avoids short-term gain that produces long-term pain.

The cli logo reflects one of the wisest psalms. The psalm describes a tree that remains green and produces fruit in its season. The lyricist graphically warns against following crooked council or trusting in dishonest ways or relying on the gains procured by deception. He sings it out; ill-gotten gains will not last. Instead, enjoy a life of sustained success. Integrity is like a fruitful tree. A good tree produces fruit in its season. In contrast, the momentary success secured by corruption is like chaff, which wind blows away.<sup>xxviii</sup> I believe every person, every family, every business and every nation desire sustainable fruitfulness. Joseph's example reminds us that over time integrity pays off. It takes time to grow a fruit tree. Weeds spring up overnight. Remember, the fruit of a tree is enjoyable and bountiful, but the spread of weeds is aggravating and detestable.

### **Influence Creates Prosperity**

Today's news should convince us that cheaters eventually lose. Whether you consider corruption in politics, sports, business, engineering or science, sooner or later, the penalty for corruption demands payment. Joseph's integrity took him through the pit, Potiphar's house, a prison and finally brought him to the palace. Faithfulness, in whatever his present position was, opened the door to greater influence in the future. Eventually, integrity paid huge dividends. The good character of Joseph kept him on track and brought him before a king. If he had turned to a devious way, Joe would have lost his path and forfeited his future. Integrity protected him. Integrity held in-store benefits beyond anything he ever anticipated.

Why do I suggest integrity gets credit for his success? Perhaps it was just luck. Here are 5C's to remember as to why integrity paid off.

- a. Character there is no substitute for character, in the quest for productivity.
- b. Competency integrity guides skills, gifts and abilities towards effetiveness.
- c. Commitment integrity means you are "all in" for the long haul.
- d. Courage integrity empowers you to do the right thing.
- e. Confidence integrity can be trusted to produce the desired results

The psalm which inspired our cli logo includes the following words, "They shall be like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."xxix History bears witness; integrity can deliver a good reward.

### **Influence Benefits Everyone**

Self-interest is a potent cocktail of personal inclinations. It's a blatantly negative human characteristic that we began while we were infants. Our early overwhelming instinct was about selfcomfort, warmth, food, attention. As we grow through childhood and then into adolescence, we come to the point in live when our personal needs, interests and comforts are balanced by an otherness, an ability to see that life is not just about ourselves.

At the beginning of this chapter, I wrote, "the unselfish use of power results in enrichment and opportunity." Could any story deliver better proof than the story of Joseph? His appointment as second in command over Egypt entrusted him with immense power and provided access to boundless wealth. Yet, the Pillar of Influence continued to guide his use of power. He pursued benefit for the entire nation rather than just personal advantage. Although Joe enjoyed the abundance that came with his new role, he believed the position handed to him was not for his benefit alone but for the prosperity of the whole nation.

While researching for this book, I googled "great world leaders." All of the top 100 men and women in the lists made significant contributions to the lives of others. When I did a reverse search googling the worst 100 leaders of history, the list contained men and women who abused their power, robbing nations and destroying the lives of many.

I recommend Nelson Mandela's story, "The Long Walk to Freedom." When I read his story, I noticed a few parallels between Nelson Mandela and Joseph Jacobson. Like Joe in ancient Egypt and Nelson in South Africa, each knew that a single person could be a catalyst for change, and neither doubted they could be that catalyst. They both experienced in the freedom of spirit while enduring the confinements of prison. When they emerged from prison, both were powerful men fully prepared for what stood ahead of them. Despite hardships, these men refused to give up their dignity. Each set an example of dedication, courage and sacrifice worth following. And both laid a foundation strong enough to secure a sustainable future for those who followed them. As Barak Obama said during Mandela's eulogy:

"Ubuntu, a word that captures Mandela's greatest gift: His recognition that we are all bound together in ways that are invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to, humanity; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others, and caring for those around us ... He not only embodied ubuntu, he taught millions to find that truth within themselves"

#### **Influence Forgives Others**

If anyone ever had a reason to be bitter and non-forgiving, it was Joseph. While in prison, he could legitimately say, "This is all my brothers' fault or it's because of the false claims of Mrs. Potiphar." We have all had people do things that hurt us or made us angry. Sometimes we illegitimately blame others for the things that happened. But in Joseph's case, he had a legitimate complaint.

When Joseph's brothers appeared before him begging for food, he had the authority and unparalleled opportunity to do them great harm. He could finally treat them any way he wanted! Yet, what he wanted was to comfort them, help them and take care of them and their little ones. True forgiveness looks like that. This story should inspire us toward forgiveness. As we reflect on this story, we can ask ourselves, "How well have we managed to forgive?"

Sometimes a story like this, rather than inspiring us to forgive, condemns us. Perhaps we can think of several people in our lives with whom we are not at this level of forgiveness. We may think, "Joseph forgave, but I feel so bad that I can't forget or forgive what happened." Forgiveness may seem impossible. Before you give up, let me offer a little encouragement. Firstly, don't feel condemned by Joseph's incredible level of forgiveness because he did not get to that point overnight. Remember, there were stages of forgiveness that brought him to the place where he could show kindness to his brothers and take care of them. He didn't immediately see God's purposes in the evil events. His forgiveness took a long time in the making. I doubt if in the first day in slavery or the first month in prison, he reached complete healing. Your forgiveness may not yet look like his. Although forgiveness may be given in a moment, it's lived out in a lifetime. Be patient with yourself. Hurt causes bitterness, anger and resentment to toxify your emotions. It takes time and intentionality to heal deep pain. Depending on how big or complicated your situation determines the journey it takes to walk out your forgiveness. But if Joseph could do it, you can.

Secondly, Joseph forgave from a place of safety. He was not in a pit or prison. He has healthy boundaries and the ability to constrain his brothers' influence. He has carefully tested and observed them. Sometimes relationships become so toxic that you need space or separation to provide protection. Wisdom guides you to find a place of safety and coaches you in how to begin the process of letting go.

*Thirdly, forgiving is not forgetting.* There is a false idea ingrained in North American culture that forgiving is forgetting. "Just forgive and forget." I appreciate the sentiment behind that thought, but the fact is, forgiving is not forgetting. Trying to forget is a very unhealthy way of approaching forgiveness. Joseph knew that his brothers meant what they did for evil. He did not make excuses for them. Instead he held a firm grasp of the past and how it affected him. He had not forgotten it, ignored it or suppressed the facts. What happened remained part of his story. But he began to make sense of what happened. And he had discovered that by forgiving, by guarding his integrity, those terrible happenings somehow lost their power. Because of his steadfast honour, what was meant for evil worked for good.*xxxi* Forgiveness opens surprising possibilities. It's a healthy decision. It's hard to make. But it will result in your being able to reach the highest potential.

### **Influence Invests in a Better Future**

Father Jacob's lack of integrity undermined the success of his family and estranged his sons. Joseph's functional integrity created a future for his family and guided the steps of his sons. If corruption is allowed to continue unabated, it threatens to weaken the world that the next generation will inherit. Why have billions of dollars given in aid failed to make a significant difference? Why has much of the aid never reached the intended recipients? Will investment continue to flow to those who prove unaccountable or who divert investments to other projects? Corruption not only robs the present, but it also steals from the future.

Integrity requires that fathers do not steal their children's future. I remember listening to a Canadian politician argue that his policies would restore hope and bring down the escalating debt. He challenged voters to be courageous and to think beyond the immediate pleasure. His message declared it was time for the current generation to accept responsibility for the world we hand to the next generations.

If people of authority and power will establish the Pillar of Influence as a foundation for their actions, we can recover the hope for a better tomorrow. Remove the foundation of integrity, and we spiral towards impoverishment. A wise man wrote, "the man of integrity will be happy because his children will be robust on the earth, and their homes will be blessed."

May all who come behind us find us people of integrity.xxxii

INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

**Pillar of Trust** 



Trust Establishes Character. If people can't trust you, people won't build a relationship with you. If people can trust you, people will want to build a relationship with you.

*Trust is like blood pressure! It's silent, vital to your health, and if abused, it can be deadly.*<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Trust is among the most frequently used words in the English language, ranking  $949.xxxi\nu$  A search of amazon.com for a book on trust produces 84,509 options. If you enter the word trust in the online database psychologists frequent, PsycINFO, you will gain access to more than 9,600 articles.xxx $\nu$ 

Trust is the pillar upon which every relationship, connection, investment or contract rests. It's the essential ingredient in effective communication and the foundational principle that binds relationships together. At a basic level, trust assumes people will act in the best interest of others. Life teaches us that trust takes years to build, seconds to destroy, and a long time to rebuild. No single activity can create trust; it is developed by consistency over time. Acts of negligence reduce trust. Just as an eraser gets smaller each time it eradicates a mistake, so too, trust gets diminished by negligence. Without question, trust is crucial in family, government, business, church, education, professions, sports, arts, media and entertainment. No meaningful relationship can last without it! Can someone build a successful life without trust? I challenge you to find a Mountain of Influence where trust is not essential to sustained vitality. The heart of healthy relationships is trust. Don't be shocked that someone lied; be upset that from now on, you will struggle to believe them. If people can trust you, they will be interested in a relationship. If people can't trust you, they will be disinterested in a relationship.

As I travel the globe, I purchase gasoline. Wherever I buy petrol, I trust I am getting clean, quality fuel. I expect market prices and that my currency will be accepted. The most straightforward transactions require trust. Trust is foundational to life.

For many years, I lived in southwestern Ontario, Canada, a region famous for agricultural production. Local farmers sold fresh produce by placing fruit and vegetable stands at the end of their lanes. Each farmer displayed their fresh produce. Local buyers assumed freshly picked items, and local growers offered high quality at low-cost. However, something was missing at each produce stand. There was no salesperson - instead, only a metal box where buyers could deposit their payment. Sometimes farmers left a jar with coins, so a customer could make exact change. No cameras prevented buyers from pilfering the produce or stealing money. Fruit stand commerce existed because trust existed. Mutual trust between farmers and consumers sustained it. The simple system benefited everyone. Without trust, the produce stands would disappear.

Many countries have a problem because of a trust deficiency. Despite the consequences of distrust, few seem very concerned. Even human suffering caused by corruption fails to slow its advance. Think of the suffering caused when relief such as medicine, food, and building supplies sit in sealed containers at the end of a runway. Despite the desperate need, large containers continue unopened until the officials get a bribe. Can you name corporations who violated the public trust and no longer exist? Other corporations like Volkswagen and the American Red Cross betrayed the trust and paid massive penalties to reimburse the people cheated and to rebuild trust. The consequences of their corrupt actions proved higher than court fines or budget loss.

Although fraud occurs in every country, people expect leadership to be trustworthy. After working in multiple countries over 20 years, Kouzes and Posner (2007) polled 75,000 respondents in a variety of countries, cultures and organizations. Survey results indicated that trust was the number one characteristic desired in leadership. People want leaders to be trustworthy.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

### What Does a Lack of Trust Cost?

"What does corruption cost?" An old book provides the answer; "Let a man not deceive himself by trusting what is worthless, for he will get nothing in return"xxxvii Thousands of years ago, a wise businessman named Job discovered that trusting the untrustworthy yields a lousy payback. You give them the power to harm you. The repercussions are worse, not better. For instance, sometimes aide does not help; instead, it hurts. Consider what happens when those who receive aide act corruptly. They exacerbate the problem while frustrating noble attempts at a solution.

The expression, "One bad apple can spoil the bunch," refers to a situation in which one person's negative demeanour or bad behaviour can affect a whole group. *xxxviii* Bad behaviour influences others to engage in similar conduct. Negative attitudes affect everyone - the instant gratification and reward from deception, kickbacks, fraud, betrayal and corruption fuels untrustworthy behaviour. Unfortunately, in many countries, the bad apples are leaders who spread the rottenness.

If there is mistrust in a marriage, couples ask questions like, "Can I trust you to be there for me when I'm upset? Can I trust you to listen to me? Can I trust you to choose me over your mother or

brother? Can I trust you to work for our family? Can I trust you to abstain from drugs? Can I trust you to not cheat on me? Can I trust you to be fully involved with our children?" When trust decreases, so does a safe relationship.

As a Canadian, I grieve over the growing corruption in my country. We embrace liberty without guarding morality. Years ago, we chose leaders because of character. People started from a place of trust. At one time, a person's word meant everything. A gentleman's agreement formed the basis of significant unbreakable contracts. No small print, loopholes or lawyers. The courts upheld the law. Lawyers took cases because they were worth addressing and because they thought the accused deserved a fair trial. Sadly, many attorneys today are primarily motivated by cash, defend the guilty and try to get criminals free on a technicality. In a posttruth culture, truth takes the second position to image and loses its authority. There was a time we never dreamt we would hear a lie from the church office or the Prime Minister's office. But today dishonesty sits comfortably in the chair of politics, justice, religion, business, church, education, entertainment and family.

A lack of trust inflates the cost of doing business. Trust, not money, is the currency of business and life. In a culture of trust, people are more creative, more motivated, more productive, and willing to sacrifice for the team. As trust increases, performance rises. As mistrust propagates, it kills motivation, teamwork, and productivity. Distrust causes everything to come into question. A lack of trust slows processes and speeds anxiety. People stop buying products or booking services from companies they can't trust. In his book 'The Trust Edge', David Honsager demonstrates how a company's highest expense comes from a lack of trust. He contends, "A lack of trust diminishes productivity and laws increase. As a result, millions of dollars that could have been used on research, staff training, or incentives, are being spent on oversight and accountability processes to accommodate regulations.<sup>\*</sup>xxxix</sup> Stephen Covey taught a similar idea, "Low trust environments fill with political games, interpersonal conflicts, interdepartmental rivalries, and hidden agendas. People bad-mouth each other behind their backs while they sweet talk to their faces. In low trust environments, you find a lot of rules and regulations that take the place of human judgment and creativity. You see profound disempowerment. People will not be on the same page about what is essential. Alternately, the culture will become driven by urgency rather than importance, because everyone is in it for themselves and their agenda."<sup>xt</sup>

A lack of trust costs a company its health. It creates toxicity within a company's culture. What toxins do within the human body, a lack of confidence, does within a company or economy. Just as poison destroys body cells, mistrust destroys relationships. Eventually, what was healthy becomes sickly, what was strong becomes weaker, and what was life-giving becomes lifeless. Mistrust is counterproductive. How nice would it be to work in an environment where trust prevails, and people do their jobs effectively!

### **High Relational Cost**

A lack of trust brings a high relational cost. One of the early indicators of a trust deficit is the absence of teamwork. Without teamwork, people pursue self-interest and fiercely protect their territory. Agreement grows increasingly impossible. Generosity evaporates. Motivation dries up like dew in the morning sun. Performance levels drop. Cooperation is cautiously measured out, and hope seems beyond reach. Suspicion governs conduct and fear builds barriers. The fruit of love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control withers on the character vine.<sup>xli</sup>

The price tag for building trust is relatively low compared to the high cost of mistrust. Mistrust resembles a fake gem that people buy, mistaking it for a genuine jewel. Although it promises wealth, it proves valueless. However, trustworthy behaviour is like a beautiful gem that holds its value. The more examined it is, the more beauty appears.

If you sow distrust, can you expect a harvest of trust? Mistrust leads to mistrust. A friend offers to help you move some furniture on a Saturday, but never shows up. Your daughter tells you she will be home at 11 o'clock but returns at 3:30 am. "I lost track of time," she says. Who can we trust? There are a few people I can confidently trust. Moses who led a fickle nation who frequently broke their pledge of allegiance wrote, "God will not disappoint, and his character is always trustworthy. I can rely on Him in all things".*xlii* Unlike people who over 40 years repeatedly disappointed Moses, and failed to remember their promises, Jehovah never broke his promise or disappointed.

Is it possible for someone who intentionally hurt you, to ever regain your trust? History tells the story of a man who led a religious/political purge against a group of people he hated. He forced them to flee their homes, imprisoned many, tortured some. Even after this group fled their homes, his unassuaged hatred compelled him to pursue them relentlessly. About whom am I thinking? Unfortunately, the list of candidates is far too long. In this case, I am thinking about a man named Saul, Saul of Tarsus. The reason I chose him is that a day came when Saul stopped persecuting this group and actually become one of them. He joined their ranks. Would they forgive his gross atrocities? Was it possible for him to ever overcome their suspicion? Imagine Saul of Tarsus attempting to build any kind of relationship with this group! Impossible?

# **Create a Trust Account**

Who has earned your trust? When you read that question, what names immediately came to mind, and what emotions did you feel? I remember some trustworthy friends, and just thinking of them brings joy. Trust resides in the mind and soul. Earned trust is the highest trust. Being trustworthy, is a function of consistent behaviour. Does trust remain static, or does it change? Faithfulness can lay a solid relational foundation over time. However, unfaithfulness undermines relationships. Violating someone's trust has been compared to crumpling a flat piece of paper. You can attempt to smoothen the creases, but the page is not the same. I agree about the temporary consequences of broken trust. However, unlike the crumpled paper, relationships can be restored.

The Jewish religious leaders empowered Saul of Tarsus to persecute a new sect. He eagerly conducted a crushing campaign against them. It was like giving a hunting license to a hungry man. His appetite for cruelty grew until he was not satisfied by just attacking the local group in Jerusalem. When the Christfollowers spread out beyond the capital city region, he stalked them. He believed that ridding Israel of this sect would be how history remembered him. But one day, while on the road to Damascus, Saul experienced a divine encounter that transformed his life forever. In a moment, the leader of the persecution against Christians became a Christian. His mission changed. Saul joined the people he had hunted.

Saul's zeal intensified until the day a light from heaven stopped him. In that moment, Saul of Tarsus was required to give account for his actions against humanity. Suddenly what he believed to be good and honourable was exposed as vile and offensive. Recognizing his serious crimes against humanity and against God brought him to repentance. After his conversion, Saul's survival depended on his ability to open a trust account with the people he had persecuted.<sup>*xliii*</sup>

But the community he hoped to enter viewed him as vindictive, hateful, vile, void of conscience and dangerous. And his previous conduct justified their distrust. Although he now claimed transformation, the believers remained dubious. His words and actions asserted a change but earned little trust. His credentials, education, previous achievements, position, wealth proved powerless to influence the opinion of people he formerly abused. Building trust seemed almost impossible.

Could he ever earn their trust? His record of intentional hostility towards this group meant he started from a trust position of total bankruptcy. Some might argue that his repentance, together with God's grace, gave him an opening trust account balance of zero. However, most think Saul started with a large deficit because of past performance. Whatever the case, Saul's example demonstrates that forgiveness offers the repentant an application form for a trust account. If Saul could earn trust, there is hope for any of us regardless of our past.

Was it possible that even one person who suffered at his hands would extend trust to him? Forgiveness is given; trust is earned! God forgave him, but how about those wounded by his vengeance? Could they give him forgiveness? God drew near to Saul, but the believers preferred to keep their distance. Restoring trust takes time. For people forgiveness is a process. It takes a consistent accumulated effort. Building trust or rebuilding trust requires evidence long after forgiveness is extended.

Saul's hope of cancelling the terrible debt of mistrust depended on creating the relational currency of a trustworthy life. In order to open a trust account, Saul submitted his new identity to daily scrutiny. If nobody remembered his record, it would have been so much easier to gain approval! His past carried real consequences. His request for a trust account challenged the small group in Damascus. Perhaps even heaven, earth and hell waited to see if Saul's conversion would prove genuine.xliv Once the account opened, Saul must make regular deposits using the currency of his character and conduct.<sup>xlv</sup>

Incredible trepidation filled Ananais' heart when the Spirit instructed him to visit the house where Saul resided. Could the Spirit's voice be trusted? Would obedience result in martyrdom? Nothing within him induced him to help Saul. Ananias had no logical reason to obey! Why should he go? The explanation only makes sense if he had a greater trust in the voice of God than fear of Saul. A trust greater than fear convinced Ananias to act. The trustworthiness of his Heavenly Father, superseded his fear of Saul<sup>*xlvi*</sup>

Trust rose in the face of fear and activated courage, but others believed a conspiracy theory. They thought Saul's conversion nothing but a cunning ruse by which he hoped to infiltrate their ranks. The believers in Damascus remained guarded. However, they acknowledged that the hostilities between Judaism and Christ-followers eliminated neutrality as a sustainable option for Saul. A counterfeit conversion would be short lived. Saul, from his first act as a believer consistently proved he was genuine.

#### **Trust is Earned**

Saul was a new man. God's forgiveness was immediate, complete, and a gift of grace. What about the people? Could they find the grace to forgive him? It required some risk and faith on their part. Saul's positive words, good intentions and big promises were worthless unless accompanied by a consistent lifestyle. It required more than words to forge a healthy relationship. Verification required daily deposits of trust. Dependable, consistent actions became deposits. Slowly, after many, many deposits Saul created a positive account balance.

#### Trust will be Tested

It took a long time for Saul to establish his credibility. Within a few weeks of his change, a severe test arose. A group of his former associates banded together to threaten him. His new allegiance angered as well as astonished his old colleagues. They believed Saul had changed. He was no longer one of them. He refused to identify or honour their aggression. So, they conspired to capture Saul and get rid of him.

The faith community recognized Saul's peril and cautiously extended help to him. They had observed his conduct, heard his public speeches. His unswerving commitment under pressure provided genuine evidence that he was trustworthy. At that moment, his numerous trust account investments paid dividends. Over time Saul's investment of trustworthiness paid rich dividends. A small band of believers trusted Saul and surrounded him like a hedge of protection. They stepped in harm's way to protect him. Because of their bold efforts, Saul escaped his enemy's cunning trap.<sup>xlvii</sup>

When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, many doubted if he was trustworthy. Even a written referral from the Damascus believers failed to allay fears. However, a man named Barnabas welcomed Saul. Barnabas set out to build a bridge of trust for Saul. He stood with the man in question and accompanied him when he appeared before the Jerusalem leadership. Barnabas gave a character witness for Saul, asserting his trustworthiness. Those affirmations, together with the letter from Antioch, secured a favourable verdict.<sup>xlviii</sup>

When people set out to rebuild trust, it is common that a very significant test of character and resolve will emerge. Like Saul, you can expect a strong test of character will come. How you react under intense pressure of that test provides an accurate gage of your integrity. Perhaps the toughest test of integrity my wife and I encountered came when a group of people we loved broke agreements, failed to keep promises and acted unkindly toward us. The great temptation was to take the bait of offence. Why not retaliate and seek to do as much harm to them as we felt they had done to us? We had to make a choice. Would we change our conduct, character, commitments or communication because of their broken promises? Would we empty our trust account by inappropriate decisions or misconduct? It was enticing to retaliate and blame them for their vengeful reactions. Revenge seemed so very appealing. Why not excuse our responses by saying, "We only responded because of what they did?" But the actions we were tempted to take surrendered to the very wrong we resisted. We refused to let their behaviour control our conduct or attitude.

