

THE CONGRUENT LIFE—CHAPTER 1

Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 1 on pages 28-29. This page will be left blank to do that. Answer only those questions that really "grab you."

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION—CHAPTER 1

(Reflect upon the ones that “grab me”)

1. What is something within the reading assignment which particularly speaks to me right now in my work and leadership experience (an insight, a challenge, a reminder, an “aha” moment)?
2. If someone were to ask me, "What is the relationship between your spirituality and your work, how would I answer?"
3. Later in the book, Thompson comments, "The most essential characteristics of leadership are the outer fruits of a devoted inner life." How have I come to experience this insight in my own leadership journey? Who or what has influenced my recognition of the importance of a rich interior life?
4. Do I in any way still have a sacred/secular split in my thinking? If so, how does such thinking influence me in my attitudes toward work? In my attitudes toward spirituality/faith/religion?
5. From reading this first chapter, what am I looking forward to as I continue on with this book for reflection and conversation?

The Congruent Life—Chapter 2

*Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 2 on pages 47-48. This page will be left blank to do that. **Answer only those questions that really “grab you”.***

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION—CHAPTER 2

(Reflect upon the ones that “grab me”)

1. What is something within the reading assignment, which particularly speaks to me right now in my work and leadership experience (an insight, a challenge, a reminder, an “aha” moment)?
2. How would I describe to someone the meaning I find in my work?
3. What have been my fundamental motivations, the reasons why I do the work I do?
4. How have I experienced in my own life the human drive toward wholeness, a desire to grow beyond the boundaries of the ego?
5. In what ways do I view my work as a career?

In what ways do I view my work as a vocation?

6. As I go through (or have gone through) midlife transition, have I experienced any new “call” emerging from deep within myself (from God)? If so, what?

How am I responding to this “call”?

The Congruent Life—Chapters 3 & 4

Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 3 pages 70-71 and Chapter 4 pages 88-89. This page will be left blank to do that. Answer only those questions that really “grab you”.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION -- CHAPTER 3 & 4

(Reflect upon the ones that “grab me”)

1. What is something within the reading assignment, which particularly speaks to me right now in my work and leadership experience (an insight, a challenge, a reminder, an “aha” moment)?
2. Have I generally recognized my work and work environment as “fertile soil” for my spiritual growth? Why or why not?
3. How is (or could be) my current work situation a valuable source for my spiritual growth?
4. In what way is my work a spiritual discipline, a way of serving God?

5. If I were to do my work consistently as a way of serving God and others and growing spiritually – what changes in my motivations, attitudes and actions would need to occur?

What first step might I take to move more in this direction?

6. If someone said to me, "Spirituality has no place in business, it's a private matter," how would I answer this person?

7. Have I ever treated religion or spirituality as a commodity primarily for my own personal gain? When? In what way? If so, how did I move beyond this?

8. My comments about Thompson's statement on page 82 -- "I am convinced that the discussion of spirituality in our time has become so watered down and our use of the language so loose, that we describe as spiritual a great many things that merely make us feel a certain way... we come much closer to the truth when we look at the root causes of those feelings, and reserve the designation spiritual for those thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that grow out of our relationship with God and our own deepest center."

9. Have I ever too quickly regarded an experience or relationship which made me feel a certain way as spiritual when with hindsight I can see that it was lacking genuine spiritual depth and may even have been somewhat self-centered? If so, what have I learned from the experience?

10. Thompson states on page 87 -- "... I never saw a single thorny ethical issue that was satisfactorily resolved solely by reference to an ethical theory. People tend to untangle the most important problems that confront them by referring to their most deeply held notions about life, their place in the world, and the nature of Ultimate Reality."

In my own life who or what has influenced my ethical commitment?

11. Do I agree that calling people to be ethical without encouraging a spiritual foundation is missing something vital? If so, how can we in some way, implicitly or explicitly, encourage spiritual development at work?

The Congruent Life—Chapter 5

Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 5 on page 113. This page will be left blank to do that. Answer only those questions that really “grab you”.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION—CHAPTER 5

*(Reflect upon only the ones that “grab me”—
there are too many to cover them all)*

1. Under what circumstances have I ever felt disconnected from my deepest values or from God in the work that I do? What did I do to get beyond this?

2. Do I have a need to look at my life and work in a healthier, balanced, spiritually grounded way?

(Do I ever get too caught up in valuing the external and extroverted part of my work to the expense of developing my interior life at work? Do I ever measure success and fulfillment too externally?)

3. What valuable dimensions of the inner life do I need more of -- reflection, listening, silence, prayer, intuitive ways of knowing, self-evaluation, seeking the purpose behind the task, etc.?

4. As a leader how do I foster a work environment in which personal growth can take place for all who work there? Do I give space and permission for people to develop their inner life? What resources do I provide for personnel to realize their potential in the work they do? What can I do further?

5. My comments about Thompson's statement on page 109 -- "for any fundamental change in our society to occur -- *including a spiritual renewal* -- that change must go into and through business. Our work and the institutions in which it is performed are simply too central to our lives and values for deep-seated cultural change to evolve without them."

6. My comments about Peter Vaill's statement on page 112 -- "the pervasiveness of spirituality means that the ideas we have about leadership, management, organizing, and facilitating change are *incomplete* to the extent that they do not recognize the spiritual basis of working with human beings. They are *inadequate* in times of change to the extent that they do not recognize this spiritual basis, and they are simply *wrong* if they try to argue that the spiritual condition of the people involved is of no importance to the way things proceed."

7. Do I see myself in the work that I do in any way (explicitly or implicitly) fostering spiritual renewal within and among the people? If not, how might this be done? How can such a renewal be facilitated in an appropriate way?

The Congruent Life—Chapter 6

*Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 6 on pages 140-141. This page will be left blank to do that. **Answer only those questions that really “grab you”.** (These questions seem to be very valuable and thoughtful. Please consider answering questions 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. Spend a little time reflecting on them.)*

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION—CHAPTER 6 (*Reflect upon the ones that “grab me”*)

1. What value do I see in this developmental model of work and leadership?

What struck me most about it?

2. C. Michael Thompson suggests that there are three dimensions to people’s development in the work place, developing *organizational skills*, *interpersonal abilities*, and *inner-personal traits*. What are my reflections upon this insight for me and the people in my own organization?

3. C. Michael Thompson makes this comment on page 140, “*For our discussion of organizational leadership to neglect the spiritual element can now be rightly said to omit a most integral part of the whole—an essential piece of the puzzle. We have long ago dispensed with the notion that leadership is a set of competencies to be learned, just so many blocks to be checked. Admitting instead that it is...the individuated, mature, and developing man or woman who is most fit for the task of leadership. We must look more carefully at the role the inner life plays in becoming that person.*”

What is my response to this statement?

How do I emphasize the importance of the inner life to the people in my organization?

THE CONGRUENT LIFE—CHAPTER 7

*Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of chapter 7 on pages 174-178. This page will be left blank to do that. **Answer only those questions that really "grab you."** The author has given many good questions for us to reflect upon. I will not be adding any others. **Again, response only to those, which "grab you"**).*

QUALITIES OF A SPIRITUAL LIFE

Reflect and rate yourself on a scale of 1-10 (10 being strong).

1. _____ *Zealous*: loyal, dedicated, faithful, spirited and passionate about life
2. _____ *Trustworthy*: upright, honest, keeps promises
3. _____ *Optimistic*: hopeful, positive thinking, able to influence good
4. _____ *Caring*: values and shares a concern for others
5. _____ *Prayerful*: person of faith, reflective, contemplative
6. _____ *Adaptable*: adjustable, malleable, pliable, reflective, versatile
7. _____ *Present*: in the “now”, attentive, sensitive, good listener
8. _____ *Interpersonally Communicative*: good communications skills, can express wants, needs and desires equally well
9. _____ *Faith Driven*: connected to God, virtuous, love motivated, envisions and practices peace and justice
10. _____ *Balanced*: whole integrated, centered
11. _____ *Cooperative*: collaborates well with others, a team person
12. _____ *Humorous*: laughs with, celebrates life
13. _____ *Motivated*: inspired, activated, stimulated, focused
14. _____ *Responsible*: accountable, dependable, good steward, generative, competent
15. _____ *Respectful*: considerate, attentive

The Congruent Life—Chapter 8

Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 8 on pages 203-206. This page will be left blank to do that. Answer only those questions that really “grab you”.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION—CHAPTER 8 *(Reflect upon the ones that “grab me”)*

1. How consistently do I empathize with others at work—“take on their perspective” or “walk in their shoes”?

This is an example in which I showed empathy in a significant way to someone else. What helped me to be more empathetic in that situation?