The landmines of emotion buried beneath broken relationships threatened to explode our character. We repeatedly asked God to help us guard our integrity. It wasn't easy. Vengeance looked inviting. If our hearts became embittered, our mouths would betray us. Brokenness called for retaliation. Emotions stirring in our souls threatened to explode. At times we questioned whether safeguarding integrity was worth the effort. But we did what we believed was right. We chose the right-way and implemented the counsel of trusted friends. Now, years later, we look back with little regret. We did not risk the years of making trust investments by rash, unwise misconduct. Integrity enabled us to endure adversity. We could have failed the test. If we had, we would have forfeited our right to lead an integrity movement or write any chapters for this cli manual.

#### Trust can be Transferred

Just as you can transfer money to someone's account, you can transfer trust. A man named Barnabas stepped up to invest his reputation in Saul. I remember the first time I met with the primary leader of an Armenian mission. A friend named Mark introduced me. He stood at my side as he introduced me to the national director. I thought Mark might say, "I'd like you to meet my friend..." but he did more. Mark told him about my family, my work, about his relationship to me and ended his introduction by telling a story of how something I had done impacted his life. I was overwhelmed. Was this the way to make introductions in Armenia? After Mark's kind endorsement, the Armenian director responded, "If you're Mark's friend, you are my friend. The trust I have in Mark, I extend to you!" Instantly, I valued the gift Mark had given me. Mark deposited some of his earned trust in my account. His actions touched me deeply, and I wanted to do all I could to attest I was worthy of Mark's support.

You can transfer the currency from your trust account to another person's account. Barnabas moved currency from his trust account into Saul's. An older man invested in the next generation, the stronger invested in the weaker, the teacher invested in the learner. The man with proven character endorsed one whose integrity was unknown. Trustworthy people can elevate others and create opportunities for them to rise to their potential.

Barnabas made the transfer understanding both the risk and the potential in recommending Saul. He risked losing some of his credibility if Saul failed. However, the possibility was that Saul's trustworthiness might add to his credibility. Too often, the next generation lacks endorsement. If older leaders choose to invest in the younger, the impact will be notable. Both the younger leader Saul and the mature leader Barnabas benefited.

Shortly after Barnabas' endorsement the believers uncovered a second plot to kill Sau. In order to protect him, they sent him off to Tarsus. Four years later, Barnabas travelled to Tarsus to recruit Saul to work as his associate. The two men joined together to lead a new enterprise in Antioch. And that enterprise expanded exponentially. Barnabas and Saul were better together. Each spurred the other toward their full potential. What did Barnabas discern in Saul that inspired him to make such a long journey? Barnabas judged Saul as trustworthy.<sup>xlix</sup>

There are five core competencies of a trustworthy person.

## **Five Core Competencies**

#### 1. Commitment

John Maxwell teaches that commitment is essential for influence.<sup>1</sup>

"Until I am committed, there is a hesitancy, a chance to drawback. But the moment I commit myself, then God moves, and a whole stream of events begin to flow. All manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings, persons and material assistance which I could never have dreamed would come my way, begin to flow toward me the moment I make a commitment."<sup>1</sup>

Commitment speaks louder than words. It gives no place to

apathy and leads to the daily triumph of vision over skepticism and conviction over fear. Committed leaders inspire expectations, prompt hope, and create trust.

Saul's story demonstrates how commitment creates trust. After his time in Jerusalem, Saul spent three years in Arabia. He was not running away from responsibility. His past commitment taught him the importance of his current commitment. Leading in the new environment required no less dedication than his former leadership. Leaders recognize that most leadership principles learned are transferrable. Saul had studied at the feet of great teachers, worked tirelessly to gain a reputation as a Pharisee of the Pharisees, and earned the prestigious rank of a Sanhedrin. But he would not rely on his past achievements, he must be committed to his new call.

Commitment marks the lives of great leaders. Martin Luther King Junior concluded that all men should live as equals. He declared his dream despite physical assaults and continuous threats to his family. Nelson Mandela demonstrated the uncompromising resolve when things got tough. His intense commitment gave him the ability to unite others and rally them around the cause. After three years in Arabia, Saul's passion was more brilliant than ever. Saul's commitment remained unwavering, despite threats and hardship. Trust and integrity are hollow concepts until supported by a solid commitment.

#### 2. Character

Every decision generates consequences. Saul's decisions demonstrated a transformed character. The events behind the horrific explosion of the 1986 space shuttle, depict the importance of trustworthiness on the part of everyone.

Why did the Challenger space shuttle explode? Investigators determined the cause as a small O-ring failure. How was this possible? Behind the technical explanation for the disaster, lures the real culprit, a character flaw. Under tremendous pressure to launch on schedule, the manufacturer of the O-ring decided to compromise on final testing. Morton-Thiokol (MT) failed to test how their O-rings would perform at extremely low temperatures. Rather than do the testing and take the criticism for a delay, they forged ahead, endangering safety. That choice proved fatal. A breach of character by the top MT decisions-makers allowed the installation of a small, unproven O-ring. One compromise resulted in a faulty O-ring that cost astronauts their lives.<sup>*lii*</sup>

We must strive to develop a lifestyle of integrity in everything. What character qualities need to strengthen? If you are aware of where a character is weak and ignore it, you risk serious consequences. Can you afford the repercussions of excusing a character flaw? It takes a diligent effort to improve your character.

### 3. Conduct

Trustworthy people carefully manage choices. A sailor who reads the sky knows when the storm is coming and will not venture out on the high seas but will wait in the harbour until the storm passes. Likewise, trustworthy people exercise wisdom and patience. They take appropriate actions to navigate life and avoid problems. They use their influence to protect and benefit all. Trustworthiness means you can rely on someone to do what they promise and demonstrate a consistency of thought, words and actions. Integrity guides people to conduct themselves with:

*Truthfulness:* They do not just possess a truth; the truth possesses them.

*Honesty:* They don't say what you want to hear; they speak the truth.

*Reliability:* They fulfill their promises and deliver results. *Loyalty:* They remain loyal, whether you are present or absent.

*Cooperation*: They collaborate, consider and contribute. *Humility*: They do not have an attitude of superiority. *Accountability*: They accept responsibility for their actions. *Gratefulness*: They have a thankful, positive and generous spirit. Justice: They desire the best and work to right wrongs. Communicate transparently: They demonstrate trust and elevate authenticity<sup>liii</sup>

I doubt Saul had a list like this on his desk; however, he practiced all ten. I recommend you make a flashcard of these qualities. Post the card somewhere you will see it as a reminder. These ten will coach your conduct and grow character. When we develop our character, integrity increases.

#### 4. Compassion

Those who care for others are more likely to be trusted. Trustworthy people are concerned beyond themselves. They live by the golden rule, "Whatever good things you want to be done to yourself, do to others."liv One of the best ways to show you care is active listening, which helps develop genuine relationships. It includes eye contact. Poor listening is rude, relationally expensive, and tends to empty your trust account. Our body language reinforces our presence in a conversation. Commit to one conversation at a time. Listen with ears, mind, eyes and body.

Compassion expresses itself through generosity and gratitude. Trustworthy people tend to be grateful givers, not cynical takers. If you use relationships for personal benefit, you're a taker. Givers invest in others. Compassionate people acknowledge that the more you give, the more you receive. Most people instinctively trust a giver. One way to advance your trustworthiness is to be generous without expectation. People are drawn to gratefulness but tend to push away from the ungrateful. Saul's generosity and gratitude are almost legendary. He taught and modelled these traits. His conduct expressed these qualities. Because of this, the people he served felt loved. He kept their best interest at heart.

Saul refused to use his position for personal gain. Not only did he practise generosity he encouraged others to do the same. His motivation went beyond the money raised. He wanted to raise generous people.1v

### 5. Communication

You are the message. You influence by your actions more then by your words. Communication is a life-giving artery through which trust flows. Saul modelled courageous communication. In a direct culture, he addressed issues with honour and dignity. When the culture was indirect, Saul developed trust by refusing to be silent concerning import issues. He communicated without corruption in a way that remained intolerant of depravity. He wrote honest letters from his heart. He addressed issues about which people needed to talk. His words and lifestyle presented a unified message. If there is any inconsistency between how we act and what we say, that dissonance frustrates a relationship and erodes trust. Misleading words indicate the speaker can't be trusted. Don't withhold the necessary information. Appreciate other people's contributions and opinions. Healthy communication improves partnership, increases collaboration, inspires innovation, impacts execution and ensures growth.

## What Destroys Trust?

#### 1. Deception

Although many things contribute to the disintegration of trust, here are five very common contributors. The first is deception. Deception is more than false information; it implies intentional misrepresentation. Trust always parts ways with fraud. The two can't partner because they destroy each other. The vile command given to commanders of Nazi death camps was: "Those going to their death must be deceived until the end."lvi Contrast that to Saul's counsel, "Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort ... on the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly, we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience..."

### 2. Criticism

Criticism is the second major contributor to the destruction of trust. Critique can be caring and life-giving or uncaring and

deadly. Caring yet corrective criticism is a gift of kindness. It protects. Most people don't like to have their weaknesses or failures pointed out. But how will we address our shortcomings and overcome our failures unless we identify them? I have learned to value constructive criticism. What makes criticism unsavoury is not what is said but how it is said.

Criticism can be mean-spirited, unfounded, cynical, and intended to put others down. Condemning criticism destroys. Words can destroy. Corrupt communication breaks the spirit. Saul shared from personal experience when he gave this advice: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."<sup>*bviii*</sup>

#### 3. Defensiveness

The third thing that undermines trust is defensiveness. Excuses never build a foundation of trust. Defensiveness is like the marshy land underneath the famous tower in Pisa, Italy. The word 'pisa' in Italian means marsh-like. The famous Pisa tower leans because it lacks a solid foundation. Defensiveness functions like marshy soil when a problem arises. If we deny personal responsibility or shift the blame to others, we make its resolution difficult. Defensiveness keeps us from participating in the solution. Defensive, angry or intimidating overreactions to feedback shut people out. It is better to face reality, admit a problem and accept responsibility for your part. Rather than defend your actions, seek ways to change what is ineffective.

One reason Saul's message holds authority is he refused to see himself as a victim. Instead of defensive reactions, he chose to seek solutions. In a letter to his friends, he listed some of the hardships he endured to take the good news to Asia-minor. None of the harsh challenges deterred him from his goal. And what of the problems he caused? Saul took responsibility for his mistakes and dealt with the consequences of his actions.lix When a problem arose because of another leader's actions he lovingly addressed his colleague and reached out to him.1x

#### 4. Contempt

The fourth contributor to a trust breakdown is contempt. This attitude guarantees a breach of trust. Contempt means treating others as though you are superior. If you consider yourself more qualified, more intelligent, more powerful, more skilled, wealthier or more important, be prepared for trouble. Avoid condescending speech. Contempt spreads like an infectious disease destroying relationships and teamwork.

Some of the people Saul introduced to faith failed to honour him, but his love for them did not change. He showed no contempt. Instead, he identified with them, saying: "I have laboured and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for you all. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?"<sup>1xi</sup> By respecting the weaker ones, he won the trust of all.

#### 5. Inconsistency

The fifth factor that destroys trust is inconsistency. The mistrust created by deviation doesn't happen overnight. It develops in stages. Doubt is the first stage of distrust. If not resolved, uncertainty grows into suspicion. Unresolved suspicion leads to anxiety. Feelings of uneasiness and apprehension eventually produce fear. Fear ripens into a state of self- protection. Ultimately, you put up walls in a relationship to protect your interests and prevent another person's inconsistencies from causing frustration or harm.<sup>*lxii*</sup>

Saul travelled with a company of people. Many proved reliable, but a few failed to conduct themselves responsibly. So that their actions would not put the team in peril, Saul approached the guilty and held them accountable. Those who resisted his encouragement he eventually released from the team.<sup>*lxiii*</sup>

### **Can Trust Be Restored?**

When you open a new bottle of medicine, there is a protective vacuum seal affixed to the mouth. The seal assures the consumer that nobody has tampered with the contents. Do you know the story behind that protective seal? In the fall of 1982, seven people died in the city of Chicago after taking extra-strength Tylenol capsules laced with cyanide. When investigators linked the deaths to Tylenol, the executives at Johnson and Johnson faced a monumental choice: shirk responsibility and assert that the tampering had occurred after the product reached the store shelves or hold themselves accountable for the entire disaster.

They chose to be accountable and find a lasting solution even though that decision required drastic measures to restore trust in their brand. They informed customers across North America not to consume Tylenol products until they had determined the extent of the tampering. They halted all advertising and production of the product. They recalled all Tylenol capsules from the market—about 31 million bottles with a retail value of more than \$100 million. These bold actions, along with other steps, helped restore the public's faith in the brand. The fact that corporate leaders valued trust more than their own success proved to be a great decision. Integrity was a pivotal contributor to Johnson and Johnson's recovery from their crisis. They kept their reputation intact, and the Tylenol brand recovered to become the most profitable brand in America.<sup>*lxiv*</sup>

My dad used to say, "Son, if you want to keep my trust, you need to admit what you did, apologize for it, and act in a new way." Those three things, admit, apologize and act have helped me again and again. Trustworthiness is worth any price. The story of Saul of Tarsus, who became known as the apostle Paul, demonstrates that untrustworthy people can build trust. A healthy relationship depends on it.

Remember, the cost of being deceitful is inestimable, while the benefits of being honest are beyond calculation. Start building

your trust account today. Start where you are and with people you know. Start building trust in every aspect of life, not just the important things. "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much." lxv

## **Pillar of Dignity**



When dignity is lacking, people defraud, abuse, and destroy one another. When dignity is present, people value, support, and protect one another.

Integrity provides the foundation to live with dignity.

### Nelson Mandela said,

"Prison authorities conspire to rob each man of his dignity. In and of itself, that assured that I would survive, for any man or institution that tries to rob me of my dignity will lose, because I will not part with it at any price or under any pressure."<sup>Ixvi</sup>

Isolated for years in a tiny cell, Nelson Mandela emerged with a vision as big as all creation. Through his extraordinary life, he showed that tyranny and discrimination never had the last word. He demonstrated that despite the thickness of prison walls, the world could hear his voice. Without question, we remember him as the ambassador of human dignity.

In a speech entitled "Our Era's Greatest Ambassador for Human Dignity", UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, "Nelson Mandela was a human being with flaws and frailties like any of us. And yet, from his humanity came humility; from humility came strength; from strength came transformation; from utter goodness came epic greatness." Human dignity is not just a human right; it is essential to human life."<sup>*txvii*</sup> In this chapter, I want to study the life of a woman named Ruth Chilion. Her story appeals to women of all ages, ethnicities and status. Women identify with her, and take courage from her example. Yet her story also interests men, and inspires them. Why? Because in a time and culture where being a woman of another ethnicity eradicated hope of fair treatment, she rose to prominence. She proves that living a life of dignity transforms your environment and circumstances.

Ruth started with little chance of being successful. She was born a woman, in Moab, an ancient middle-east nation. Being a woman in that culture reduced her dignity. Being a Moabite factored into the on-going discrimination she endured. When she reached the age to marry, her parents arranged an inter-racial marriage. Despite the strong cultural disapproval of the inter-racial marriage, her parents gave her to a Hebrew family. Adding to that, she had to abandon her Moabite customs and from the day of her wedding, adopt her husband's people and practise their ways. She was a woman from Moab in an inter-racial marriage sent to live as a Jewish wife in a Hebrew ghetto.

Ruth would continue to face more than her share of dehumanizing challenges. After less than a decade of marriage, her husband became ill. Although she did all she could to care for him, he died. What is more? He left her childless, which in the ancient cultures reflected harshly on any woman. Even as a widow, she was subject to open public scorn because of being "barren." Society generally attached a woman's identity to her husband, assumed a woman's wealth came through her husband or his family and that a woman's security was guaranteed as long as her husband lived. If the husband died, leaving the wife childless, she could expect to be removed from her home and even excommunicated from the husband's family.

Ruth's behaviour displayed extraordinary dignity. She cared for her husband until he died, then comforted her mother-in-law. Instead of abandoning the older woman after the time of grief was over, Ruth assumed responsibility to support Naomi. But she could only find work toiling in farm fields as a temporary agricultural labourer. One day her mother-in-law heard that the economy in her homeland was again robust. Therefore, she decided to return home. Because her mother-in-law was a citizen of the country, it became possible for Ruth to procure a visa under the provisions afforded to a refugee family member. However, the people living in Naomi's small town did not welcome her warmly. Discrimination and inhospitality awaited her. The community assumed as a barren foreign refugee widow, she would be an additional burden. Immigration failed to improve her plight.

Like many refugees who immigrate to another land, Ruth lived in poverty. She applied for work, but any job available was far below her training or prior status. Offence and defeat tempted her to give up, but she refused. Instead, she busied herself with odd jobs and whatever she could do. She worked with excellence and diligence, often surpassing the commitment of the locals. Although the people did not understand her, she knew who she was and what she was capable of doing. In time, the community noticed her hard work, positive attitude, and love for her mother-in-law.

One day Ruth Chilion learned of a provision in the country's law, which entitled her to excellent benefits. However, she lacked someone to represent her case. She risked the little she had to make her legal appeal. Some of the local people misunderstood why she would lodge a formal claim. For Ruth, it was a matter of her dignity. Although it would take time for justice to be determined, she waited patiently. Finally, the court ruled in her favour. Following the court's favourable decision, a woman who came into the community as a sponsored refugee rose to the position of community influence. Why did it happen? It happened because the Pillar of Dignity gave her courage and guided each step of the long journey to success.

# What Do We Mean by Dignity?

What do we mean by dignity? "The most common response people offer is that dignity is about respect. On the contrary, dignity is not the same as respect. Dignity is our inherent value and worth as human beings; everyone is born with it. Respect, on the other hand, is earned through one's actions ... Our shared desire for dignity transcends all our differences ... The glue that holds all of our relationships together is the mutual recognition of the desire to be seen, heard, listened to and treated fairly; to be recognized, understood and to feel safe in the world."<sup>*lxviii*</sup>

The German philosopher Immanuel Kant is often considered to be a key figure in the development of the contemporary concepts of honour and dignity. For Kant, dignity meant the equal and inherent worth of every individual. Kant thought that human beings occupied a special place in creation. Of course, he was not alone in thinking this. It is an idea: from ancient times, humans have considered themselves different from all other creatures. If a human's value is beyond price, it follows that the treatment of people must be more than a means but an end.<sup>*lxix*</sup>

Are we all born worthy? Are some tribes, classes, or nations more worthy? Ruth Chilion was born a woman and in Moab, which in ancient times lowered her worth. As a little girl, did she ever hear, "You are invaluable, priceless and irreplaceable?" Imagine if people treated each other as though everyone mattered. If we did, we would have to believe that we are all:

worthy of having our identity accepted no matter who we are; worthy of recognition for our unique qualities; worthy of acknowledgement to be seen, heard and responded to; worthy of belonging and feeling included; worthy of freedom and independence; worthy of feeling safe and secure; worthy of being treated fairly; worthy of an apology when someone does us wrong.<sup>*lxx*</sup> I believe we were created in wisdom by a marvellous Designer. Every person has dignity. We are alike in many ways, yet we are unique in many ways. Sometimes our differences determine a negative attitude towards one another. How do you respond when you see someone who is a visual minority? Our dissimilarities reach beyond race. It's challenging for an introvert to appreciate an extrovert, for the rich to comprehend the world of the poor, and for the tall to get the perspective of the short. Do men actually understand the world of a woman or vice versa?

Have you ever wondered about how unique you are compared to everyone else? You are one of a kind, put together with a specific purpose! Or have you marvelled about the strange gift mix so evident in your friends, children or spouse? I sometimes chuckle at the sense of humour displayed in how the Master Designer knit us together.lxxi Why are you better at some things than other things? Accept it and develop your strengths. Learn to manage your weaknesses. Leadership is the art of harnessing who you are to make a difference. The first person you have to understand is you. The first person you have to lead is you. Be yourself. People would rather follow a leader who is real than one who is always right.<sup>lxxii</sup>

There are many kinds of psychological tools available to help us understand ourselves and others. One of the members of our Canadian cli board took some of our team through an excellent tool called Kolbe. When I was introduced to Kolbe and took the survey, I thought. "What will this short quiz tell us?" I was surprised by the accuracy of the tool. My Kolbe accurately identified who I am and how I approached life. And it was just as accurate for the rest of our board. Kolbe's insights made it possible for us to see the real strengths and weaknesses each person brought to our team. The impact of this information had immediate implications, and it will continue to benefit our relationships, and increase our success.<sup>*lxxiii*</sup>

I have learned that whenever we honour someone, we strengthen our own dignity. Whenever we live with dignity, we stop the spread of neglect, mistreatment or discrimination; whenever we live with dignity, integrity flourishes because the pillar of dignity is foundational to integrity.

## **Dignity Guides my Attitude to Myself**

Ruth provides an example of someone who knows the difference between pride, insecurity, and dignity.

Pride	Insecure	Dignity
1. Everything I do is	Nothing I do is	I do things wrong
amazing.	amazing.	but I am an amazing creation.
2. Don't admit	Ashamed of	Embrace and learn
mistakes or	weakness; try to	from weaknesses.
weakness.	hide them.	
3. Builds themselves	Criticize	Celebrate their
up by putting others	themselves; can't	success and the
down.	celebrate others.	success of others.
4. Don't think they	Afraid to admit that	Love the fact that
need others.	they need others.	they need others.
Value in being the	Desperate for other	Find value in being
best at things.	people to give	alive and being
	affirmation.	themselves.
5. Deny the value of others.	Intimidated by the success of others.	Rejoice in the value and success of others. <sup><i>lxxiv</i></sup>

She understood that millions of people lived during the time she was alive. She may not be the best, the strongest, the smartest, the prettiest but she would be the best Ruth she could be. She believed that one of the main reasons God made her was because he wanted her in His universe. Pride suggests that being special means you are better than others, what if being special amounted to living as the best you possible? Why does every steam think it is the river? Dignity spotlights contributions you can make instead of contributions you deserve.

### **Dignity Guides our Attitude to Others**

How do we treat people with disabilities, emotional illness, terminal illness or vulnerability? Do we marginalize them? Do we withhold the tools and services they need to live a productive life? The disabled constitute a disproportionally large number of the world's poor. In developing countries, 90 percent of disabled children do not attend school and as many as one of every three street children is disabled. Adults with disabilities face higher unemployment.<sup>hxv</sup> Often our words undermine personal dignity. We honour people to say insane instead of crazy. Use neutral words like, "That person has a mental illness" or suffers from mental health issues. Rather than saying they are handicapped say they have disabilities.

Our response must go beyond the selection of words. Be proactive in treating people. Give them the same treatment we desire. Stop behaving as though people with disabilities are less than human or to be pitied. They are more than objects of charity, medical treatment or social protection. They are not to be feared. Be their friend. Approach them with respect and treat them with dignity.

Some time ago, the organizers of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities challenged the fashion industry and its obsession with perfection. In-display windows of Zurich's Bahnhofstrasse, organizers placed imperfect mannequins between the perfect. The imperfect mannequins represent people with scoliosis or brittle bone disease. All mannequins sported the latest fashions. The organizers filmed the responses of people passing by the display window. Many stopped and were surprised by what they saw.

It seemed that the observers saw beauty in something they had previously overlooked. The longer people looked at the display, the more the imperfections distorted perception. People often chase after perfection instead of seeing the good and beauty in imperfection. Honour affirms what some might see as unlovely because they are blind to the genuine worth. It delights in the beauty of those who are less than perfect.<sup>*lxxvi*</sup>

Ruth did not abandon her husband when he became incapacitated. Love moved her to care for him. A person deserves respect no matter what stage of life they are in or what is happening to them at any particular moment. Here is a list of ideas that have guided my conduct towards people with disabilities:

Give people eye contact Don't avoid them. Treat them as equal not as lesser or in a condescending manner. Ask if they need assistance before providing it Don't treat them as a victim or see their condition as a tragedy Don't underestimate their abilities Discover and encourage their courage Be a friend.

I have discovered that when I implement these behaviours, it develops understanding. Often, I feel like I benefit more from the relationship than anyone by choosing actions based upon a Pillar of Dignity.

# **Dignity Identifies with Others**

Donna Hicks says, "We don't have to be a politician to fall prey to the temptation to save face. The desire to save face represents a direct link to our over-reactive self-preservation instinct; we are so vulnerable to, since it is part of our shared humanity."/xxvii Protocol, would have instructed Ruth to save face saying, "Don't inconvenience yourself by identifying with Naomi." Let her family network care for its own. Yet the most famous words from the story of Ruth are, "Don't urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go and where you lodge, I will lodge, your people shall be my people and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried."/xxviii Ruth fully embraced Naomi and her faith. There was a quality of collaboration between the two ladies that empowered them to overcome adversity. Together they would tackle the complex issues of life awaiting them. Dignity created an irrevocable commitment. Ruth's pledge reflected character, compassion, courage and conviction.

What if Ruth had distanced herself from Naomi's faith or her people? What if her dissimilarities to Naomi excused her from expressing compassion? What if her difference forbad cooperation or continued communication? Too often, people are intolerant of those who hold divergent beliefs or come from a separate ethnicity. In doing so, they break the second great commandment, love your neighbour as you love yourself. Dignity moves us beyond religious, political, tribal or social tolerance, to a place of honour. In my opinion, there is room for intolerance but not of people. We should be intolerant of dehumanization, prejudice, abuse, and corruption.<sup>*lxxix*</sup> Let's stop viewing one another through the lens of ethnicity, economy or education.

Tolerance is the sweet fruit of dignity - all of the six pillars of integrity factor into the tolerance equation.

*Dignity* expressed with tolerance will not dehumanize. *Trust* expressed with tolerance opens the door to cooperation. *Authenticity* expressed with tolerance permits each person to be genuine.

*Influence* expressed with tolerance advances working together.

*Honour* expressed with tolerance guards against dishonour. *Truth* expressed with tolerance values the unique contribution made by all.

## **Dignity Values Diversity**

Settling into her new home proved more complicated then Ruth anticipated. Even if she dressed as they dressed and ate the same food they ate, her Moabite accent betrayed her. Being multilingual meant she could speak their language, but it wasn't easy to read Hebrew. Who wanted to hire her? Well educated immigrant woman like Ruth, who qualified for professional level employment lacked opportunity to use their skills. Ruth must start at ground zero. She experienced racial profiling, prejudice, and alienation. Her ethnicity and nationality disqualified her applications. Xenophobia restricted her early advancement. I am a Canadian by birth. But my grandparents came to Canada hoping for a better life. They endured some of what Ruth experienced, but they also received the help that equipped them to thrive. Like Ruth, their dignity drove them to succeed in a new land. One of the reasons I am addressing this issue here, is because in our world the issue of how we treat immigrants demands attention. Regardless of the country or tribe a person comes from each person deserves a dignified welcome with dignity. Rather than create barriers - build relationships, invite partnerships, support aspirations and strengthen the community. Are foreigners any less human? Maybe you were once an immigrant or a stranger. Treat foreigners, strangers, disenfranchised with dignity.<sup>*lxxx*</sup>

# **Dignity Addresses Poverty**

Poverty is not only a deprivation of economic resources but also a deprivation of the spirit. People often view the materially poor as inferior. Historically, this has led to neglect, exploitation and enslavement. Ruth demonstrated that given the opportunity, the poorest possess the capacity to get out of poverty. The local relief program did not create dependency. She was not a constant drain on society. She demonstrated the capacity to thrive and shunned a beggar mentality. Ruth demonstrated resilience, not apathetic indifference. She climbed out of poverty with the help of a few people ready to offer her a chance. A woman, a poor immigrant, an exploited minority, yet Ruth rose above poverty. She did so, empowered by the Pillar of Dignity.

In ancient Rome, the impoverished masses were satisfied in their lowly condition by the state providing "bread and circuses." In other words, they were given free food and entertainment economic freedom, along with the opportunity to develop and use their natural abilities.<sup>*lxxxi*</sup> Instead of long-term handouts, dignity calls charities and governments to focus on helping people caught in poverty to develop. Capacity building must follow a cup of rice. The power often dormant in the poor can be cultivated and encouraged. One day Jesus praised a poor widow for her generosity and for stewarding her capacity. "Jesus looked up and he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two tiny copper coins. "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others."<sup>Ixxxii</sup> Dignity recognizes the contributions of the poor. It removes the yoke of despair from the shoulders of the underclasses. It repairs what poverty has impaired.

## **Dignity Coaches Personal Development**

If we seek true humility, start with dignity. Humility's firm foundation is dignity. Because Ruth knew who she was, it created personal security greater than her circumstances. True identity nurtures healthy self-worth. As an immigrant, she experienced painful slurs on her dignity. How would she respond? Would corruption be her character coach? A lack of status, personal poverty, or opinions of others failed to define her. Later, when she achieved success, her dignity remained unchanged. Dignity provided her defence against character defamation.

Ruth was younger than Naomi. Yet she profoundly influenced her mother-in-law's return to dignity. The events of the past eroded the older woman's courage and sense of self-worth. A younger woman needed to encourage the older woman. Naomi attempted to change her name to reflect her despondency. But Ruth refused to allow her mother-in-law to despair. Ruth appealed to the little dignity Naomi still possessed. Sometimes proud, authoritative, abusive people will attack someone's worth. Instead of showing strength, undignified behaviour exposes weakness. Strong leaders listen and receive counsel that is helpful. Weak, threatened, crushed, powerless individuals do not necessarily reject mentoring, they often just lack or opportunity.

Ruth's daily choices of conduct coached an older woman. When a younger person coaches someone older, it's called reverse mentoring. "Reverse mentoring assumes a opposite perspective to learning. While acknowledging the proven value of the older-to younger approach 'teaching down', it provides the vital complement of a younger-to-older method 'teaching up'.<sup>*lxxxiii*</sup> Naomi seemed inclined to view her young daughter-in-law as a source of mentorship. Ruth's daily example and practical approach rubbed off on Naomi. Rather than continuing to be depressed, she recovered.

Dignity holds you accountable for who you are and who you will become. Ruth understood that she was liable for the condition of her body, mind, attitudes and skills. Naomi didn't have to nag Ruth until frustration forced her to take action. No, Ruth owned her duty to make healthy lifestyle choices. She cultivated habits that improved her life and assumed responsibility for personal growth. Each decision made her feel more confident and optimistic. The wonderful by-products of personal development created a better, healthier, stronger, and happier woman.

Dignity tutors people to be all they can be. We must accept responsibility for who we are and who we become. If you dream of doing something, what are you prepared to do about it? If I dreamt of playing the guitar but never picked up the instrument, never took lessons, never practiced; what are my chances of fulfilling that dream? Dignity will coach us from dream to accomplishment! Accomplishments always affirm our dignity while apathy subtly undermines our dignity.

There are some simple steps all of us can implement to reach our potential. We all know that improper diet shortens life, a lack of exercise weakens health, and insufficient rest reduces immunity as well as performance. The question is, "How does this information influence us?" Some time ago, I rode in an older taxi that was in excellent condition. I asked the driver to explain how his car could still be like new. He replied, "There are over 500,000 kilometres on my car, and I expect it will go another 200,000. Every day I work at maintaining it. Because I diligently maintain my taxi, it will serve me a long time."

How are you at maintaining your health? Your health is like a driver maintaining their vehicle. Do your appetites control you

or do you control cravings? Proper diet leads to improved health, better memory, healthier teeth and bones, unagitated digestion, settled moods, inhibition of strokes and cardiovascular disease, managed diabetes, reduced risk of cancer and enhanced sleep. What are you doing with what you know? The conclusion is; "good nutrition is worth every effort you give it." Let your dignity coach you to a good diet and proper eating patterns.<sup>*lxxxiv*</sup>

If you want to feel better, more energetic, and even add years to your life – exercise. It is dangerous and foolish to ignore the many benefits of regular exercise. Regardless of age, gender or physical ability everyone profits from exercise. According to the Mayo Clinic, there are seven significant reasons you should exercise. Exercise controls weight, combats health conditions, improves moods, boosts energy, promotes better sleep, rejuvenates sex life, and enables enjoyable social interactions. Do you need more convincing to get moving? Dignity inspires you to do it for your own benefit.<sup>*lxxxv*</sup>

A good night's sleep is as essential to your health and over all well-being as eating healthy and exercise. I am surprised at how few people take seriously sleep deprivation. Let me give you convincing reasons why good sleep is vital. Poor sleep is linked to higher body weight and higher calorie consumption. Lack of sleep lowers concentration and productivity and reduces physical performance. Sleeplessness increases the risk of disease, affects metabolism and initiates the onset of type 2 diabetes, causes depression, downgrades your immune function, influences long-term inflammation of the digestive tract and promotes cell damage. Dignity tells you to value your sleep. Go to bed.<sup>*lxxxvi*</sup>

Our first cli manual allocated several pages to self-care, and the early summits devoted a session to the impact of diet, the indispensability of sleep and the importance of exercise. The feedback we received included a frequent confession, "I knew diet, sleep and exercise were important, but I never admitted they were essential for me. I told myself I was getting away with ignoring them." Failing to self-discipline undermines the Pillar of Dignity. We need to love ourselves enough to invest in who we become. Often the lack of self-discipline reflects a lack of self-worth.

The above self-discipline topics deserve much more attention. However, I urge you to access the countless excellent resources devoted to a healthy diet, proper sleep and regular exercise. Also, I invite you to attend a cli cohort or Summit where you can learn more and be encouraged through accountability to achieve your goals.

# **Dignity Advocates for Justice**

Why are there so many injustices in the world? I believe that at the root cause of most conflicts is a lack of dignity. Where there is peace, dignity and justice are present. On the other hand, conflicts grow where humiliation, distrust and injustice are present. Donna Hicks is right, "the road to peace is paved with dignity."<sup>*lxxxvii*</sup> One of the high capacities that dignity develops in the soul is compassion. Much of the prevailing injustice of our world comes from a lack of compassion. Compassion comes from a Latin root, "cum passio" which means to suffer with.<sup>*lxxxviii*</sup> You will care about the suffering of others when you have dignity.

My first introduction to injustice was jarring. Before that moment, issues of injustice never directly touched me. I saw examples on television or read of atrocities. However, I was moved to tears when I came face to face with Nelle, a mother from Cambodia. She had four kids and was a widow. When I met her, she had walked twelve kilometres in the only garment she owned to come to the city where we had set up a temporary clinic. She described to me poverty in terms I can't forget. Much of the hardship imposed upon her was due to tyranny. She told me of the day she ran out of coals, the family fire went cold, and when the last of the food ran out. She watched her youngest son's body shrivel as he suffered from malnutrition until his life waned, and he too became cold. When it became too dangerous to remain in her village, she took her children and fled. She escaped by forging rivers and illegally crossing borders hoping to escape rape or even murder. Her home became a refugee camp. Did this woman, formerly a medical surgeon, have any hope for the future? Yes, her dignity gave her resilience and expectation.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights refers to humans as having dignity and this dignity as being the basis for human rights.<sup>*lxxxix*</sup> One day, Naomi informed her daughter-in-law that civil laws existed which qualified her to receive social benefits. Unfortunately, although the law made ample provision, nobody was responsible for assuring the implementation of those articles.

Up to that moment, Ruth had been ignorant of the possibility of any help. Her situation was further complicated because the law denied her the ability to access the resources rightfully hers. As a woman, she was powerless to advocate for her case. Like countless other powerless people, she lived outside access to the law. Nothing would happen until Ruth found an ombudsman to act on her behalf. Although the entire community understood the provisions available to her, nobody felt responsible for intervening on her behalf. It was easier to do nothing then to take up her cause.

We must address the injustice. But without people of dignity justice will go unserved. Although denied access, Ruth found a way to procure her human rights. Acting in highest dignity, she approached a man she believed had integrity. She presented her case clearly and wisely. Would he respond, would injustice end? The Pillar of Dignity motivated Ruth, while the Pillar of Influence informed Boaz. He listened to her plea. His character, compassion and values meant he could not remain silent. Being aware of her situation, he took up this woman's cause and arranged proper representation before the local city council. The council listened to Ruth's case, then ruled as the terms of the law stipulated. That day established her rights and granted the provisions rightfully hers.

Today, whenever I hear of people who stand up for human rights, whenever people speak out for freedom or whenever they reach

out for reconciliation, I am reminded of Ruth Chilion. And I am reminded of Boaz, who had compassion and took up the cause of justice. Inequities must stop, but it will require the empowerment of dignity.

# **Dignity Attracts Attention**

Everyone in the village grew to admire Ruth's extraordinary dignity and composure. Human dignity is virtuous; therefore, it inspires admiration and enhances lifestyles. The storyteller described Ruth as a woman of personal excellence. Field workers appreciated her, women associated with her, children trusted her, and in time civic leaders honoured her. True dignity is not a quantitative notion, by which we can have more or less. Dignity is more than earned social status. Instead, dignity is like a foundation, a foundation of integrity. Why is it so attractive? Because it commands empathic respect, up-ward looking attitude, inaccessibility to corruption and enhanced appreciation of human capacity.<sup>xc</sup>

In conclusion, I want to point out how Ruth's exemplary dignity inspires those who know her story. She may have never dreamt that her life would continue to influence people long after her death.

My wife is Irish. One of her hobbies is genealogical research. Each St. Patrick's Day, when the family gathers at our house, we celebrate our roots. Sometime during the party, my wife will gather the whole family and tell a story from our history. Our legacy includes pioneers, indentured servants, circuit preachers, politicians and more. We are heirs of strong people whose dignity shaped their life. As a family on St. Patrick's Day, we remember that our heritage obligates us to build a better world. The Pillar of Dignity establishes the foundation for a brighter tomorrow.

Some readers would know that Ruth's name is found in a famous genealogy. A genealogical record prized and guarded by the Hebrew people. Her name is included in their most cherish list. She is found among men like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, King David, King Solomon and the Messiah Jesus Christ. As a woman, among a large list of men, Ruth stands out. She set a true standard for dignity. May both men and women emulate her.

## **Pillar of Honour**



Honour Encourages Potential. When honour is withheld, fear, selfishness and dishonour bind a society. When honour is given, love, generosity and respect liberate a society.

Values are a major influence in the formation of culture. Anthropologists contrast a Culture of Law with a Culture of Honour. A Culture of Honour has an implicit body of codes by which the members of the society agree to live. A Culture of Law has an explicit collection of laws which all members of the society must obey, and there are defined punishments for lawbreakers.

Generally, the ancient cultures formed around honour and did so without written laws. Today, a Culture of Honour continues to govern many people groups. However, Cultures of Honour appear to be on the decline while Cultures of Law are becoming more common.<sup>*xci*</sup> Honour requires various elements such as valour, dignity, honesty, fidelity, compassion, the nobility of soul and ethical excellence. Honour codes dictate business contracts, sexual conduct, personal protection, family systems and national patriotism. A Culture of Honour lacks nothing. It builds life.

Sometimes the term honour has been associated with dishonourable practices. Does honour killing justify injustice? Can illegal acts become legal by claiming allegiance to a code of honour? Is honour sufficient reason to go to war? Dare we justify prejudice or revenge in the name of tribal honour?

Dr. John Kerr, in his book Butterfly Christian Nation writes: "In western thinking, a good conscience requires justice or obedience to norms. A bad conscience is the result of guilt or breaking the norms. A guilty conscience is best resolved through reparation (making amends for a wrong one has done) ...give back what you stole. In Africa, on the other hand, a good conscience comes from honour and acceptance in the community... an offender experiences shame from exclusion. A shamed conscience is healed through reconciliation and re-inclusion into society. In a communal culture, a transgression is never directly addressed because it may undermine honour."<sup>xcii</sup>

# **Character Determines Honour**

It seems more natural to honour someone we deem worthy. It feels dishonest to honour someone we perceive as unworthy. Integrity-based honour is a revolutionary concept; we tend to think of honour as performance-based or a measure of social hierarchy. Immanuel Kant's honour system implied a calculated social value with an exacted protocol.<sup>xciii</sup> However, the Pillar of Honour announces that conduct originates in our character and it is given not demanded. The foundation of honour depends on the character of the one who gives it, not on the performance of the individual who receives it. Those who bestow honour do not categorize who qualifies based on conduct, position, wealth or success. Honour fits everyone. Character guides the expression of honour. Fundamentally, integrity works like this, it initiates rather than reacts.

### Honour is Given

The Pillar of Honour rests on a foundation of character, not reward. Therefore, honour is not demanded from someone but given freely. People of integrity genuinely give, while corruption exacts. Is it fair to assume everyone comprehends who deserves honour, and who does not? Consider the attitude people from Jesus' hometown had towards him. He grew up in their village, Nazareth, therefore they found it difficult to regard him as a great rabbi. They intentionally withheld tribute from a local boy! Instead of celebrating his success, they treated him with contempt. His neighbours struggled to understand his acclaim. He was simply the son of a local carpenter.<sup>xciv</sup>

Should you honour your teacher, boss or spouse when you think they don't deserve it? We rationalize that to affirm people who don't merit it, would encourage inadequate performances and be dishonest. The Pillar of Honour instructs us to give honour to all, not just to those we consider worthy.

Are honour and respect interchangeable terms? Are they synonyms? Integrity views honour and respect as unique and different, as apples are to guava.

Respect is achieved while honour is given. Respect reveals the recipient's conduct, while honour reveals character of the giver. Respect is deserved while honour is designated. Respect comes from the head, while honour comes from the heart. Respect, like trust, is earned, while honour like love, is given. Respect is a reward for achievement; honour is a gift that inspires achievement.<sup>xcv</sup>

We use the word honour in many ways. In the military, soldiers honour according to rank. Honour inspires patriotism. Soldiers avoid dishonour at all costs. Many organizations define honour by authority, power or position. The Pillar of Honour operates because of good character. Controls, codes and authority impose external requirements. While integrity does regard external monitors, it is motivated by internal values.

# **Honour Everyone**

"Protocol demands appropriate action to comply with the cultural codes. It reminds people within the culture of how vital it is to give honour. Protocols serve to reinforce cultural codes and values. According to the All-Africa University of Zimbabwe Institute of Diplomacy: "Protocol, etiquette, professionalism and good manners are invisible, subtle, silent and effortless professional tools that make you reach your goals with polish, poise and professionalism... Having "etiquette and protocol intelligence" gives you the edge by allowing you to focus on substantive issues."

Sometimes protocol expresses genuine honour. Sometimes beneath the performance, lurks vile dishonour. Dishonour may be camouflaged by external behaviours even those done with excellence. Isaiah experienced deceitfulness among the people of his day. He unmasked duplicity, "because of fear you display public honour, while honour was not in your hearts."<sup>xcvii</sup> They faked honour for kings, leaders, authorities, the successful, and the elderly because it was their expected duty. Inwardly they despised the person they publicly venerated.

If we adopt a philosophy of giving honour only to the person who deserves it, then recognition is reduced to obligation, performance, or custom. The Pillar of Honour teaches us to revere all people, even those whom we deem less deserving or disqualified. Everyone receives honour: rich and poor, educated and uneducated, people of your tribe and those of another, healthy and those disabled, the old and the young, those of your faith, and those of another religion. Everyone is worthy of honour. The Bible instructs those who want to live with integrity to honour all.

## **Honour is Proactive**

Honour is proactive, not reactive. Your conduct should not determine my actions. Your lack of honour toward me should not cause me to dishonour you. Someone's lack of love must not limit my love. Why should another person's dishonesty derail my honesty? Should another person's weak character damage mine? Integrity doesn't adjust to outside influences, it's foundational.

Honour guides conduct, whether we are with people who hold position or not. It expresses itself, whether we are with people of a different political persuasion, an unkind boss, an abusive parent, someone of another tribe or religion. We can honour without endorsing or encouraging corrupt actions. Honour is proactive, not reactive. Genuine honour is a decision. It functions like the root, not the fruit. Honour shapes lifestyles and renews mindsets. As a leader, when I infused honour into my team culture, productivity went up. It unified the team and inspired goodwill. A gram of honour is a thousand times more precious than a thousand grams of dishonour.<sup>\*xcviii</sup>

### **Honour Releases Potential**

Let me tell you a true story as told by Patrica McGerr. The narrative of Johnny Lingo's Eight-Cow Wife illustrates the fantastic influence of treating someone with honour. Johnny Lingo was a young man who lived on the island of Nurabandi, not far from the island Kiniwata in the South Pacific. He was one of the brightest, strongest, and richest men in the islands, but people shook their heads and smiled about one business deal Johnny made.

It was customary on these islands for a man to buy his wife from her father, paying the price in cows. Two or three cows bought an average wife, and four or five purchased a highly satisfactory one. Yet, for some reason, Johnny paid the unheard-of price of eight cows for a wife, Sarita. She was not attractive by any standard. As one fellow explained, "It would be a kindness to call her plain." She was skinny. She walked with her shoulders hunched, and her head ducked down. She was scared of her own shadow. Why did Johnny Lingo pay eight cows for such a woman?