2. How vulnerable am I able to be with others at work? Am I able to really hear others even when they are questioning and critical of me? What helps me to do that? Share an example.

Am I able in appropriate ways to share with others my own pain, fears, and needs?

What are my inner obstacles, if any, to doing this?

What helps me to do this well? Relate an example.

3. How tolerant am I of people whom I perceive as different than me in any way? How do I relate with someone from a very different background or with a different perspective on life?

4. My comments about Michael Thompson's quote on page 187 "the greater part of the prejudice, hatred, and intolerance in our world flows directly from our inability as individuals to confront our shadow qualities. The faults we see lie not so much in those whom we think we see them in, but in ourselves. A strong inner life is the antidote to negative projection, and the birthplace of true tolerance."

5. Do I have any difficulties truly empowering others at work? If so, what are they? (Do I at times empower people to do only what I want them to do?)

What has helped me to be truly empowering of others?

6. How do I most often exercise power at work? In a coercive or positional or persuasive or charismatic or consultative way? Why is that?

What is the fundamental purpose for which I use my power? For my own benefit or in furtherance of the interests of the organization or in the service of a Higher Power/God?

Do I ever think I'm using my power for the sake of others or of God and later realize that I was really being led by my own ego? What helps me to confront this in myself?

How do I get beyond my ego toward the exercise of power in a genuinely spiritual way?

7. How am I able to demonstrate what Thompson calls gift-love at work?

What helps me to be able to show selfless service to others at work?

8. Have I experienced at work the kind of sacrifice or suffering that is the appropriate and inevitable result of gift-love—of extending myself for the good of others even when such caring makes demands on me? If so, reflect upon an example of this.

9. How do I view the relationship between my spirituality and the ways I relate with people?

The Congruent Life—Chapter 9

Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 9 on page 233. This page will be left blank to do that.

4. How do I respond to Warren Bennis, who said, "By focusing attention on a vision, the leader operates on the emotional and spiritual resources of the organization, on its values, commitment, and aspirations"?

How might I better encourage such a sense of vision within my organization?

5. A transformational leader is called to have the following attributes (how well do I possess each of these and how do I see them relating to my spirituality):
 - *Courage and integrity*
 - *Faith and hope*
 - *Being a lifelong learner*
 - *Flexibility*
 - *Ability to deal with complexity and ambiguity*
 - *Perspective to reframe problems appropriately*
 - *Self-awareness through introspective self reflection*
6. How well am I at being a servant leader that reconciles the inevitable tension of individualism and relationship/community? What in my spiritual growth helps me to do this?
7. What is my experience of being more of a coach, teacher, and facilitator with those I lead? How has my own spiritual journey assisted me in doing this better?

The Congruent Life—Chapter 10

Think about and consider writing in response to the questions at the conclusion of Chapter 10 on page 264-66. This page will be left blank to do that.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION—CHAPTER 10

(Reflect upon the ones that “grab me”)

1. What is something within the reading assignment, which particularly speaks to me right now in my work and leadership experience (an insight, a challenge, a reminder, an “aha” moment)?

2. How much time do I spend within any given week consciously cultivating and exploring my inner spiritual life, my relationship with God? What are the fundamental ways that I do this?

3. What kind of rhythm do I have in terms of active engagement and time for solitude, reflection, prayer?

Am I uncomfortable with solitude or with silence? If so, why?

4. How well do I use my daily opportunities for "little solitudes"? Am I able at times in silence to become detached from myself in order to see all things from God's perspective?

5. What kind of time do I give myself to Sabbath (a longer period away from busyness) -- to become refreshed and refocused, rejuvenated and recollected in the midst of an active life?

Do I need more time? If so, will I take it?

6. Do I practice any form of meditation? If so, what do I do? How does this practice center me, drawn me closer to God?

7. How is my prayer life? In what ways do I listen to God?

How adept am I in recognizing God's presence and guidance in the events of my everyday life? How might I become more aware of God in ordinary life?

8. My comments about Thompson's statement, "The primary purpose of prayer is not to change God but to change us. In prayer we open to the possibility of being directly influenced by God, we admit and acknowledge God's primacy, and we begin consciously to align ourselves with God's purposes in the world."