Everyone figured Sarita's father, Sam Karoo, had duped Johnny, and that's why the islanders smiled whenever they discussed the deal. Patricia McGerr finally met Johnny and got the chance to ask about his eight- cow purchase. She had assumed he had done it for his vanity and reputation—until she saw Sarita. "She was the most beautiful woman I have ever seen," McGerr wrote. "The lift of her shoulders, the tilt of her chin, and the sparkle of her eyes all spelled a pride no one could deny." Sarita was not the plain girl McGerr had expected, and the explanation lay with Johnny Lingo.

"Do you ever think," he said, "what it must mean to a woman to know that her husband settled on the lowest price for which she could be bought? Later on, when the women talk, they boast about how much money their husbands paid for them. One says four cows, another maybe six. How does a woman feel who merited one or two cows? Johnny would not allow this to happen to my Sarita."

"You did this just to make your wife happy?" McGerr asked. "I wanted Sarita to be happy, yes, but I wanted more than that.

Many things can change a woman: Things that happen inside, things that happen outside, but the thing that matters most is what she thinks about herself. In Kiniwata, Sarita believed she was worth nothing. Now she knows she is worth more than any other woman in the islands."

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"But ..."
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"But," he finished softly, "I wanted an eight-cow wife."

Because Johnny Lingo considered Sarita was worth eight cows, she began to see herself and present herself as an eightcow woman. Before Johnny entered her life, Sarita was a shy, plain island girl. After he placed incredible value upon her, she transformed into a confident, attractive woman who knew that, to her husband, she was worth far more than any other island woman

Corruption devalues people. It causes them to feel the way Sarita felt before she met Johnny. Snide words, abuse, mistreatment, peer pressure, and dishonour reinforce our low worth. Its time people receive the same gift of honour that Sarita received! Everybody has incredible value! Sarita, seen through Johnny's eyes, was a priceless treasure. When viewed through our Creator's eyes, you and I are worthy of honour. Integrity makes people feel like they are worth many, many cows.<sup>*xcix*</sup>

Why is it so important to view others as a priceless treasure? Because each person has dignity and purpose. People are more precious than gold. Honour ascribes high value to people and transforms how they perceive themselves.

### **Consequences of Dishonour**

### **Dishonour Erodes Integrity**

Corruption focuses on the negative. It isolates a small detail and magnifies it out of proportion. Let's consider how dishonour affects the home. Dishonour in a marriage undermines the relationship between husband and wife. When you live with another person, you see their flaws. Awareness of one another's imperfections makes it increasingly challenging to cherish one another. Both the fairy tale prince charming and the beautiful princess lost their charm. Children watch their parents, observing their conduct and listening to conversations. They watch their parents in the privacy of the home and in public. It can be challenging for children to esteem their parents because of what they see. Before you know it, the family fragments and members drift apart.

Dishonour influences the workplace too. Employees watch their employers. They observe how the leader makes decisions and implement policies. In a smaller company, employees know the employer, and familiarity can breed contempt. Dishonour impacts relationships. Like a slow escalator ride downward, dishonour lowers the quality of communication, relationships and teamwork. When dishonour thrives, productivity drops. You never improve by putting someone else down. You never become happier by making someone else unhappy. You never receive honour by withholding honour.

## **Dishonour Limits Potential**

Dishonour is one of the most effective weapons of corruption. Dishonour is easy to use and readily available. It causes immense damage. Earlier I mentioned how the residents in Jesus' hometown failed to honour him. What were the consequences? We read that Jesus could not do many mighty deeds in his hometown. It does not say he would not, rather, he could not do mighty works. It appears the amount of honour reflected the measure of their faith. Dishonour produced doubt, while faith determined hope."<sup>c</sup>

The hometown folk assumed Jesus was an ordinary guy, one of the boys who grew up in the town. He attended the local school and worked in a local carpentry shop. The Book of Mark records, "Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honour."<sup>ci</sup> The Greek word translated without honour is the word '*at-ee- mos*,' meaning to dishonour; to treat as common or ordinary.<sup>cii</sup> Dishonour effectively limits the good from being done. People of the Christian faith discover that if they treat Jesus as common, they experience little, but when they honour Him as Lord, they experience his power in their lives.

If you want a common or an ordinary marriage, dishonour your spouse. Treat him or her as common. If you wish to attend a regular college, dishonour the students and treat the teaching staff as standard. Dishonour always devalues, limits or lowers the standard. It influences people toward a more unsatisfying relationship.

The Greek word pronounced "*tim-may*," means to honour, to value, to respect or highly esteem, to treat as precious, or to ascribe worth.<sup>*ciii*</sup> I have an old leather book. Most would see this book as unnoteworthy, but to me, it's invaluable. My father was a pastor, and this book was his personal study Bible. It contains handwritten notes. He highlighted verses that touched his heart, wrote margin comments of his thoughts. Plus, I found a few of his sermon notes tucked in the back.

I own many Bibles that friends may read. All of them are available for Bible study groups who meet in our home, all except for one, my father's Bible. It rests on a special shelf, and I keep it on display. It is not for general use. I don't think I would ever sell that Bible. If I did sell it, how much do you think it would be worth to me? Dad's Bible is worth far more than money.

Dishonour devalues people. It treats them as ordinary. Honour esteems people and views them as valuable. Dishonour sets limits on people. Honour encourages people to reach their potential. Dishonour views others with doubt or suspicion imposing restrictions. Honour views others with faith, unlocking their destiny and potential.

### **Dishonour Produces Shame, Fear and Guilt**

Dishonour produces shame, fear and guilt. Shame, fear, and guilt are toxic when mixed with control. To overcome shame, we must re-establish honour. Love combined with honour overcomes fear. The perspective-altering power of honour changes debilitating mindsets.

James Gilligan in Violence, Reflections on A National Epidemic, says:

I have yet to see a serious act of violence that was not provoked by the experience of feeling shamed and humiliated, disrespected and ridiculed, and that did not represent the attempt to prevent or undo this loss of face—no matter how severe the punishment, even if it includes death....The secret that violent men would die in order to not reveal is that they feel ashamed—deeply ashamed, chronically ashamed, acutely ashamed, over matters that are so trivial that their very triviality makes it even more shameful to feel ashamed. Why are they so ashamed of feeling ashamed? Because nothing is more shameful than to feel ashamed.<sup>civ</sup> Gilligan claims that dishonour puts people at risk in every society. Sociologists identify three common effects from dishonour: guilt, shame and fear. These three have influenced the formation of three types of cultures.

**Guilt-innocence cultures** are individualistic societies (common in the West), where people who break rules are guilty and seek justice or forgiveness to rectify a wrong.

**Shame-honour cultures** are collectivistic cultures (common in the East), where people are shamed for not fulfilling group expectations and seek to restore their honour before the community.

**Fear-power cultures** refer to animistic contexts (typically tribal), where people afraid of evil/harm pursue power over the spirit world through magical rituals.

One of these three: guilt, shame or fear frame every culture. Dishonour exerts enough force to erode the very foundations of society.

## **Dishonour Causes Discontentment**

Earlier, I mentioned my father's Bible and his notes in the margins. Beside a verse in the Book of Exodus 14, Dad wrote, "Murmuring cures nothing. It steals joy while causing things to get worse." I agree. Murmuring hinders personal growth, steals energy, fogs vision, defames character and hurts relationships. Gratitude prolongs life; ingratitude shortens it. The ungrateful accomplish less than grateful people.

Avoid a reputation for being discontented. If you see the glass as halfempty instead of half-full, you miss what is there. Seeing the good is a choice that conveys hope. Grateful people are aware of the negative but realize the good. The world is not as it should be. When we identify deficiencies, we have two choices; we can complain, or we can do something to change things. Discernment awakens the possibility of finding solutions and positive change. If you are discontent, look for ways to improve things rather than complain. Excuse the play on words, which tent are you willing to live in —discontent or content?

Try following this good council: "... whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things."vv

A great way to discover the life-giving power of honour is to follow the steps of a man named David. He honoured an unstable leader, failed to honour his son and hesitantly honoured his wife. We learn much from all three stories.

## **Honour Makes A Difference**

### **Honour Yourself**

The story of David begins with a moment of rejection. Samuel (the national spiritual leader) arrived unexpectedly at the house of David's father. Samuel was on a mission to appoint the next king of Israel. Jehovah had revealed to him that the future king of Israel would be one of the sons of Jesse. Samuel arrived intent on identifying that son and anointing him as the future successor to King Saul. He asked Jessie, if he could interview each son.

In haste, Jesse gathered his boys, but he assumed David was too young, so excluded him. Jessie considered David shepherd material and not a kingly candidate. One by one, the brothers appeared before Samuel, but none qualified.

Samuel inquired, "Are these all the sons you have?" Jessie replied, "There is still my youngest son" and instructed the servants to fetch David. The moment Samuel saw the young shepherd boy, he knew David was the one chosen by Jehovah. The father miscalculated his son's potential, yet Samuel discerned greatness in him and anointed David.<sup>*cvi*</sup> After his anointing, David did not forsake tending his father's sheep. He was patient. He had much to learn. It's a long journey from caring for woolly sheep to ruling a nation. Wisdom guided the preparation for his future assignment. One day David would become king. One day a shepherd of sheep would become the "shepherd" for a nation. Training proceeded promotion. Many of the lessons David learned resulted from his life intersecting with a man named King Saul. Saul would prove instrumental to the development of David's integrity.

Do you remember the story of David and Goliath? Initially, David tried to face Goliath in Saul's armour. But he realized, "I cannot go in these because I am not used to them." He decided to be himself and work with what he had proven. It's counterproductive to put on someone else's armour. If we try to be someone other than ourselves, it feels unnatural and awkward.<sup>cvii</sup> Authenticity holds the key to success. Oscar Wilde said, "Be yourself; everyone else is already taken!"<sup>cviii</sup> You are most effective when you are yourself.

Sometime after David defeated the giant Goliath, King Saul commissioned his servants to find an outstanding musician who could play in his court. One of the servants answered, 'I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the lyre. He is a brave man and a warrior. He speaks well and is a fine-looking man. And the Lord is with him.'cix Look at his resume. Do you notice the odd mix of skills? These are very different traits, yet all in the same person. Every person has a unique mixture of gifts and skills. A good analogy is a human body.

"...God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be...The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." On the contrary those parts of the body that seem weaker are indispensable, and the parts we think are less honourable we treat with special honour."<sup>xx</sup> Honour delights in personal differences. It embraces the unique attributes of each person. It acknowledges that those attributes or skills that may appear to be the least important are often most necessary. Can we afford to dishonour the one who seems least important? Who can estimate the worth of someone based on age, gender, ethnicity, training or health?

#### **Honour Strengthens**

The springbok is a gazelle-like antelope and normally very alert to predators. However, I remember watching a wildlife show that filmed two springboks fighting. Absorbed in their battle, they did not notice a lion prowling nearby, positioning himself to attack. Dishonour breeds quarrels and stirs up discord, and pride. *cxi* Vanity led to King Saul's demise. Once pride gripped him, it blinded him. If David received honour it tormented the king's cxiithoughts until it inspired irrational conduct.

While Saul sought David's downfall, his son Jonathan became David's trusted friend. As the king became more relentless in his aggression against David, Jonathan's loyalty grew stronger. Jonathan's support furnished David with the courage he needed. The storyteller says, "Jonathan's heart was knit to David for he loved him as he loved his own soul."<sup>cxiii</sup>

As an act of honour, Jonathan took off his royal robe and gave it to his friend. This bold act strengthened David's hope. The prince boldly showed favour to David by openly identifying with him. Doing so required a deliberate decision that risked Saul's rage. When Jonathan honoured David, the whole nation followed his example.

David learned from his friends' deep generosity. David became one of the most generous kings who ever ruled Israel. His capacity to honour both man and God traces back to the impact of Jonathan's kindness towards him. Years later, David asked, "Is there anyone left from the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Ziba answers the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is lame in both feet."*cxiv* David invited Jonathan's disabled son to dwell in his palace and made a special place for him at his table. He honoured Jonathan's lame son before the nation. When we give our time, talents or treasures to others, we confer value.

## **Honour Protects**

King Saul's fits of insanity forced David to flee the palace. There were years David pitched his tent in the wilderness just to live a safe distance from Saul. While David dwelt in the wilderness, a group of brave warriors rallied around him. The chronicler describes these warriors as having the faces of lions and feet as swift as gazelles on the mountains.<sup>*cxv*</sup> These comrades stood by his side like a protective wall defending him. They encouraged him. Friends honour one another by standing together. Men and women of integrity support one another as they contend with corruption. Loyalty motivates us to stand shoulder to shoulder for a common cause. Dishonour permits people to withdraw support, especially in times of adversity.

We are better together. The plight of a soldier who stands alone is perilous. David and his men honoured each other. We need people to stand with us and hold up a shield on our behalf. In the battle for integrity, it is better to engage the conflict together. Like Spartan warriors David's mighty men, gripped their shields and stood shoulder to shoulder. Lift your guard. Stand linked together. The fiercer the battle grows, the more we need one another.

## **Honour Makes Confrontation Safe**

By guarding his integrity, David built a bridge across the everwidening gap between the two men. His unrelenting integrity gave him favour with a watching nation. And in those rare moments when Saul was sane, David's loyalty regained the king's favour. One day, Saul's life lay in David's hands. David could have assassinated the king, but instead, he stealthily cut off the corner of Saul's robe, then left. In a culture of honour, a man's robe denoted identity and authority. David's actions would be like saying, may your kingdom be cut off from you. Years earlier, when Saul had disobeyed the explicit instruction of Samuel, the prophet cut a corner out of Saul's robe and told him that his rule had been torn from his hand. This was a second time that a corner of Saul's robe had been cut off. This time David's conduct implied dishonour.

After his lapse of judgement, David's heart struck him. He had dishonour, his king. That was not his intent. Therefore, David approached the king, and with humility confessed, how he restrained himself from killing his monarch. Then he held up the piece of cloth ripped from Saul's robe. With his action David declared, "My hand will not be against you." *cxvi* I am your servant now and always. You can trust me to honour you.

#### **Honour Establishes Boundaries**

King Saul's hostility threatened David's life. To avoid danger, David set boundaries. Imagine a servant setting boundaries with a powerful king. If David had failed to set appropriate boundaries, he would have fallen prey to Saul's whims. The king lacked appropriate boundaries, so the shepherd boy had to establish them. Protocol argued against a subordinate establishing boundaries with a superior. However, the other character qualities of integrity; honour, truth, trust, influence and authenticity inspired action. Both kings and shepherds need boundaries. Everyone needs a safe place to retreat, be replenished, and refocus. By establishing clear boundaries, David thrived in tough circumstances.

Look at what the historian writes following Saul withdrawing his attack on David. "So David went on his way, and Saul returned home."*cxvii* David refused to change his boundaries because, for the moment, the conflict seemed resolved. He continued to honour King Saul but maintained a safe distance. Forgiveness opened the door for restoration, but until Saul overcame his anger issues, David guarded his boundaries.

Does establishing personal boundaries dishonour others? It may feel that way, but it's just the opposite. By setting boundaries, you honour others while at the same time guarding your dignity. By communicating your boundaries, you do not push people away, but you reaffirm that your relationship rests on mutual respect. Boundaries empower healthy relationships.

However, people may struggle with the boundaries you establish. They'll test them. Sometimes they will attempt to disregard them. When that happens, you are dealing with issues of dishonour. Generally, when you communicate firm and consistent boundaries, people will accept them. Good boundaries produce better neighbours.

How do you determine boundaries in a direct culture? First, you need to identify where you need space or self-respect. Begin this process by identifying where and when you feel threatened, frustrated, violated, or resentful. Are there times someone has crossed your appropriate boundaries? Be aware that some situations may require more definite limits. Communicate your boundaries. Boundaries help create a safe environment.

Boundaries in an indirect culture help affirm individual affect in the collective identity. Individuals learn to differentiate themselves in the group without alienating themselves from the group. Indirect modes of intervention allow for boundaries. Appropriate boundaries establish honour and serve to strengthen the group.

## Honour Invests in the Next Generation

It can be uncomfortable for leaders to welcome the next generation of leaders into their sphere of influence. Many young leaders struggle to find someone who will invest in them, and mentor them. In the first edition of a cli Manual, Don Mann told of a time he met with a group of 45 leaders representing 14 African countries with oversight of more than 8,000,000 people. When Don asked them, "What do you fear about succession and passing the leadership baton to the next generation of leaders?" they said:

> We fear they will blow it. We fear they will do better than us.

We fear they will change the vision.

We fear the loss of financial security. We fear the loss of respect and influence.<sup>*cxviii*</sup>

David understood that if he honoured Jesse, his father, King Saul, his political father, and Samuel, his spiritual father, he would inherit a better future. If the next generation honours those who are now in authority, when it comes time to carry the weight of responsibility, they too will be honoured. Generally, those who show honour will receive it. What you sow you reap.

I was taught to honour my father and mother. As a boy, I learned honour was one of the ten commandments. On occasion, my parents reminded me the command contained a promise: "Honour your father and mother so that you may live long in the land..."*cxix* How do you understand the term 'in the land'? Let me suggest your land is your business, school, home, church or office.

David honoured his fathers but dishonoured his sons. A destructive offence developed between King David and Absalom his son. It escalated into one of history's ugliest family feuds. Israel's royal family became rife with division, misrepresentation, conspiracy, conflict, and misery because of it. Why did it happen? The root cause was dishonour. Eventually, family strife threatened the entire nation. The story showcases a father and son hostility. The Bible devotes multiple chapters to their growing feud. Why does scripture give so much attention to it? Because dishonour destroys. "Dishonour brings a lethal curse while honour brings life-giving blessing."<sup>cxx</sup>

Honour enables parents and grandparents to help the next generation reach their potential. In healthy families, children honour parents and parents honour their children. They practice honour when they speak to one another. Mutual honour does not guarantee success but creates a climate where success can thrive. If the older generations treat the younger as inexperienced, incompetent or immature, how will they elevate them to their potential? If the older generation fails to entrust the younger generation with responsibility, how will they become ready to handle future duties? Let the fathers encourage the emerging generations to take their role in the work of industry, the rule of government, the training of education, the vibrancy of faith, and the life of families. Young people are not just a bunch of immature kids. Each generation needs the other. Establish a foundation of honour in inter-generational relationships. As fathers and mothers equip, encourage and empower your children. Being young is meant to be a fantastic time to learn and grow.

But what if a parent has a rebellious teenager? What if parents have abused or abandoned their children? If you find yourself in either of these positions, remember the story of David and Saul. Never lose sight of the person. Continue to love and honour your family member(s). Disrespect will fuel destructive patterns. Honour protects any hope of change. Does showing honour reinforce negative behaviour? Does dishonour help motivate better action? cli encourages all participants to stand with a person who has failed. We don't reject them or treat them as outcast. Instead, help them recover. One poor decision doesn't forfeit the possibility of a life of integrity. Character can be restored!

## Honour Rebuilds the Broken

Perhaps no story illustrates the hope of restoration better than the story of Bathsheba. It's the story of stolen honour and restored honour. Bathsheba was not bathing outside to seduce King David. She was observing the Old Testament purity regulations. Since David got Bathsheba pregnant, we know she was ovulating at the time. Ovulation happens one week after menstruation stops, so Bathsheba was bathing one week after her bleeding, precisely when Jewish law required ritual bathing for a woman. The story reads, "Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness "*cxxi*. That detail alerts astute readers to an impending problem. The time of ritual bathing was the time when babies are

conceived. Bathsheba's bath was the ritual bathing of a proper lady, and not a Hollywood style pornographic scene. The text does not say she was bathing naked; she may have been partially clothed and washing from a bowl.

Bathsheba was still a teenager. Considering she was old enough to be married yet still without children, she was likely between the ages of 16 and 19 and possibly just back from her honeymoon. The prophet Nathan referred to her as a "little ewe lamb." As a young woman, she would have been unprepared to resist a king's advances.

Although she was an innocent victim, she still experienced shame. When Nathan confronted David, there was no mention or hint of Bathsheba being at fault. The prophet's finger pointed directly at David. Within one year, Bathsheba endured three significant losses: her purity, her husband and her firstborn son. The losses were substantial, especially for a young lady who now must wrestle with shame and guilt. She would have been devastated by the grief of losing her husband. Added to heartbreak was the shame. Her pregnancy probably drew condemnation from many and disrespect from all.

After the disgraceful incident with David, Bathsheba steadily returned to a place of honour. Many years later, when David was dying, Bathsheba acted nobly to ensure her son Solomon inherited the throne as promised. After Solomon became the next king, he placed a second throne beside his. Bathsheba sat at his right hand. *cxxii* The king restored her honour. Though her husband, the former king, had stripped her of honour, the current king venerated her. She moved from carrying the shame of a young girl forced to have sex with the king, to sitting at the right hand of the king, as the Queen Mother.

In his life, King Solomon wrote three books; Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. All are books of wisdom. Each book sheds further light on Bathsheba's graces. The Songs mention how

her example in marriage guided him, for she "crowned him with a wedding crown."*cxxiii* In Proverbs, King Solomon writes with a deep affection for his mother's teaching.*cxxiv* While we appreciate that Solomon's wisdom came as a gift from God, much of the application of his knowledge came from his mother.

Hidden in the genealogies of Israel's Messiah, we discover her name, the final honour conferred on Bathsheba.<sup>*cxxv*</sup> A girl who at one time, was stained by shame now becomes elevated to a place of national honour. She overcame her pain, abuse, failure and shame. Her story of restored honour extends hope to all. **Pillar of Truth** 



Dishonesty is not an acceptable policy. Honesty is the best policy.

Integrity provides the foundation for truthfulness.

Are you familiar with the term alchemy? As a medieval forerunner of chemistry, alchemy operated on the assumption that they could transform matter such as lead or copper into gold. Alchemists suggested that the process by which lead turned to gold also provided a universal elixir capable of curing all ills. Alchemy stands tall among the fraudulent claims and perpetrated hoaxes of history.<sup>cxxvi</sup>

Another kind of alchemy exists today. In this new version, alchemists suggest they can transform corruption into good and turn evil into a universal cure. It is a scam! In 2016 the Oxford Dictionaries international word was "post-truth." The definition of post-truth is: "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential than public opinion and appeals to emotions and personal beliefs.<sup>cxxvii</sup> This definition implies that in a post-truth era, people's perceptions create realities and what they believe to be valid forms of acceptable alternatives. Post-truth values instincts or aspirations more than truth. Will post-truth transform the lead of corruption into the "golden nugget" of integrity? Calling a duck, an eagle does not make it an eagle.

Trying to change the opinion around corruption does not make it right. Neither can good intentions transform the essential nature of dishonesty.

Let me give you a few thoughts about when something is a lie;

Being mistaken is not lying; lying is making a statement with intent to deceive.

Being incorrect is not lying; lying is knowingly misinforming or falsifying.

Having incomplete facts is not lying; lying withholds facts and misrepresents.

Creating a false or misleading impression is lying.

Adding to the truth, exaggerating or making up a statement is lying.

Saying one thing but doing another is hypocrisy, which is a form of lying.

The Oxford Dictionary says, "truth is conformity with fact or reality. It is verified or indisputable fact, proposition or principle." Synonyms of truth are; fidelity, honesty, veracity, integrity, accuracy and certainty."*exviii* 

I believe that any protection, pleasure, provision, power, position or possession procured under pretense can only be sustained for a short time. Dishonesty is like building your house on the sand. When the storms come, it will not stand. Corruption is no foundation at all. Integrity is the rock on which you can stand.<sup>cxxix</sup> Truth is the foundation of integrity.

When we lie, it becomes necessary to embrace our lie and defend it with our behaviour, intellect and speech. Lies enslave us. Liars choose to be liars. When confronted with a situation in which our hurtful words or actions get exposed, instinct tells us to lie or obscure the truth, to do whatever it takes to protect ourselves. The dread of having our inadequacy, incompetence or lack of moral integrity made known is enough to turn us into liars, and we thereby violate our own dignity. There is a fascinating historical account of a military commander named Joshua, who leads an invasion to recover the land owned by his forefathers. The squatter inhabitants living in the area seemed somewhat powerless against the force of Joshua's army. Even the most significant and most robust walled city fell before the might of these invaders. As a result, five city-state kings forged a coalition hoping their united force could turn back Joshua's troops. A small regional kingdom called Gibeon realized its army was no match for the approaching forces. To survive, they devised a strategy of deception, hoping to escape destruction. Brave men posed as travellers from afar. They arrived at Joshua's camp wearing threadbare sandals on their feet and tattered clothes on their bodies, carrying nothing but a few dry crusts of bread for food. They entered the military camp claiming they had journeyed from a distant country with one purpose, to make a treaty with Joshua.cxxx

They told Joshua, "Our people have heard of all your great victories. Therefore, our leaders sent us on a mission to ask you to make a covenant with us. The bread was plentiful and warm when we left. Our clothes and sandals were new. Joshua never investigated their fraudulent claims, nor did he inquire of God. Instead, he accepted their false evidence as true. The ruse worked, Joshua hastily signed a treaty which assured Gibeon that Israel would not attack them and should Gibeon come under attack, Israel would defend them.

Three days after signing a treaty with the Gibeonites, Joshua learned the messengers were next-door neighbours. Anger rose inside of Joshua. His instinct urged him to rally the troops and destroy all of them! But integrity stopped him. He would honour his word even when others had intentionally employed dishonesty. The dishonesty of Gibeon did not justify revenge. What consequences would the Gibeonites experience? Enormous consequences awaited them. The entire nation became slaves forced to work at the most menial labour for Joshua and his generation. It is true, lies enslave. The Pillar of Truth establishes that the dethroning of corruption will require an all or nothing response. There are no half-truths that become true. How long could the Gibeonites expect to cover their lie? Corruption eventually is revealed. In this case it did not take long for the ruse to be revealed.

However, significant consequences also awaited Joshua because he believed the lie. Do you know the rest of the story? Before the Gibeonites could relocate, a coalition of kings attacked them. In desperation, the men of Gibeon cried out to Joshua, "Don't let us down! Come to our rescue!" I am sure he felt an overwhelming temptation to abandon them, but again his integrity intervened. Instead, his army marched all night to come to Gibeon's defence. The next day, Joshua's forces conquered the coalition of kings. Remarkably the victory came in a day, for God honoured Joshua and his people for their trustworthiness and truthfulness.

In his excellent book about integrity, psychologist Henry Cloud says:

"Telling the truth is the first part of having an orientation toward truth. We all desire to be with honest people. The sad reality is that many do lie. In fact, depending on how we define it, most of us do, at some time or another, in some form or other... We sometimes want people to feel good, we don't want to hurt them, we don't want them to feel mad at us. But, in reality, some really good people will tell lies when it helps them."*exxxi* 

All of us face the constant challenge to be truthful. Admitting the temptation begins to disarm the internal mechanisms that trip us. Sometimes the nastiest lies are told by silence. Sometimes a half-truth creates devastating, damaging, defiling deception. Halftruths are lies. It involves self-discipline to develop the character trait of truthfulness. We can build a reputation of honesty but it takes time, personal monitoring, even peer accountability. In the end, the rewards of truthfulness are worth the effort. Dishonesty erodes the foundation provided by the other five Pillars of Integrity. Who is the first person we deceive when we lie? (Authenticity) How does a lie affect our self-worth? (Dignity) If we are dishonest will we be trusted? (Trust) What impact does lying have on relationships and leadership? (Influence) Why do we suppose lying could honour someone? (Honour) Lying affects the liar and the one deceived in a negative way.

As a boy, my parents taught me that truth is motivated by love while lying originates from fear. I know that adage is true. However, I have discovered there are many compelling temptations to lie beside the primary pull of fear. Some lies are birthed from convenience, financial gain, guilt, shame, desire for acceptance, pleasure or pressure to perform. Stop for a moment and think, "What subtle sources or strong temptations entice you to not tell a lie?"

## **Truth Helps Solve Problems**

Knowing the truth is essential. If Joshua had known the truth, the story would have gone much differently for all. Unfortunately, people have an unlimited capacity for self-deception. We like to tell ourselves the best story possible. Admitting the truth can be difficult. Human nature tends to avoid the truth. However, if we don't know the truth concerning a problem, we can't fix it. If you don't know about a medical condition you can't cure it; if you don't know about an engineering mistake you can't repair it; if you don't know the real cost how can you finance it; and if you don't see the truth how can you act appropriately? Truth solves problems.

Truth also enables you to avoid problems and go through difficulties. I had a friend who was a used car salesman. Used car salespeople have a poor reputation for honesty. As an experiment, my friend posted on the car window a list detailing all mechanical concerns known by the dealership. Interestingly, his honesty attracted customers and resulted in more sales. People preferred knowing the truth regarding what they could expect in the future, even if it wasn't good. Why side step the truth? Abraham Lincoln said, "I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth they can be depended on to meet any national crisis. The point is to bring them the real facts."*cxxxii* Truth empowers, truth encourages, truth educates, and truth establishes. As I work on this manual, Canada battles the "coronavirus" pandemic. During the Covid-19 pandemic the more truthful and transparent the communication of our leaders the more protection their knowledge provided. Our response as a people reflected our comprehension of the truth. Given the true facts, our national reaction "lowered the curve" of infection and saved countless lives. Perhaps when the crisis is long over Canadians will reflect on the lessons learned about the power of truth.

# **Truth Informs All Aspects of Life**

Suppose a father promised to take his son fishing on the weekend. The boy loves fishing. He dreamt of the event all week. During the week, he got his fishing equipment ready. When Saturday finally arrived, he awoke early, full of excitement. That morning his father came to him and said, "Son, something that demands my attention has come up, and I am sorry, maybe we can go fishing another time." For a moment, the disappointment crushed the boy, but he knew his father was a good man and consoled himself in the promise they will go fishing. As he is returning his fishing gear into storage, he saw his father placing golf clubs in the family car, then he sped away. Could words redeem his father's behaviour? The lies daddy told hurt, but the actions daddy did, destroyed. Let your words and your actions agree. Truthfulness performs the promise, even when something more appealing comes along. Truth fulfills obligations.

In our historical example, the ruse engaged both speech and conduct of the Gibeonites. To convince the General required more than words. I am sure the representatives rehearsed their speech, practiced their walk and prepared props to stage their deception. False witness demands every aspect of life is activated to support a story. Lying involved so much more than words. It can't be just speech. Statements are seldom enough; deceit must be reinforced. Why do people put their trust in lies? Will lies enable them to avoid punishment, to obtain a reward otherwise not obtainable, win admiration, escape an awkward situation, hurt people less, avoid embarrassment, hide the truth, produce a long-term solution or maintain control? But a lie is unable to fulfil what it promises. Although the truth doesn't cost anything, a lie can cost everything.

Excellent communication requires integrity. Clarity with others stems from being transparent with ourselves. People with integrity are not afraid to speak the truth even when the truth is painful. They tell the truth in love and with honour. Shelly-Baer of Integrity Based Communications writes. "there are some wonderful communication benefits of integrity: … It enables you to have a difficult conversation, it increases receiving and giving feedback, it develops confidence and high-trust, it reduces stress, and it is characteristic of top-performing teams."<sup>cxxxiii</sup>

## Truth is a Shield Against Bribery

A university professor was alone in his office marking exams when a knock came to his door. Initially, he was surprised, because almost everyone had left for the day. When he opened the door, a large angry man filled the doorway. "May I come in?" he growled. Reluctantly the professor stepped back to let the man enter.

After they had both taken a seat, the man explained the purpose of his visit. The father, he had just learned that his daughter, who enrolled in the professor's class, had been delinquent in attendance. Further to that, he learned that his daughter had not passed her final exams. The father explained how this was the source of great disappointment and embarrassment. He had come in hopes of persuading the professor to show his daughter some leniency. Then, he stood up, walked to the window and invited the professor to stand beside him. Raising his arm, he pointed out the window toward a new Mercedes Benz car. "Here are the keys, it can be yours if you agree to show my daughter mercy." Angered by this blatant bribe, the professor demanded the man leave at once. After the man had left, it took him some time to calm his emotions. As he drove home, he thought, "What if I had accepted the bribe?" My one choice could betray my integrity. He recognized all six Pillars of integrity would be compromised if he accepted the bribe. He thought:

"I would have betrayed my position and the university's standards.

I would have betrayed my values and compromised my dignity.

I would have to betray my wife's trust and lie about how I obtained a car.

I would need to create a believable story to explain the car to the faculty.

I would have dishonoured myself, the student, other students, and faculty.

I would have to appease my offended conscience and choose duplicity instead of authenticity."

As he considered the benefits found in his integrity, the old Toyota sputtered a little. It was as though the car affirmed his choice. He was content, free and ready for tomorrow.

Bribery is a technique used by many parents to get children to improve their grades, keep their rooms clean and do household chores. What's so bad about bribery? It's not hurting anyone, right? Yet on a global scale, bribery is pandemic. With more than a trillion dollars being paid in bribes worldwide each year, it's clear that corruption is a worldwide epidemic. And it's enough of a problem that legislation to combat it has become more frequent and much more robust. Even in the most benign cases, someone loses. Bribed children become adults who go through life asking, "what's in it for me?" and miss out on some of life's simple pleasures. A gift is something of value given without the expectation of return; a bribe is the same thing presented in the hope of influence or benefit. Bribery offers something desirable or something of value in exchange for getting something in return. Giving a university professor a car to obtain a passing grade for a daughter is but one example of bribery.<sup>cxxxiv</sup>

The social arguments against bribery are compelling. Unfortunately, the hearts of people who stand to gain from bribery seem impervious to the truth. In a culture of corruption, the rich get richer, and the poor get poorer. Bribery eradicates legal certainty, compromises every aspect of public administration, undermines security, allows unsafe practices, and hampers economic development. Delays increase, the more people want in on the deal. Companies suffer when leadership tolerates bribery. Quality goes down when specifications are less critical than the payoff. Bribery of government officials constitutes theft from the public. At its worst, it puts innocent people in prison and keeps criminals out of prison.<sup>cxxxv</sup>

"Extortion turns a wise person into a fool, and a bribe corrupts the heart."*cxxxvi* 

I take courage from the words of Isaiah,

"People who walk with integrity, and speak what is right, who reject gain from extortion and keep their hands from accepting bribes, who stop their ears against evil plots ... their refuge will be like a mountain fortress and their bread will be supplied and their water will not fail them.<sup>cxxxvii</sup>

## **Truth Exposes Fraud**

I wonder how many times Joshua thought back to the day when a Gibeonite fraud fooled him. He probably remembered that regretful decision all his life. Although Gibeonite slaves served the people; they did not make Israel a better place. Have you ever been fooled by a scam? Maybe it came in the form of a letter, a phone call, or a promise given by a marketer. The truth remains, if a claim is too good to be true, it is too good to be true. Unfortunately, scammers often prey on the most gullible and uninformed. They target greed, pride or fear. Generally, they demand a quick response and resist investigation. Today's scammers duplicate the strategies of the Gibeonites.

There are many types of fraud. Think for a moment; fraud exists beyond financial statements. There is mail fraud, credit fraud, internet fraud, identity fraud, insurance fraud, resume fraud, age fraud and voter fraud. New forms of fraud seem to surface regularly. What is our defence? If you have experienced fraud, learn from Joshua's example. He did several sage things that exposed and resolved the issue:

He acted swiftly.

He gathered accurate information. He addressed the problem. He guarded his integrity. He required compensation. He trusted God to help him recover.<sup>cxxxviii</sup>

# Truth is a Powerful Weapon

Truth can be a powerful weapon, so be careful how you use it. Many people assume the evidence presented them is truthful, but this isn't always the case. In our historical example, staged evidence of dry bread and tattered clothes produce a faulty conclusion. Statistics don't lie, but liars use statistics. Liars can offer the right thing but misrepresent the meaning. Truth can encourage, or it can discourage. Truth can be a powerful weapon to fight corruption, or it can be an instrument employed to advance corruption. What determines how it functions? When integrity guides the exercise of truth, it becomes a weapon for good. I like the proverb that says, "Any enterprise built by wise planning, becomes strong through common sense, and profits wonderfully by keeping abreast of the facts."*cxxxix* 

### Truth Requires Wisdom to Choose a Better Way

Truth possesses the same value as the other five Pillars of Integrity. Does honour bow to truth? No, they function together. Does truth trump trust? No, they stand side by side. All six pillars working collectively provide a solid foundation for integrity. Everyone has experienced the temptation to hurriedly activate only one pillar without taking into account the tempering effect of the other pillars. Wisdom and maturity instruct us to never assume we can omit the other pillars because, after all we are exercising one pillar. Wisdom teaches us to incorporate all six pillars, all of the time.

We know that all corruption is terrible, but not all corruption is equal. Many people try to treat each of the ten commandments as though they are the same. As a result, they get confused. Intuitively they realize that some commandments are more significant than others. Does failing to love God have the same consequence as dishonouring your parents? Does the fourth commandment, remember to keep the Sabbath holy, scale the same as the sixth commandment, don't murder? Some people question if the commandment to keep the Sabbath even applies today. Many misunderstand the importance of this command. Some don't observe it. And they certainly don't consider the Sabbath command as being on the same level as laws prohibiting theft, murder, adultery or lying.

People can point out exceptions as to when it was alright to break the Sabbath. If a doctor gets called to the hospital for an emergency on the Sabbath or if a truck driver has a trailer full of live animals to transport on the Sabbath, does the doctor or driver do nothing on the Sabbath? Inherently we know the Sabbath law is different from lying, stealing, or committing adultery. We don't criticize the soldier who is posted on the front lines for 28 days before being allowed to return to base for a week to rest. However, the need for rest, refreshment and replenishment cannot be denied. The Sabbath law helps people sustain good spiritual, physical, social and mental health. It is impossible to escape the need for a Sabbath through taking clinical, dietary, chemical, or supplements. In reality, the law of the Sabbath benefits the obedient and penalizes the disobedient.

However, the Sabbath law is not a moral law; it is a ceremonial law. When the Hebrew people left Egypt, where they had been slaves for nearly 400 years, they resettled in a "promised land." To help a group of ex-slaves establish themselves and to build a strong nation, God gave them several types of laws. First, there were civil laws that applied to safety, management of property, business practices and protection of rights. Civil Laws applied to property, contracts, capital, personal rights and relationships. Secondly, there were Moral Laws like do not steal, lie, covet, commit adultery or murder. Moral Laws defined what was right and wrong. Moral laws applied to all people all the time. Thirdly, Ceremonial laws dealt with faith and atonement. These laws explained what to do if you broke the moral rules. The Moral Laws declare it is wrong to steal. The Ceremonial Laws told how to get right with God and how to repay victims for damages.

Moral Laws exist for all time; they don't change. These laws remain foundational to integrity. However, the Civil and Ceremonial laws changed between Old and New Testaments. But the core value and essence of each command remained. Consistent obedience to the Civil and Ceremonial laws demanded a good character. Although there were three categories of law, all of the laws should be honoured and treated as relevant. People of integrity are law-abiding. They keep the commandments whether the law enforces significant consequences or minor consequences.

Are there exceptions to obeying any of the Moral Laws? Is it ever permissible to lie? I can think of stories in the Bible where someone told what seemed to be an acceptable lie. The story of Rahab tells of a prostitute who protected a group of spies. In return for her protection the spies promised to protect her on the day Israel attacked Jericho. The men handed Rahab a scarlet cord and instructed her to hang the cord from her window, on the day of Israel's invasion. She helped the soldiers escape by lying to the Jericho police. (Was it necessary for her to lie? As a prostitute deception was her default but still a questionable behaviour.) Was it her dishonesty that gained her protection or her trust in the God of Israel? Amazingly, a lying prostitute would be rescued. And later she and her family were incorporated into the full life of the nation. Was Rahab honoured for lying? No! Was she honoured for her immorality? No! She will be remembered for believing in Jehovah and hanging a scarlet chord from the balcony of her house. The Pillar of Truth does not sanction lying. Remember God's love reaches out to include dishonest, immoral people who put their faith in Him.

Another example comes in the story of the Hebrew mid-wives during the days of Moses. Despite the command of Pharaoh to kill all male babes, the mid-wives let the male children live. When Pharaoh found out, he questioned the mid-wives. They answered, "because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." The midwives gave false witness to the Pharaoh. And the Bible says, "God dealt well with the midwives ... and because the midwives feared God, he gave them families." *cxl* 

The mid-wives faced extreme circumstances. Did that justify their lie? When two commandments collide, such as do not murder and do not lie, what will you do? In this case, an evil ruler forced women into a situation where they must break one of the commandments. Which law would the mid-wives choose? Don't think this example permits people to lie whenever it serves their advantage. It's never ok to lie on your resume, to lie to cover things you have done or to avoid trouble. Lying is wrong. But faced with a choice between lying and murder, which would you choose? The fact that God dealt well with the midwives was not because they lied but because in fear of the Lord, they refused to murder babies.

God honoured them for choosing to protect lives. Did they need to lie? I leave that between them and God.

Consider the extreme circumstances, when two commandments collide, choose to obey the greatest. In the above case, protecting life and loving their neighbour would be the greater command. One of my heroes is a woman named Corrie Ten Boom. The Ten Boom family dedicated their lives in service to God and their fellow man. During the Second World War, the Ten Boom house became a refuge, and a hiding place, for fugitives hunted by the Nazis. Their non-violent resistance against Nazi-oppressors was their way of living out their faith. Yet success required a form of deception. Through their activities and those of their friends, the Ten Booms saved the lives of an estimated 800 Jews and other refugees. I consider what the Ten Booms did to save lives as a heroic act.<sup>cxli</sup>

Is there ever a time when telling the truth surpasses protecting life? Many martyrs have refused to deny their faith in God. Lying would seem a very convenient way to escape death. However, faith in God instructed their decision. To renounce faith in God would forfeit hope of eternal life. Would someone sacrifice eternal life for a temporal moment of reprieve, only to die in a few short years? Again, this is an extreme circumstance, but the principle is that life is not more important than faith. Discerning what to do when two commandments collide must be guided by the integrity of your heart.

What if a Moral Law seems obscure? For instance, what constitutes committing adultery? Is adultery as black and white as the sexual act? Was Bill Clinton's defence correct when lawyers redefined his conduct as non-sexual? Much of the world looked on and said he misused his office to escape impeachment. Consider the words of Jesus who did not confine adultery to a bed. He taught that adultery began in the heart, eyes and thoughts. Lustful thoughts often lead to sexual acts. Be on guard against lust for it destroys. Lust damages relationships, even if entertained in thought alone. How much better to stop lust while it's in the soul! When someone acts out on lustful thoughts, the actions carry horrible consequences. The law is not simply an external recommendation, to be obeyed as you wish. Integrity begins in the heart and provides an antidote for corruption.

Keeping the law improves life while breaking the law diminishes life. The question is not, can I break the law and get away with it, but how can I build a healthier, more loving, more stable society. The Pillar of Truth challenges us to pursue whatever is good. Get as far away from compromise as you can. Integrity doesn't give a license to see how close to the fire of corruption we can get without being burned.

When I was a boy, I heard people say, "all sin is equal to God." Intuitively, I knew that was not necessarily the case on the earth side of eternity. All corruption is bad, but not all corruption has the same after-effect. If all sin was equal, why didn't God or man assign all evil the same penalty? Some corruption is more destructive. Yet all corruption has bad consequences.

#### **Truth Restricts the Spread of Corruption**

Given that not all corruption has the same consequence does the lower impact of what we might consider lesser offences lull us into apathy. Why do we create a hierarchy of evil? Truth causes us to have an appropriate fear of all corruption. Take, for instance, the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet."<sup>cxlii</sup> Why this Moral Law is even included among the ten? The reason coveting concludes the law may be because it acts as the root cause behind breaking the laws that proceed it. Where does adultery begin?

You don't commit adultery unless you first covet. Where does stealing originate? It would be rare for someone to steal something they didn't desire. Coveting leads to quarrels, anger and fights. What started out as small and insignificant grew until it became massive. Sometimes unmet desire leads to murder.<sup>cxliii</sup> The wise person avoids corruption, whether in minor things or crucial things.

Lies don't remain alone, lies populate. Dishonesty spreads like a

virus. One false statement ignites another. To cover the first lie, tell a second. You must tell another lie tomorrow, for the lie you told today.<sup>*cxliv*</sup> Lies contaminate many aspects of the character. The false assumption that has destroyed far too many is, compromise affects only one area of character. In this chapter, we learned that coveting was the root cause of many acts of corruption and dishonesty. Coveting proliferates. Lies defile character. It dissolves into the whole glass of water. Corruption does not remain in tablet form; it saturates its environment.

## **Truth Doesn't Fear Exposure**

Corruption will be exposed. Mark Twain said, "If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything."<sup>cx/v</sup> Lies beget more lies. The more you attempt to cover deception, the more complicated it gets. Sooner or later, the story breaks down, and the lie gets exposed. How long did the ruse of the Gibeonites last? Before the ambassadors got home to report the success of their deception, Joshua's intelligence service had already found out. Corruption will be uncovered. When it happens, there are negative consequences. By contrast, truth welcomes investigation. Integrous people do not fear examination. A wall of a building that has integrity has no cracks. A building inspector can approve it. The root meaning of integrity means 'whole' or 'undivided.' People of good character don't mind accountability.

## **Pillar of Authenticity**



Authenticity Establishes Your True Self Without authenticity, people struggle to know who they are or why they exist. With authenticity, people discover their true selves and learn why they exist.

*We are not who we are; we are not even who we think we are, we are who we think other people think we are.*<sup>*cxlvi*</sup>

We live in a world full of copies and counterfeits. In my travels around the globe, I have gone to markets to buy items such as sports jerseys, phones, sunglasses, artwork and jewelry. For each item, there are numerous imitations and a variety of qualities available. Therefore, before I make a purchase, I ask, "Is this genuine?" Generally, I check to see if the business displays a sign of government accreditation or a business license verifying its legitimacy. In the back of my mind, I have a nagging conundrum, "Is the Certificate of Authenticity a forgery?"

The word authenticity conveys a muddled message. Sometimes people who are unconventional or outspoken are hailed as authentic. Such people semi- defiantly display their style while brashly voicing unorthodox opinions. People regard them because of their nonconformity and independence. Does unfiltered behaviour guarantee authenticity? Unrestrained flamboyance may reflect a style, but it is not necessarily an expression of integrity. Children tend toward authenticity. Young children function with simplicity and express themselves openly without hiding their true selves. Hiding real emotion or thoughts is a behaviour learned as we grow into adulthood. As individuals mature, they feel mounting pressure to hide their real self. As children, if we were afraid, we openly said, "I'm scared," or took our parent's hand. If we were not feeling well, we'd say, "I'm sick." During puberty, we become image-conscious and tend to exchange authenticity for image management. Our simple life becomes more complicated. Higher education increases the temptation to project a culturally acceptable image. As pressure to conform mounts, people pretend to be someone they're not and lose their true selves.

How do we develop integrity in a selfie culture? After taking a cell phone picture of oneself, most people use filtering apps to reimage their photos before posting them. Filters remove blemishes, soften tones, adjust brightness, take away red-eyes and even remove double chins. We expect enhanced selfies, but pretense is unacceptable in healthy relationships. Many people filter who they are. The real person gets re-imaged because they fear a failure to measure up to perceived expectations. Fear of rejection lurks behind image-consciousness and brand identification. The need for acceptance produces extensive waste of emotional energy. What if I don't have the right hashtag? It needs to be smart, but not too clever; it needs to be right but not looking as if you're trying too hard. If you feel awkward, hire an image coach. But how can you polish your image if you don't know who you are? Integrity doesn't photoshop the truth. It provides appropriate filters but insists on the honest, genuine, real you.

Uncle Zeke lived in Zambia. He enjoyed visiting his good friend, who ran a blacksmith shop. The two men had been friends since boyhood. One day, his friend was working on a horseshoe. He put the shoe in the fire, pulled it out and hammered it, then put it back into the coals, only to pull it out to pound on it again. Frustrated, he realized the metal would not cooperate. He tossed the hot horseshoe on the floor. A moment later, Uncle Zeke walked into the blacksmith shop. He saw the horseshoe, picked it up and instantly dropped it. The Blacksmith looked over his glasses and said, "Too hot, is it, Zeke?" Zeke responded, "No, it doesn't take me long to judge a horseshoe."

I've always liked that story. Many of us try to behave like Uncle Zeke. Instead of admitting the dumb thing we just did, we pretend nothing happened. We cover our mistakes. I wonder if Zeke suffered from burnt fingers because of his pride. If Zeke had been authentic in his response, it might have brought laughter among friends but also a chance to treat his burnt fingers. Authenticity is a better response.

#### **Authenticity Gives Strength**

In the book, Joni and Ken: An Untold Love Story, Ken Tada admits that at times he grows weary of taking care of Joni. Many consider Ken an unusually good man to lovingly care for his quadriplegic wife the way he does. Joni adores him because he willingly adjusts his life to hers much more than she conforms to his. Ken admits, "It hasn't always been easy."cxlvii There are times Ken wants to get away from it all. Yet his vulnerability and openness concerning his struggles keep the problems benign. It gives Ken strength, lifts the weight of guilt from his soul, and brings perspective. When Ken admits his weakness, the emotional pressures pent up inside release, and he has new courage to go on.

Authenticity requires truthfulness. Honesty about your strengths and weaknesses creates a genuine community. The Pillar of Authenticity challenges the idea that people will only be attracted to others if they are good enough, fast enough, strong enough, or smart enough. Did you know that weakness and vulnerability often draw people together?

# **Authenticity Creates Trust**

One day I was playing golf with a man who had just started attending the church I pastored. During the round, we chatted about life and family. He began with the usual get-acquainted questions. As our conversation deepened, he asked, "When did you learn about faith?" I replied that I had grown up in a pastor's home. He was curious about what my life had been like as a pastor's kid. He kept probing into my personal story. Had I experienced any heartbreak or significant difficulties? I told him about a brother-in-law who had recently left his wife. As I shared my pain, I noticed a slight grin on his face. Then he responded, "That's great!" It seemed so inappropriate. I asked him what he meant. He replied, "If you are going to be my pastor, I need to know if you understand what it's like to have real problems or battle with temptation. If you are going to be my spiritual mentor, I need to know if you can empathize with me. Understanding you can identify with my struggles enables me to trust your teaching."

A pastor faithfully served in a small mining town. One dark rainy night, the mine siren howled, and the entire community knew that sound meant there had been an underground disaster. Everyone rushed to the mine. Families stood in the cold, wet darkness awaiting a word on the fate of fathers and sons who had been underground.

A newspaper reporter arrived with his cameraman. As he set up, the pastor stood among the families. He hugged and encouraged them. At one point, he gathered several fearful families together and prayed with them. The reporter noticed this tender moment. He wanted to capture it on camera, but the camera had frozen. Before the cameraman could get his camera working again, the pastor finished his prayer.

Impressed by what he watched the reporter approached the pastor. He explained who he was and that his camera had frozen during the prayer. He asked, "Will you pray again for the camera?" The pastor answered, "I have prayed, I will not pose. I am doing this because my heart breaks for my friends." We need a generation of men and women who will live without duplicity, who will not look for a photo opportunity.

#### **Authenticity Grows Community**

Hypocrisy proves destructive to us and those we love. Rick Warren says, "There are two great confessions in the Bible." One of them is Peter's Confession, "You are the Christ."*extviii* This profound confession builds faith. The second is Paul's Confession, "We too are only men, human like you." Many believers agree with Peter's confession but are cautious about claiming Paul's confession. We are more interested in promoting our virtues than admitting our weaknesses.cxlix Why deny our humanness? In building relationships, trying to appear super-human proves impossible and harmful. A lack of vulnerability pushes other people away.

Too often, we hide our pain, cover our sins, and deny our weaknesses. We foolishly tell ourselves that if we repeat positive words, pray strong prayers and project a positive image, our concerns will disappear. Pretending all is well when it is not provides a formula for depression, burnout, anxiety, temptation, doubt or frustration. Attempts to elude the truth, escape accountability or avoid an awkward moment, only postpones the inevitable. What was once manageable gets out of control.

Being disingenuous deactivates the soul's security system. Centuries ago, people used clay pots to cook and store food. Occasionally during the kilin baking process, a thin crack formed in the clay vessel. If the crack was small, rather than throw the pot away, the potter applied a waxy substance to fill the crack. Then he painted a glaze on top of the wax. The word insincere became the industry term for a modified cracked vessel. Insincere pottery had limited use. The proverb says, "Insincere talk that hides what you are thinking is like a fine glaze on a cheap pot."<sup>cl</sup>

# **Authenticity Inspires Vitality**

Knowledge of the true self is central to integrity. The Messiah realized his purpose because he knew who he was and what he was born to accomplish. Regardless of our culture, when we acknowledge true-self it helps us to manage who we are, empowers us to embrace our origin, and enables us to pursue our destiny. Awareness of true-self is foundational to life. William Shakespeare put it this way, "Above all — to thine own self be true, and it must follow as night follows day, thou canst not then be false to any man."<sup>cli</sup> It is impossible to be true to yourself until you know who you are. Authenticity demands self-awareness.

Corruption can steal the resources and compromise the security of a person, tribe or nation. Sometimes people live far below their potential because they have adopted a beggar's mindset. A beggar mentality is similar to a poverty mentality. Adopting a beggar mentality absolves personal responsibility. It looks to and expects that others will provide. It refuses to accept personal accountability. Just as failing to use your abilities can rob individual potential, failing to develop your resources can restrain the growth of a business or nation. Many nations possess abundant resources and tremendous opportunities, yet they are impoverished. Often national poverty can be explained because leaders operate from a beggar's mentality. Instead of organizing for a productive future, they conduct themselves like beggars depending on others to survive. Imagine what could happen if those countries realized their potential. Seize the future in terms of resources, skills, and people; chose to engineer a new tomorrow. When there is a great opportunity, it is negligent not to try. Seize the way out of under-development!

True personal identity requires healthy self-awareness. Knowing who you are and accepting who you are can inspire people to dream dreams and achieve them. It eliminates excuses for tolerating the way things are. Don't allow your origins or background to block your future achievements. Capitalize on your distinctiveness and roots. When we know who we are, we will find a way to overcome marginalization.

### **Authenticity Provides Guidance**

One disruptive consequence of living without authenticity is a loss of direction. Deception blurs the vision of who I am and distorts goals and dreams. The longer the inauthenticity lasts, the more personal disorientation develops, and more people could be described as sleep-walkers. May authenticity awaken us from our slumber and enable us to discover who we are and can become.

At one time, sailors depended on the North Star for guidance. Charting their location in relation to the North Star enabled the captain to chart the course to their destination accurately. In the same way, every individual needs the guiding light of authenticity to direct them. In the book, True North, Bill George explains the importance of the soul's true north. He helps readers chart their life direction by discovering their true north. If the North Star established navigational wisdom to sailors, then following the true inner north of the soul provides accurate perception to navigate the oceans of life.<sup>*clii*</sup>

Navigation requires that you know where you are and where you want to go. Bill George explained that a person's true north points to who they are at the deepest level. It embraces deeply held beliefs, values and the principles governing choices. Living with sustained passion requires finding your true inner north. Once you understand it, map your life journey accordingly.<sup>*cliii*</sup> There are many temptations, distractions, and pressures to pull you off course. Only staying the course leads to contentment. Avoid getting detoured by the seduction of wealth, fame, power or pleasure. Avoid yielding to social pressures to conform or to fulfill the expectations of others. Avoid projecting a false, filtered fabricated image. Being successful without being authentic slowly empties the soul. We need to follow the true north of our souls as assuredly as ancient sailors trusted the guidance from the North Star.

Do you truly know who you are? Do you need a navigational assistant to guide you? Struggle provides one of the most common and reliable GPS readings for the soul. Difficulty turns on our guidance systems. We all go through challenging experiences. It is during those tough crucible moments that we definitely discover our true north. Adversities such as a heart attack, financial setback, a broken marriage or job loss forces people to identify what truly matters.

I recall talking with a woman who was celebrating her 10th anniversary as a cancer survivor. She learned of her cancer just before she completed her teacher's degree. Cancer challenged her in every way. It forced her to ask "true north" questions. She said, "The most demanding thing for me was not surgery, nor was it the radiation treatments, but answering life's essential question, 'What truly matters? Was what I lived for meaningful or meaningless? How important was money or career? Indeed, I wanted to do well and be healthy. But my life could not be measured in material things or defined by other people's opinions. Cancer helped me discover what was essential and worthwhile. I found who I was. I gained my true self".<sup>cliv</sup>

A means of self-discovery that I highly recommend is a personal retreat. Life gets busier and busier until the demands become so intense that pressures cloud the true north. The faster life moves, the more important it is to stop to check your position occasionally. From time to time, we all need to step off the whirling treadmill for a moment. Create a quiet time to rest, think, reflect, walk, pray, read, write and dream. Don't confuse a personal retreat with a vacation. A personal retreat is lifegiving and replenishing. Sometimes vacations provide a sample of the benefit of a personal retreat. Generally, people return from a holiday feeling refreshed and refocused. Imagine if the time spent in a retreat resulted in reorientation, reaffirmation, reestablishment, re-organizing, re-energizing and refreshing. Unlike the benefits of a holiday which disappear quickly, the value of a personal retreat remain long afterward.

Be intentional. Do it. At the minimum start with a half-day of uninterrupted solitude. Get alone. Find a place. You may have to work hard to clear your calendar and seize the time. However, your investment in a personal retreat will handsomely repay. You will get far more benefit from 3 or 4 days then you will from one day. Your personal retreat will not only repay you with tremendous dividends but also those around you.

#### **Authenticity Makes A Difference**

People who find their true north will make a difference in their circle of influence and beyond. Notice how Ted Kennedy, in his eulogy for his brother Robert, underlines the potential of each person to make a difference; "Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. It is from countless diverse acts of courage and a strong effort that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal his actions to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope..."clv

Living with integrity impacts the formation of your world. There was a group of men who started with exceptionally high integrity. They zealously devoted themselves to a lifestyle of virtue. Initially, the name of their group was synonymous with goodness, kindness and trustworthiness. Over time their character morphed, and their reputation declined. Without maintaining their moral moorings, they slowly drifted into corruption. In time they became the selfappointed judges of rightness. One day as they attempted to control a rabbi and scrutinize his message, he turned on them. He publicly called them out, confronting them for their pretentiousness. He exposed their hypocrisy. How had this group drifted so far from their original purpose? Part of the answer lies in the fact that they lost true north. The rabbi's accurate indictments against them hit hard. They preached well but lived differently. As the rabbi produced evidence of fraudulent faith, they faced a life altering choice. Were they prepared to admit their corruption, or would they aggressively seek to silence this antagonist? Repentance, restoration and recovery, were available but only with humility and sacrifice. The sect refused to pay the price.

Over time the name of this political and religious sect became synonymous with hypocrisy. According to the Oxford English dictionary, pharisaical means "marked by hypocritical censorious self-righteousness."<sup>clvi</sup> There are pharisaical tendencies in all of us; we say one thing but practise another.

As I conclude this chapter, I will examine the Pharisee's loss of authenticity. Hopefully, we can learn what caused their slow moral drift from integrity. To measure the distance the Pharisees drifted away from integrity, let's listen in as rabbi Jesus presents the evidence.clvii This story reads like documents for impeachment. The confrontation is unparalleled in literature. The rabbi's words drew back any religious veil hiding the truth and exposed a small-minded fearful group of men who desperately clung to Machiavellian style power. Jesus turned the tables on this judicial bunch and before a large crowd addressed their hypocrisy.

The rabbi brought warning after warning. He lamented the farreaching destructive consequences their corruption imposed on both spiritual and social life. Each woe delivered by the rabbi landed like a boxer's punch to the chin. The accusations stung consciences. Each statement hit the target. For almost three years, the Pharisees deliberately refused to heed the rabbi's teachings. Now it was time for a final intervention. Only radical character surgery could remove the life-threatening blockage to their hearts. Without an intervention, it was just a matter of time before corruption would depose them from power; self-destruction was eminent.

The word hypocrite comes from the theatre. Actors put on theatrical masks to play a role. The word hypocrite originally meant a good actor and related to theatrical skill, not moral goodness. Actors held up a comedy mask, recited humorous lines, and the crowd roared with laughter. Then the same actor slipped off the stage and returned with a tragedy mask and spoke lines of melancholy, causing the audience to weep. Hypocrites played their role convincingly. It was a show, each mask defined the actor's behaviour.

Today people who hide behind behaviour masks or resist authenticity are considered hypocrites. Their lives are simply a performance. Perhaps you have watched a movie and seen an actor portray a strong, loving parent, only to read later how that actor faced legal charges for child abuse. Integrity assures that the lifestyle of the person on and off stage are identical.

The Pharisees acted as though they were models of integrity. They claimed intimacy with God and felt entitled to His favour. They worked hard to maintain power and deceive people. Instead of laying a foundation of integrity, they cunningly crafted a ruse. The chart below outlines the Pharisee's drift away from integrity. They started securely moored to the six Pillars of Integrity. Over time they cast off the lines of character and slowly drifted away from integrity.

Started with	Slow Drift	Ended with
Integiry		Corruption
Helped others		Hurt Others
Provided houses		Devoured Houses
Protected		Destroyed
Kept Promises		Broke Promises
Majored on		Majored on the
Priorities		Minors
Generosity		Greedy

*They abandoned the Pillar of Influence.* Awful things happen when people forsake their moral moorings. When the Pharisees started, they were a trustworthy, influential, powerful religious group. You might compare them to today's political insiders. They exerted considerable pressure on Rome to ensure the Hebrew people fulfilled their obligations of the Mosaic Law. They enriched the lives of others and furnished them with hope. But over time, power corrupted them. By the time of our story, instead of advocating for others, these legalists contravened human rights. They had let go of the *Pillar of Influence*. It meant the people who they were responsible for helping, now experienced impoverishment and oppression and often at their hands.<sup>clviii</sup>

*They abandoned the Pillar of Trust.* Initially, the Pharisees defended the poor and disadvantaged. However, as corrupt practices set in, instead of giving aid from collections, the Pharisees consumed the majority of what they collected. Most of what they gathered, they devoured with administration costs and they justified their misappropriations of funds. They benefited while the poor remained vulnerable and impoverished. Instead of extending mercy, they withheld it. Rather than use the law to protect, they turned the law into a weapon of oppression. They placed heavy burdens on people that were too great to bear. Their actions were calculated, cruel and callous. They became indifferent to the plight of people. Corruption hurts people; it did then, and it does today.<sup>clix</sup>

*They abandoned the Pillar of Honour.* For years, the Pharisee's reputation was above reproach. Anyone who followed them learned the upright ways of honour, justice, truth and dignity. However, when the Pharisee's untethered themselves from the Pillar of Honour, they withheld honour from others while demanding excessive honour be given to them. They camouflaged demeaning practices by erecting complex, spiritual codes, which neither they nor their disciples could keep. They created rigid rankings to determine who had earned honour. They stopped offering life-giving encouragement and justified criticism as a way to coerce people to obey. Honour became a badge of distinction but also a weapon for disgrace. As experts in the law, they attempted to convince that their new way would prove superior, but it was crooked and doomed to failure.<sup>clx</sup>

*They abandoned the Pillar of Truth.* The rabbi reminded the Pharisees that when they broke promises and sabotaged relationships. These specialists in the law found loopholes to break almost any contract.clxi A calculated pledge became as strong as the thing invoked to secure the pledge. None of their pledges could be trusted. At first, a Pharisee's word stood as a bond, a handshake sealed the commitment, and their character backed any contract. Later, commitments were made rashly and broken easily. When mistrust replaced the Pillar of Truth, everything imploded. Julian Lennon, the son of the famous Beatle John Lennon, said this about his father, "Dad was a hypocrite. He could talk about peace and love to the world, but he could never show it to his wife and son."<sup>clxii</sup>

*They abandoned the Pillar of Dignity.* Somehow the Pharisees assumed that giving great attention to small details justified blatant disregard for the important things. They argued that doing something good in one area counter-balanced a failure to do good in another. Pharisees exercised camel-sized passion for the gnat-like issues. They kept extensive accounts insisting on absolute accuracy in the smallest things while displaying a gnat-sized passion for huge matters of justice and compassion. When they let go of the Pillar of Dignity, it wasn't long before history recorded them defrauding and abusing others. The rabbi never criticized them for giving attention to detail, but he called them out for neglecting the weightier issues of justice, mercy and faithfulness. Justice upholds what is right; mercy applies truth with kindness. The Pharisees grew indifferent to the plight of others. Hypocrisy desensitized them and blurred their perspective. *clxtili* 

*They abandoned the Pillar of Authenticity.* Nobody had more concern about external appearances than the Pharisees. They expended considerable effort and expense to be noticed but little energy on the deeper internal issues of the heart. If an integrity movement focuses only on external performance or posted policy, it is doomed to failure. True integrity lives in the heart. It is "in-tegrity". Authenticity requires that the inside of the cup be as clean as the outside. What would bother you more, going to work with your hair out of place or your attitude in the wrong place? What do you consider as more serious, a stain on your dress or a stain on your character? The pillar of authenticity requires attention to both the internal and external life. Hypocrisy endorses fraudulent behaviour.<sup>clxtv</sup>

The final accusation the rabbi laid against the Pharisees was they let go of their authenticity. Hypocrisy slowly produces moral cataracts that blind people to their wickedness. The Pharisees became blinded to their corruption. They decorated the tombs of the same prophets their fathers killed and boasted, "If we had lived in the day of our fathers, we never would have killed those prophets."*clxv* However, less than a month after these clear warnings, the Pharisees carried out a heinous plot to kill the greatest prophet of all! Without conscience, they demanded the Romans crucify an innocent man, yet on the same day, they zealously guarded their ceremonial cleanness by refusing to enter into Pilate's house. They plotted and carried out the condemnation of an innocent man without even a blush of shame. But they considered themselves just; after all, they followed the letter of the law. Even if they imposed the codes for a destructive end, they could rationalize their conduct.

What are the results of living without authenticity? The example of the Pharisees teaches us that hypocrisy hurts people, undermines hope, breaks trust, is indifferent to the plight of others, endorses fraudulent behaviour and blinds people to their wickedness. History records countless examples of groups and individuals whose story parallels the account of the Pharisees. When anyone casts off the moorings of integrity, they drift towards a sea of corruption.

How often do leaders offer what appears to be an authentic solution, yet in time their plans prove corrupt? The example of the Pharisees should challenge us to live authentically. Let's make things different.

# **Authenticity Produces Wholeness**

Can you claim one aspect of your character is intact while another part is faulty? Can your character be divided into compartments? You are the sum of every part. As a boy in math class, I learned an integer is a whole number, not a fraction. The first meaning of the word integrity derives from the word integer 'whole'. My fingers are integers, and I want to keep them whole. A decimal point is unnecessary behind a whole number. Integrity applies not just to a fraction of life but to all of life.<sup>*clxvi*</sup>

The second definition of integrity is: authentic. It means you're the real deal. You're not fake or a fraud. You won't pretend. You're not an imitation or trying to be something you're not. You are who you appear to be. If you have authenticity, your character is the same everywhere, whether you are alone, with your family, the team, your friends, a priest or a politician.<sup>clxvii</sup>

The third meaning for integrity is: not mixed or diluted.<sup>*clxviii*</sup> I have visited countries where local merchants sell inferior petroleum because they add substances. Vendors compromise the fuel's quality by supplementing things like kerosene, which lowers the octane quality of gas and decreases the performance of an engine. Mechanics tell me a mixture like this eventually damages a motor. Integrity means nothing compromised, it's a pure product. King David longed to have the integrity of character that grew out of a "pure heart." He said, "Integrity is my source of joy and my greatest resource." May it be yours as well.<sup>*clxix*</sup>

INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# **Benefits of Integrity**



If I could teach only one value to live by, it would be this: "Success will come and go, but integrity is forever.<sup>clxx</sup>

I'll never forget his story. Months earlier, he had refused to falsify a statement for work performed. His employer demanded that he present the customer a fraudulent invoice or risk termination. Although he needed employment, he could not submit a bill for services he had not provided or parts he had not installed. Despite intense pressure, he maintained his integrity. But he lost his job.

The next few months proved very difficult as he tried to find new employment. The scenario of his termination played over and over in his mind. What if I had been willing to lie just once? Yet he knew it wouldn't have been just once. In his heart, he was glad he preserved his integrity. Then something unexpected happened. The police charged his former employer, along with the employee who replaced him, with fraud. If he had sacrificed his integrity for the sake of employment, he too would be facing criminal charges.

The week of his former employer's arrest, a large company recruited him for a managerial position. During the interview, he asked, "Why are you interested in me?" Their answer startled him, "We are looking for someone with proven integrity to come and manage our people..." Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.<sup>clxxi</sup>

As I conclude this manual I invite you to consider the 10 benefits of integrity. There are many, more benefits than the ten that I list here. I encourage you to create your own file. All ten benefits that I share are readily available to anyone who practices integrity.

# 1. Social Benefits

Living with integrity has many social benefits. Research suggests that authentic people are well-liked. They attract support from others. Like grapes of a good vine, relationships with integrity produce clusters of refreshing, nourishing, life-giving fruit. Integrity grows quality friendships. If you think about it, you and easily create a list of positive social benefits from healthy relationships with others.<sup>clxxii</sup>

Not surprisingly, integrity makes romantic relationships more meaningful. Romance is not blind to the importance of character. Did you know that behaving with integrity has a high appeal to a potential romantic partner? When individuals listed the most desired qualities in a romantic partner, honesty and trustworthy always appear near the top of the list.<sup>clxxiii</sup>

It is essential to realize that people pay attention to the people you choose to associate with, and they inevitably judge your character by the character of your friends. Benjamin Franklin said, "He who lieth down with dogs, shall rise up with fleas."*clxxiv* We become like the people with whom we surround ourselves. If we surround ourselves with dishonest people who are willing to cut corners to get ahead, then we'll find ourselves drawn towards that behaviour. First, we endure the behaviour then accept it, and finally adopt it.

A word of advice to those who are building a reputation of integrity; avoid those who are not trustworthy. Do not partner with untrustworthy enterprises. Do not make excuses for them. Do not allow yourself to be fooled into believing that. "While they may be dishonest with others, they will never be dishonest with me." If someone is dishonest in one aspect of their life, you can guarantee they will also be compromised in another aspect of life. You cannot dismiss the little acts of dishonesty, such as the person who takes two newspapers from the stand when they paid for one. After all, if a person acts dishonestly in the most straightforward matters, how can they possibly be trusted with complex issues or in personal relationships?

If you want enjoyable friendships with people who will enrich and encourage you to reach your destiny, then surround yourself with people of integrity. Integrity is the key to a meaningful and regretfree social life.

### 2. Psychological Benefits

A clear conscience enables you to live in the present without being preoccupied mentally or emotionally by your past. Guilt can haunt. What is hidden will eventually be exposed. But you don't need to be held hostage by regrets from the past. Integrity admits personal failure, and that leads to remorse and repentance, which results in forgiveness and restoration. Although facing your failure may seem threatening, it is far less daunting than dealing with the harsh consequences awaiting the discovery of corruption. Owning responsibility precedes any change in conduct or character. Those who acknowledge their failure before others discover it are much more likely to rehabilitate and to embrace integrity. Guilt, shame and fear seldom result in sustained character change. The fear of getting caught may be a good deterrent, but it is a terrible remedy.

Repentance is a valuable gift. The forgiven know the benefit of a clear conscience, joy, peace, love and contentment. Psychologists have discovered that habits of integrity establish emotional freedom. It explains why a man of integrity walks confidently and securely.<sup>clxxv</sup> Honesty is a wonderful gift. Integrity keeps promises and shuns rash pledges. It commits to doing what it promised without excuse. The psychological impact of keeping your promises is powerful. You strengthen your dignity, trust, honour, influence and truthfulness. Integrity takes ownership of character formation.

# 3. Financial Benefits

There is compelling evidence that conducting business with integrity bears a positive financial return. If a customer doesn't trust the salesperson, it is unlikely they will make the purchase. Business owners understand that implemented values not only help attract the right customers but also keep the right employees.

Integrity may be the x-factor of success. A study done in 2000 of hotel employees with a higher than average employee integrity rating, discovered that this one value translated into a \$250.000 US profit increase per hotel per year.clxxvi Another study done in 2015 concluded that trust and integrity make good business sense. Researchers found that CEOs whose company employees gave them high marks for character had a corporate average return on assets of 9.35% over two years, compared with companies whose CEOs had a low character rating and averaged only 1.93%. *clxxvii* What company can afford a CEO who lacks integrity?

Business coaches recognize that teamwork depends on each member trusting the others. Integrity inspires cooperation. Teamwork makes the dream work. It evokes collaboration as a unified team has capacity for bigger and more significant projects. Integrity enhances business contracts, student enrolments, church giving levels and media subscriptions. Good character pays dividends in terms of personal and corporate remuneration. The fact is integrity improves the bottom line.

Corruption promises short term gain and produces long term pain. Whether in business, government, church, or sports, arts, media or entertainment (s.a.m.e.) combating fraud and bribery requires a commitment from everyone in the organization. Ethical operations ensure long term success. It protects reputation, avoids loss due to litigation and creates a productive community of trust. "The honest will inhabit the land, and those with integrity will remain in it, but the wicked will be cut off from the land and the treacherous will be rooted out of it."*clxxviii*  A lack of integrity de-motivates. Companies lacking a healthy culture have employees who waste time, resources and energy. Compare those companies to ones with a culture of integrity. Workplace productivity increases the number of salary hours worked increases, as does the level of employee performance. Integrity creates the diligence necessary for proper maintenance of equipment. It also minimizes loss due to carelessness and theft.

#### 4. Benefit of Sustainability

Profits without integrity are short-term and unsustainable. Profits with integrity are sustainable. They build and grow. Rather than giving a one-time benefit, the returns on integrity are ongoing. Sustainability is the by-product of integrity.

Honesty is like the oil in an engine. It keeps the motor of life running smoothly. Without clean oil, the motor breaks down. Integrity sustains operations. Warren Buffet, Chairman and CEO of Berkshire-Hathaway said, "In looking for people to hire, look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if they don't have the first one, the other two will kill you."*clxxix* Dishonesty eventually catches up with people. It may not be today or for many years, but at some point, there will be a reckoning. Those who walk without integrity will be exposed.

Why do the wicked increase in power? People can gain power quickly and easily if they are willing to cut corners or act without moral constraints. We can all think of people who lacked integrity yet were successful, and some never seemed to get caught. These examples create a false perception that corruption offers success. However, corruption is an unforgiving taskmaster whose relentless demands for payment never disappear. Dishonesty may offer a short-term escape, but it will never last. Sooner or later, what a person sows they will reap. If they don't glean it now, then their children or those around them will one day pay.

# 5. Benefit of Direction

King Solomon said, "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them."<sup>clxxx</sup> Integrity provides a reliable inner guidance system for big and small decisions. The more you follow the direction supplied by integrity, the more you learn to rely on its trustworthiness. "The integrity of the upright delivers them, but the treacherous are taken captive by their lust."<sup>clxxxi</sup>

Do you remember the illustration of Joseph, who resisted the strong enticement to commit adultery? He predetermined his moral values. There is an indisputable advantage to sexual fidelity. A moment of lust cannot compare with a lifetime of love. Everyone must choose between lust and love! A person cannot have both; lust will devour love or love will disallow lust. Studies have compared the joy and satisfaction gained from a moment of promiscuous sex to the satisfaction achieved from a life of committed intimacy. Individuals faithful to their spouse score as the happiest most contented. *clxxxii* Intense sexual satisfaction is sustainable in marriage. Sexual appetite satisfied by a love that engages the whole person far surpasses glandular pleasures. Physical intimacy should be shame-free and without the emptiness. Experimental or casual sex cannot compare to true love.

The path that leads away from integrity has a gentle, often imperceptible descent. However, integrity erects signposts on the road of life. Signs alert the driver to dangers and give them direction. If drivers disregard a sign put up by governments, they drive at their peril. Integrity is the internal government that erects signs along the road of life for our protection.

# 6. Benefit of Loyalty

A comment concerning untrustworthy conduct spreads like wildfire. Integrity produces loyalty in all relationships. If someone trusts you, they will spread the word. The best endorsement is a word of mouth testimony. It builds reputation. The value attached to trustworthiness is immeasurable. Reliability produces loyalty for businesses, governments, churches and schools. Remove trust and loyalty disappears. Investors seek reliable advisors for the investment of their resources. Managers will offer employees additional responsibility and growth opportunities. Healthy companies foster loyal customers. Pastors who demonstrate integrity have congregations who follow them.

### 7. A Good Character

Integrity assumes responsibility for the growth of good character. It is a commitment, not a preference. Integrity begins with small daily decisions, which become habits, and over time, mould character. If you compromise your honour in small situations with low consequences, then you will easily compromise in the more significant cases where the outcomes are immense. The most important task of good parenting is shaping a child's character. Integrity formation is far more important than so many things on which parents spend excessive amounts of time and money.

We all need coaching to develop good character. Who is your mentor or role model? Why did you choose them? If your mentor is courageous, you will be courageous. If they are honest, you will be a person of honesty. The most excellent example I follow is Jesus Christ. When I hear someone say, "You have a Christ-like attitude," that is my highest compliment.

#### 8. A Lasting Reward

Isaiah, a man with significant socio-political influence in the Babylonian Empire, made the following observation:

"The corrupt within the city are rightly terrified; the selfish are at their wit's end: 'Who among us can survive...this firestorm? The answer's simple: Live right, speak the truth, despise exploitation, refuse bribes, reject violence avoid evil amusements. This is how you raise your standard of living! Create a safe and stable way to live and develop a nourishing, satisfying way to live."<sup>clxxxiii</sup> Integrity builds the standard of living, creates a stable life pathway and unfolds a satisfying, contented way to live. Jon Huntsman Sr. a multibillionaire, started a chemical company from nothing and grew it into a \$12,000,000,000 enterprise. His book Winners Never Cheat: Even in Difficult Times is filled with stories taken from his own experience in which he steadfastly refused to compromise his principles. Huntsman claims that integrity is the reason he has been successful. He states, "There are no moral shortcuts in the game of business or the game of life." Huntsman believes, "...there are, basically, three kinds of people, the unsuccessful, the temporarily successful, and those who become and remain successful. The difference is character."*clxxxiv* 

## 9. A National Benefit

Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin condemns a people.<sup>*clxxv*</sup> What would life be like in a country governed by integrity? What difference would the lack of corruption have on your life? I encourage you, think about and imagine the implications of integrity ruling your nation!

The *crime* rates go down, and the sense of security increases. The *family* unit strengthens while family dysfunction weakens.

The *economy* will improve because there will be less exploitation, fraud, bribery and misappropriation of funds. The result would be robust economic growth.

The *health* of the people will improve. Many diseases linked to stress, fear anger, unforgiveness and lust, together with emotional and psychological illnesses, find a cure in integrity. Integrity will help attract substantial foreign investment. Think of the day when aide gets appropriately distributed. And what if contracts were honoured between countries and investors? How much more investment it would attract!

When a nation has a foundation of integrity, sons and daughters will not flee their homeland to find a better place. King Solomon coined this proverb, "Those who walk with integrity; the children who follow them are blessed."*clxxvi* A wise person leaves something worthwhile for future generations. It is sad if one generation causes the next generation to be worse off. What kind of inheritance do you want to leave your children and grandchildren? Will the implications of your just actions push back the looming clouds of frustration, discouragement, anger and debt? Integrity will provide a bright new day of hope.

### **10. Spiritual Benefits**

I have intentionally saved this benefit to the last, partially because our audience consists of both Christians and those who would not call themselves a Christian. I hope that this manual will help people in both groups become a person of integrity. I believe the serious pursuit of integrity demands commitment, courage, community and Christ.

*Commitment* – because you will be distracted and tempted to abandon integrity.

*Courage* – because the challenge to live a life of integrity requires a bold resolve.

*Community* – because we become stronger, wiser and more influential together.

*Christ* – because all of us need power beyond ourselves to become the person we desire.

Integrity is one of my favourite attributes of God. The God I love acts with integrity; He is integrity. When the Bible describes Him as complete, the word means He is completely good. I know I am not as good as I desire to be, but God is good. My best efforts often fall short. I need more than a coach. I need someone who can help me change and can create in me a new heart; someone who can give me what I lack but honestly desire.

For more than fifty years, I have watched men and women, young and old, discover the help available from God. I love to hear their stories of how life changed when they asked God for help. I am confident that God can help anyone grow in integrity because He has helped me. His strength has transformed my weakness. Not that I have achieved total success, but I am pressing ahead. I am doing better. I am becoming a person of integrity.

Our human failures can cause virtue to disintegrate. Corruption destroys. The Bible makes it clear that God gave humanity the gift of repentance so that anyone can rebuild integrity and grow strong character. The grace of forgiveness opens the door for restoration. Integrity comes from God. It is intrinsic to spirituality. Without God, at best, all you have is religion, rules and rituals. But faith is a spring of integrity. Integrity works because the love, joy, peace, hope, goodness, gentleness, patience, self-control come from God to us. All these flow like the waters of a brook to the person thirsty for integrity. Christians and non-Christians can be people of integrity. However, there is a distinct advantage in inviting God to help you.

Remember the cli logo? You can be like a tree planted by rivers of living water bringing forth fruit in season; your leaf will not wither, and whatsoever you do with integrity will prosper.

Let's grow!

# **Five Core Components**

## The five integrated components of the cli strategic plan.



**Manuals:** present the core information necessary to become a person of integrity. The Manuals are the study guide for personal growth and cohort training. The cli manual will equip each participant to develop the six Pillars of integrity as a lifestyle.



**Cohorts**: are groups of up to ten people who meet to study the cli manual. They encourage one another to implement each pillar. Cohorts take the information in the manual and apply it to life. Personal growth happens best with the encouragement of a cohort. A cohort experience moves participants beyond information to application and voluntary integrity accountability.



**Pillars:** form the basis of the cli teaching and represent the six foundational characteristics necessary for the development of a lifestyle of integrity. We chose this metaphor because ancient pillars stood as impressive, strong, enduring foundations.



# **Pillar of Influence**

### Establishes the purpose of **POWER**

The selfish use of power results in impoverishment and oppression.

The unselfish use of power results in enrichment and opportunity.

# **Pillar of Trust**

## Establishes healthy <u>RELATIONSHIPS</u>

People who cannot trust you won't build a relationship with you. People who can trust you will want a relationship.

## Pillar of Honour

## Establishes **POTENTIAL**

When honour is withheld, fear, selfishness and insecurity bind. When honour is given, love, selflessness and security liberate.

# **Pillar of Dignity**

## Establishes our **IDENTITY**

When dignity is lacking, people can easily defraud and destroy. When dignity is present, people will readily value and protect. **Pillar of Truth** 

## Establishes **RELIABILITY**

Dishonesty never produces sustainable success. Honesty is the only way to produce sustainable success.

# **Pillar of Authenticity**

## Establishes CHARACTER

Without authenticity, people question their identity and existence. Authentic people know who they are and why they exist.



**Mountains:** represent seven sectors of influence in each culture. This metaphor helps assure cli that the influence of integrity reaches every member of society. Bill Bright and Loren Cunningham were the first to define society using 7 mountains<sup>.clxxxvii</sup> cli has adapted the general concept and applied it to our strategy for developing a movement of integrity. The 7 mountains cli uses are: education, business, family, government, church, professions and s.a.m.e. (sports arts media and entertainment).



**Summits:** inspire people who have completed a cohort and equip people to sustain their commitment to live with integrity. Summits also inform people who are interested in learning more about integrity. Attendees are encouraged through personal testimonies, inspiring speakers and powerful training sessions. Often the highlight of a summit is the commissioning of people who have committed themselves to live a lifestyle of integrity.

## Is the cli Movement Sustainable?

cli believes developing one person of integrity at a time is the best way to create a sustainable movement of integrity. Following the completion of a cohort training experience, participants graduate. During the graduation ceremony, they receive a public commission to live a life of integrity. Their commission includes a personal pledge and a Certificate. Each graduate is then invited to lead a cohort.

Rules fail to be enough to sustain a life of integrity. Integrity begins in the heart. In Henry Cloud's book Integrity: The Courage to Face the Demands of Reality, he states that integrity can be compared to the two wakes behind a ship. One wake represents character, and the other represents conduct. Both are equally important. If you observe a person of integrity, you discover that their actions leave behind them a wake of good character and a wake of ethical conduct. *clxxxviii*  INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# **Lesson Plans**

# Introduction

Objective

To create a sense of community among the cohort members. Personal introductions will accomplish this. Invite each cohort participant to share why they desire to become a person of integrity.

# COMMUNITY

Experience

The cohort leader begins the first meeting by sharing his or her hopes for the group and their desire to be a person of integrity.

Exercise

Invite each person to share four things about themselves;

 $\circ$  name, family, occupation, how they learned of the cohort.

- $\circ$  share something they wish everyone knew about them.
- share something few people would know about them.
- $\circ$  share what motivated them to come to the cohort.

# LEARNING

Make sure everyone has a cli Manual.

Review the Introduction.

Be sure to explain how the six pillars form the foundation for integrity.

Which of the four categories of integrity apply to your life? What lessons about integrity did you learn from the story of Theodore Cooper and the Quebec City Bridge disaster?

# INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Make a list of ten reasons why becoming a person of integrity is a high priority.

Encourage the cohort to read the Pillar of Influence and come prepared to share from their list of ten reasons.

INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# PILLAR OF INFLUENCE

# **LESSON PLAN 1**

### Objective

You will influence others & others will influence you. This chapter challenges us to consider our influence & examine the influence others have on us.

# COMMUNITY

### Experience

Invite the participants to share their list of ten reasons why becoming a person of integrity is a priority for them.

## Exercise

Invite each person to share about someone who had a positive influence on their life. "How did this person shape their thoughts or character?"

If time permits, ask the same question from the negative perspective.

# LEARNING

Integrity provides the foundation for the proper use of power. Questions to assist the leader;

How does the paradox of power function?

How did Joseph's pride and attitude toward his brothers shape his story?

Have you dealt with favouritism? Share about your experience.

The anger of Joseph's brothers flared into bullying, what triggered their actions?

Is abuse justifiable?

Have you been falsely accused? How did you overcome it? Values need to be established and sustained. Last week, did you encounter any challenge to your values?

## INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Failure to prepare is preparing to fail. What character qualities do you want to improve or strengthen? Share a character quality you want to develop. Then, with input from the group, develop simple steps to enhance this trait. Before the next cohort meeting, think of a person you would like to approach to be a mentor. Give thought to a plan that would make the mentoring relationship thrive.

# LESSON PLAN 2

### Objective

The key to this lesson is for participants to perceive the significant difference between serving out of self-interest and serving the interest of others.

### COMMUNITY

## Experience

Since our last group meeting, was there a time you recognized "I am an influence," or "Someone is influencing me". Tell us about that moment.

### Exercise

Did you select a person you would like to mentor you? Tell the group several aspects of your mentoring plan.

#### LEARNING

Integrity provides the foundation for the proper use of power. Questions to assist the leader;

Is it true that everyone has influence? Integrity has enormous influence; how do the 5 C's guarantee success? Can a person governed by self-interest lead so that others will benefit?

Why does self-interest hinder forgiveness?

### INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Is there anyone that hurt you whom you need to forgive? Your bitterness & anger harm you. What keeps you from forgiving? Make a decision that you will forgive.

All of us have influence. How can you use your influence at home, work, community or church to make things better for others and yourself?

All of us contend with corruption. Where do you experience pressure to accept corruption?

What are you willing to do to make corruption unacceptable? Does the leader motivated by self-interest consider others when circumstances change? INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# PILLAR OF TRUST

# **LESSON PLAN 1**

#### Objective

The choice to give forgiveness happens with a decision; however, trust is earned and grows over time. Participants will shoulder responsibility for building trust with others and for letting others build trust with them.

#### COMMUNITY

Experience

Choose the shortest and tallest member of the group. Instruct the smaller person to turn their back to the larger and the bigger to stand directly behind them. Then ask the tinier to trust the larger to catch them when they fall backward.

Now reverse the roles. Instruct the larger person to turn their back to the smaller and the smaller to stand directly behind them. Then ask the bigger to trust the tinier to catch them when they fall backward.

Before making the decision of trust, what factors did you consider?

#### Exercise

Since our last meeting, were you expected to justify, tolerate or cover up corruption? How did you respond, or wish you responded?

#### LEARNING

Trust is the foundation of relationships.

Questions to assist the leader;

Why does every relationship, investment, connection, project or contract require trust?

You built trust slowly and destroy it quickly. Sometimes in an instant. Discuss the consequences of breaking trust. (Create a list of at least seven effects.)

What are the costs of a lack of trust?

What does it take to open a trust account with someone who mistrusts you? How do you make deposits in that trust account? Should you allow the currency from your trust account to be invested on behalf of another person?

## INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Have you ever thought, "If they forgive me, then they should trust me?" Is that assumption valid?

Why is it difficult to regain a broken trust? Is there broken or damaged trust you wish you could rebuild?

What steps can you take to restore trust?

# **LESSON PLAN 2**

### Objective

The participants will learn the five core competencies of a trustworthy person and coached to develop the core competencies in their lifestyle.

# COMMUNITY

### Experience

Since our last meeting, did you attempt to restore a broken or weak relationship? How were your efforts received? Did this surprise you?

### Exercise

How would you describe your relationships with members of the cohort when we first started to meet? How has your relationship changed over these few weeks? Can you be specific in terms of how/why your trust level has changed?

# LEARNING

Trust is the foundation of relationships.

Study the five core competencies to the end of the chapter. Remember that trust is the currency of relationships, the capital of leadership and the cash of teamwork. Questions to assist the leader from the five competencies;

- Commitment When should a commitment be given? How do you keep your pledges?
- Character What character trait(s) are you actively attempting to develop?

• Conduct - In which of the ten behaviours of trustworthy people are you

strongest or weakest?

• Compassion - Trustworthy people are concerned about others. Listening and being generous demonstrate you care. Think of five other ways in which you could show care for others?

• Communication - What things have you learned that helped you improve your communication skills?

# INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Which of the contributors to the destruction of trust do you consider most dangerous? Why?

How can you defend your heart against that distrust contributor?

To have a lifestyle of integrity, you must acquire the five core competencies.

And you must avoid the five significant causes that destroy trust. Which of the five causes is your greatest challenge? Over the next week, monitor how often you encounter the five causes that undermine trust. INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# PILLAR OF DIGNITY

# **LESSON PLAN 1**

### Objective

Help the participants value the dignity of all people, no matter their age, gender, tribe, status, or health. And to equip them to guard their own dignity.

### COMMUNITY

### Experience

Have the participants share the efforts they made to deposit relationship currency in a relationship.

### Exercise

Nelson Mandala said, "Prison and the authorities conspire to rob each man of his dignity. In and of itself, that assured that I would survive, for any man or institution that tries to rob me of my dignity will lose because I will not depart with it at any price or under any pressure."

What did Nelson Mandala do to guard his dignity? Think of the implications if he had lost his dignity!

### LEARNING

Integrity provides the foundation to live with dignity. The study of the Moabite woman living in Bethlehem opens many insights into the power of dignity to guide how we live.

# Questions to assist the leader;

What do we mean by dignity?

How does dignity guide your attitude to others?

Does dignity inspire compassion or empathy?

Why does dignity value diversity?

# INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Take a new bill of currency. Ask the group if they would like to have it? What would they do with it? Then crumple the bill and ask the same questions? Put the currency on the floor and step on it. Then ask the same questions again. Just as the money holds its value despite external things that affect it, so people have a dignity that does not change.

Think of someone whose dignity may be under attack. Is there a way you could reach out to encourage them? Has your dignity been threatened? How can you guard your dignity?

# **LESSON PLAN 2**

### Objective

Dignity acts as a strong advocate for yourself and others. Participants will embrace the benefits available through selfdiscipline.

## COMMUNITY

Experience

Did you have an opportunity to reach out to someone whose dignity was under attack? Tell us about your experience.

# Exercise

Ask several members of the cohort to share their experience with diet or exercise plans. Were they successful? What was the lasting benefit?

# LEARNING

Integrity provides the foundation to live with dignity. Ruth became a strong advocate for positive change in her life and that of Naomi.

Dignity leads to self-discipline and motivation for growth. Questions to assist the leader;

How does dignity motivate change?

Why does dignity refuse to settle for injustice or poverty? How does the mastery of our physical appetites influence our mental, emotional, social and spiritual health? A resolve to walk with dignity requires daily choices. Some decisions are more significant, while some are lesser. Do the choices for a lifestyle of integrity ever get easier? Why or why not?

## INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

We must accept responsibility for who we are and who we will become. Score your self-care in the area of diet, exercise, sleep and intellectual growth.

Now acting as a personal trainer for yourself, design a selfimprovement plan you could follow.

Are you willing to share your plan with anyone so they can encourage you and hold you accountable?

INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# PILLAR OF HONOUR

# **LESSON PLAN 1**

### Objective

Participants will understand how honour depends on the character of the one who gives it, not on the performance of the one who receives it.

They will recognize how honour builds healthy relationships, and honour withheld weakens relationships.

### COMMUNITY

Experience

Last week we ended by you acting as your own personal trainer. You designed a self-improvement plan you could follow. Would anyone be willing to share part of their plan?

Exercise

Divide the group in half. Give each group the two questions below. Ask one group to argue that this statement is true and ask the other group to defend the statement as false.

1. True or False

• If I do something to honour you, although you did something poorly, will my actions reinforce the negative behaviour?

• Is it possible to honour the person who acts corruptly but not approve of their corrupt actions?

# LEARNING

Honour motivates the reaching of potential.

The expression of honour is character-based. It is proactive, a gift, and it releases potential. Honour and respect are similar, but also different.

Questions to assist the leader;

Why does it seem wrong to give honour to someone who, in our opinion, doesn't deserve the honour?

What are the consequences of withholding honour?

Do you first tend to see the negative or the positive? Why does a dishonouring environment fail to create the desired outcomes, whether it is in the home, church, school, workplace or community?

Was shame, fear or guilt used to control or motivate you? How effective was it?

If you received correction that included honour, would it influence your actions?

## INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Philippians 4:8 presents one of the finest guides to the development of a good attitude. Take time to write Philippians 4:8 on a card you can keep.Memorize this powerful statement. In the week ahead, take note of the times you needed to apply this instruction.Who do you struggle to honour? How could you show them honour this week?

# **LESSON PLAN 2**

### Objective

Honour encourages people to reach their potential. Participants will assume responsibility to assist others in reaching their potential. Each person can become the architect of their destiny and benefitfrom the encouragement of others.

# COMMUNITY

# Experience

Last time we met, we agreed to apply Philippians 4:8 to our daily lives. Share how this statement influenced your decisions, conversations or emotions. Did your application of this statement affect your relationship with other people? Exercise

Select one person from the group and then invite each person in the cohort to share something they admire or appreciate about that person.

Then ask the person honoured, "How did you feel as you received honour?"

Next, ask the people giving honour, "What did you experience when you showed honour?"

LEARNING

Honour motivates the reaching of potential

Draw examples from the life of David that illustrate how honour impacted him. Give special attention to the seven ways that honour makes a difference.

Find examples of these seven from experiences within the group.

Questions to assist the leader;

How did Jonathan's gift unlock David's future? Did the impact of this action reach beyond David?

The goal of confrontation is to resolve a problem and not attack the person. How does honour guide conflict resolution? Why did Saul withhold honour from David? Did this choice make Saul a better king or fortify his rule? Why or why not? Why are boundaries so essential to healthy relationships? How can the older generation honour the younger generation? How can the younger generation honour the older generation?

## INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

As a leader, share a personal struggle you experienced in the area of giving honour to someone who required extra grace. Why was it difficult?

Invite the group to create a simple strategy to assist someone in giving honour to the person in their life who seems most challenging.

Choose to intentionally give honour to a person you find difficult to honour. Next time the cohort meets come prepared to share. INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# PILLAR OF TRUTH

# **LESSON PLAN 1**

#### Objective

Participants will discover how lies are a short-term solution, but often result in long-term concerns. Truth helps solve problems and improves life.

#### COMMUNITY

#### Experience

Did you intentionally give honour to someone you find difficult? Share your experience.

#### Exercise

How do you feel when someone you trusted lies to you? How does it affect your relationship? If you acted because they insisted their lie was the truth, how will you recover? Why do people assume that lying will make them safer?

#### LEARNING

Integrity provides the foundation for truthfulness. This chapter explores the difference between mistakenly misrepresenting the facts and intentionally deceiving someone. Truth functions best in cooperation with the other pillars of integrity.

### Questions to assist the leader

When is something a lie?

What pressures cause people to resort to lying for protection? A lie requires support to remain believable. Why do lies enslave us?

Truth helps us solve problems, so why does dishonesty allow problems to persist?

### INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Sometimes a lie seems more attractive and more comfortable to tell than the truth. Why is that?

How is truth mitigated with the other Five Pillars of Integrity? Identify external pressures you face to compromise the truth. Be alert to the times an opportunity to compromise the truth presents itself. Be prepared to share your story at the next cohort meeting.

# **LESSON PLAN 2**

### Objective

In this lesson, participants will learn the power of truth to improve life. Plus, there will be a discussion of what guidelines to need to develop when values clash.

### COMMUNITY

#### Experience

What occasions arose since we met that tempted you to compromise the truth? How did you respond?

#### Exercise

Have you ever been fooled by exaggerated claims or empty guarantees? Share your experience. What did you learn from the experience? Are you likely to ever purchase something from that person or company?

### LEARNING

Integrity provides the foundation for truthfulness. Truth is like a weapon; therefore, how you use it is crucial. Truth not only exposes fraud, it outlasts error.

Questions to assist the leader;

In a "post-truth" culture, why must truth not become impotent? How does truth restrict the spread of corruption? When two values clash what is the better choice to make?

# INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Is there an area where you struggle to be truthful? For some people it's in in sharing information, or financial accountability, or keeping promises.

What are the areas where you struggle to be honest?

Is there any area where you fear exposure?

Take time to identify those areas. And take time to consider how to bring them into a place of integrity. INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# PILLAR OF AUTHENTICITY

# **LESSON PLAN 1**

### Objective

This lesson will help participants understand how authenticity provides a compass of purpose. Authenticity identifies who we are and what truly matters in life.

## COMMUNITY

### Experience

Invite people to share of a time when dishonesty felt like the best solution and how they handled that temptation.

## Exercise

Present an item that is an imitation of something valuable, such as a watch, sunglasses, pen, etc. Ask the group how they determine if something is genuine

or counterfeit?

Has anyone in the group ever bought something they believed to be genuine only to discover it was fake?

# LEARNING

Authenticity is the foundation of the true self.

Authenticity functions like a compass. It informs our purpose and identity.

Authenticity requires that the person we are and the person we present be the same. Both private self and public self should be alike.

Questions to assist the leader:

If you are different from the persona you present, what will happen to relationships with others and with yourself? We live in a "selfie" culture. Why do we hide our true self? How does authenticity function as a compass to the real you? How do you align who you are and who you say you are?

# INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

It is essential to be genuine and authentic with ourselves. To be in touch with your inner thoughts, feelings and dreams, you need to slow down and take some time to reflect.

What challenges stand in the way of your having a personal retreat? How can you address each of these obstacles? Discuss ideas that may help plan a meaningful

personal retreat.

Consider setting a date and start your preparation for the retreat.

You must block off an extended time (no less than 6 hours) to get in touch with your thoughts, feelings and dreams.

At the next meeting, share your plan or your struggle to commit to a plan with

the group.

# **LESSON PLAN 2**

### Objective

The goal of this lesson is to enable the participants to see the dangers of pretence and to inspire them to be authentic with themselves, others and God.

Integrity requires more than external performances or promises; it demands character. Integrity begins in the heart, not the head.

# COMMUNITY

# Experience

Ask the group to share their plan for a personal retreat. Why was it challenging to find time for the retreat?

Exercise

Today there are millions of fake profiles listed on sites like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Why do people want to be someone they are not?

#### LEARNING

Authenticity is the foundation for the true self. In this lesson, we consider a group of people, who despite their talk and public performance, failed to live a lifestyle that backed their claims. They were frauds. Their pretence had far-reaching consequences.

#### Questions to assist the leader

The Pharisees started from a place of integrity but slowly drifted into a practice

of hypocrisy.

How does a slow drift away from integrity happen? The Pharisees deceived themselves into assuming they were not that bad. All of us have the same potential to deceive ourselves. How can we protect

against selfdeception?

What are the consequences of a lack of integrity?

Who gets hurt by a lack of authenticity?

Why does being counterfeit jeopardize future success?

### INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

There are six Pillars of Integrity. Create a list of the six pillars. Under the name of each pillar, write three things:

- 1. How would you consider your strength in that pillar?
- 2. What is your area(s) of challenge in that pillar?

3. What action step can you take to grow in that pillar?

Be prepared to share with the group about your retreat as part of the final cohort meeting.

INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION

# **Cohort Handbook**



Commissioning a Lifestyle of Integrity believes that we can create an integrity movement in every nation - one person at a time. Thank you for becoming a person of integrity. Together we form an integrity movement. cli thinks that one person can make a difference. However, experience reveals that a person of integrity seldom succeeds alone. The quest for integrity requires the empowerment of a community. A personal resolution to live a lifestyle of integrity will fail without the help of others. Healthy relationships lift us up, build us up and keep us from falling. We do better together.

# **How Does cli Help You?**

cli is committed to assisting you in your pursuit of becoming a person of integrity. We do so in a variety of ways, but the most significant is through small groups we call cohorts. cli has adopted the term cohort because of the confusion and misconceptions around the term "small group." A cohort is a group with up to ten people coming together to grow in a community, learn from each other, and develop integrity through accountability. The cohort is your team, your community. We are better together!

# Information...Application...Transformation

Learning to live with integrity moves people beyond knowledge.

The growth process looks like this; acquired information moves to life application resulting in character transformation.

cli summits and cohorts provide relevant information about integrity. Our teaching helps each participant take what they learn



and apply it in their daily lives. An integrity movement can only happen when people grasp the information and apply it in their everyday life resulting in a personal transformation. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.<sup>clxxxix</sup>

To assist in the ongoing pursuit of information, application, and transformation, cli supplement's the cli manual with a website www.cli.international.org, plus other social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. and Bill's blog, integrity-trust.com

# The Three Core Values of a Cohort

The cohort experience rests on three core values. These values foster empowerment through relationships, learning through mentoring and established lifestyle accountability.

# **C - COMMUNITY**

Cohorts create a sense of community. You are not alone in your quest for integrity. What could be better than belonging to a growing movement of individuals who have made integrity their lifestyle?

# L - LEARNING

Our cli Manual teaches the six Pillars of Integrity. The manual is as essential to the movement of integrity as a motor is to a car. Cohorts gather people who are serious about developing integrity. As people meet, they study the Pillars of Integrity. The six pillars teach what is necessary to live an integrity lifestyle. Each cohort will study the cli manual at its own pace. Every cohort will have a unique group culture.

### I - INTEGRITY THROUGH ACCOUNTABILITY

Learning leads to the practice of the lesson. Character grows in the course of application. Accountability produces integrity. Integrity, through accountability, motivates cohort members to act without corruption and guides the choices they make. Genuine integrity resides in the heart; it empowers speech, conduct, and decisions.

Accountability is always voluntary. Participants are never forced to share but encouraged to do so. When participants know their group will ask about practices of integrity, it motivates conduct. However, in a safe community committed to the mutual pursuit of integrity, accountability becomes a function of relationship and honesty. Cohort participants choose to be accountable to each other and not just to themselves or the leader.

### **Cohort Community**

Cohorts bring people together in a common quest for integrity. Community relationships emerge because each cohort leader and member share common experiences. cli encourages people from similar sectors of society, called Mountains of Influence, to form a cohort. For example, a businessperson relates best to other businesspeople.

Every person makes a difference. When a member shares ideas, questions, and experiences, he or she inspires other participants to grow. The sharing of life experiences tends to increase participants learning and commitment. Another benefit of involvement in the cohort is the formation of lasting, meaningful relationships.

#### **Community Care**

Cohorts offer mutual care. They celebrate the success of one

another. But the group also offers support when someone fails. They grieve with those who falter in their integrity and encourage their recovery.

cli recognizes that anyone can fail. It is vital how we treat someone after they fail. Remember, you can learn as much from failure as you can success. When someone fails, can they rely on people to encourage them and stand with them? If someone gets caught up in corruption, you who live by integrity should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of love. If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves.<sup>cxc</sup>

If someone confesses a breach of integrity, their cohort community DOES NOT abandon them. Instead, remain committed to assist in their recovery. A cohort must guard its reactions to "a breach of integrity." Appropriate responses include:

**Don't be SHOCKED** - we are all capable of failure. **Don't CONDEMN** - what is brought to the light can be forgiven.

**Don't SHUN -** do not withdraw from someone who needs you.

**Don't WITHDRAW** - stand with them, encourage and pray. **Show PATIENCE** - it takes time to recover and rebuild. **Remain SILENT** - what is shared in a cohort stays in a cohort.

**Learn LESSONS** - we can learn valuable lessons from failure.

# **Cohorts Are a Safe Community**

Trust lays a relational foundation for cohorts. When people can trust those in their group, the potential for transparency increases. Trust starts with the cohort leader. It spreads among the members as they build relationships.

Care for one another will reach beyond group gatherings.

Relationships that form in the cohort meetings will continue outside cohort gatherings. When someone is absent from cohort meetings, a participant will contact that person to be sure all is well, to encourage their return, and to share highlights of the last meeting.

### **Cohort Meetings**

Ist Session - participants get acquainted and discuss the importance of integrity.
Sessions 2-13 - studied of the pillars (suggest a minimum of 2 sessions per pillar)
Final Session - celebrate the completion of the cohort with a time of sharing.

The 90-minute cohort meeting timeline	
C ommunity building	15 Minutes
always begin on time	
L earning by studying the manual include everyone in the discussion	45 Minutes
I ntegrity through accountability	20 Minutes
Closing announcements, comments & prayer	10 Minutes

### **Study the Manual**

The cli manual is our integrity textbook and workbook. Please write in it, make notes, answer questions, draw diagrams. Make it yours. We recommend each participant study the manual before attending the cohort meeting. Reading about the pillar in advance increases retention, stimulates lively group discussion and personal sharing, Participants who come prepared gain the most benefit.

# Media/Audio/Video

Bill Pipke, together with other cli leaders, have prepared audio/ video, and PowerPoint training sessions for each Pillar of Integrity. These media segments are available through the cli website. The resources augment your understanding. There are lesson plans and videos available on our website. cli provides at least 2 lesson plans for each pillar. Cohort leaders who wish to use these teaching aids can do so without cost.

## **Cohort Lesson Plans**

As cohorts study the six Pillars of Integrity, each cohort session should begin community time, move to information sharing and end with personal application assignments. Cohort discussions are instrumental in creating appropriate self-directed life application. These assignments are optional but encourage character development.

## **Share Life Experiences**

Stories give wonderful insights and inspiration. Whether sharing comes from a recent experience or from something that occurred long ago, if it comes from an honest, humble heart, it will have a real impact. Appropriate sharing requires wisdom. Participants are encouraged to be transparent in sharing experiences but avoid offending others or causing them to feel embarrassed.

# **Shared Leadership**

The cohort leader is not an expert or authority. Nobody should dominate the discussion. During the meeting, the leader's primary role is to guide the study of the cli Manual and the discussions that follow. The leader's attitude, authenticity, and modelling set the atmosphere for the rest of the participants. Authentic leadership invites each participant, no matter their age, position, education or experience, to be involved in the process. Whether one is advanced in life experience, a peer, or a novice, everyone shapes the life of another.

# **Cohort Leader's Responsibility**

- 1. All cohort leaders have first been cohort participants. After they completed their cohort experience and graduate, they qualify to lead a group.
- 2. We recommend each leader recruit a group of up to ten people from their mountain of influence.

- 3. The leader sets the time, finds a place for the meetings and schedules all regular meetings on a consistent day, time and place. Meetings planned well in advance have fewer absentees.
- 4. The leader is responsible to make sure each cohort participant purchases a cli Manual. Individual manuals are essential because:

a. Manuals are the key to personal learning.b. Manuals allow for full discussion at the cohort meetings.

c. Manuals motivate the participant to engage.

d. Manuals increase the lifelong impact of the truth. e. Manuals provide for future reference and make the information accessible.

f. Manuals prepare the participant for the day they become a leader.

- 5. If a cohort leader encounters a problem, they may appeal to the person who led the cohort they attended. If that person does not feel they can help, then the issue should be taken to the Regional or National Coordinator.
- 6. There may be conflicts of interest, personality issues, or misunderstandings between fellow participants that make it difficult to remain together in the same cohort. In such cases, the cohort leader should help those affected to find another group.
- 7. Each cohort leader should encourage their cohort to attend the next cli Summit as a group.
- 8. Many who attend a cohort build strong relationships with one another and may be reluctant to leave their group to start a new one. Because the sustainability of a national movement of integrity requires the formation of new cohorts, the leader will challenge each member to accept the commission to lead a group. This multiplication of groups is critical to national transformation.
- 9. cli encourages the continuation of relationships after the cohort has disbanded.
- 10. Integrity requires more than human will and strength;

we encourage the leader to pray for their cohort and to promote prayer within the group. The power of God is available to people who pray.

## FAQ's About Cohorts How often does a cohort meet?

It takes time to develop the Pillars of Integrity in a lifestyle. Most cohorts will meet over 3 to 6 months. cli recommends cohorts meet twice a month. Regular, consistent meetings help grow group relationships and impact motivation.

## Where does a cohort meet?

Wherever there is adequate space for a group of ten people to enjoy being together. A meeting can be in any workspace, restaurant, home, church, office, whatever place is conducive to group dynamics.

## Who can be a part of a cohort?

Recruitment is generally relationship-based. Some will learn about cli from those who are part of a cohort. Others will receive an invitation to come to a cli Summit. Still, others will learn about cli through social media. Participants are people who desire to become a person of integrity.

# Notes

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# **Section Two**

### The 5 Core Components

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## **Glossary of Terms**

**Christian** – the word "Christian" comes from the Greek word christianos which is derived from the word christos, or Christ, which means "anointed one." A Christian, then, is someone who is a follower of Christ. The first use of the word "Christian" in the Bible is found in Acts 11:26,

**Conversion** - One who has been "converted" as a Christian by placing faith in Jesus Christ. "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

**Eternal Life** - Life everlasting in the presence of God. "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent" (John 17:3). There are two senses in which this is used. First, as Christians we possess eternal life (1 John 5:13), yet we are not in heaven or in the immediate presence of God. Though we are still in mortal bodies and we still sin, by faith we are saved (Rom. 4:5; Eph. 2:8-9) and possess eternal life will reach its final state at the resurrection of the believers when Christ returns to earth to claim His church.

**Faith** - "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). It is synonymous with trust. It is a divine gift (Rom. 12:3) and comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). It is the means by which the grace of God is accounted to the believer who trusts in the work of Jesus (Eph. 2:8). Without faith it is impossible to have a right relationship with God (Heb. 11:6).

**Forgiveness** - There are seven words in Scripture that denote the idea of forgiveness: three in Hebrew and four in Greek. No book of religion except Christianity teaches that God completely forgives sins. God remembers our sins no more (Heb. 10:17) **Grace** - Grace is unmerited favor. It is God's free action for the benefit of all. Grace is the product of God that is given by God, because of who God is not because of who we are. It is the means of salvation (Eph. 2:8-9).

**Repentance** - To repent means "to turn." In the NT repentance means to turn away from sin and toward God.

## About the Author - Bill Pipke

After 39 years of pastoral leadership, Bill and Shirley became Global Workers. This step was not a surprise. It came after years of mission involvement. During that time, they conducted leadership training summits, lead mission teams, medical teams and evangelistic crusades in Europe, Africa and Indonesia. They helped to plant over 500 churches world-wide. Bill was instrumental in the establishment of a Canadian Charity called Loads of Love, which provides global crisis relief and humanitarian aid.

Presently, Bill and Shirley are Canadian-based Global Workers. Most days, Bill can be found on a media platform participating in one-on-one international meetings. Today's technologies maximize Bill's opportunity to influence and mentor from home. However, much of each year they still devote to the global travel schedule necessary to direct cli.

Bill's vision is to raise an integrity movement in every country cli enters. He hopes to accomplish this by equipping people to live a pro-integrity lifestyle. cli is a character-based approach to conquer corruption and create cultures of integrity.

Bill dreams of raising a generation of integrity-driven leaders in business, church, education, family, professions, sports, media, technology and the government who will build a culture of integrity, where now a culture of corruption currently exists. INTEGRITY-THEBESTFOUNDATION