

## **Relationships – The Most Important Aspect of the Four-R Leadership Model**

Healthy relationships are a vital component of health and well-being. Of course, the most important relationship is the one with God. God wants us to love him first and most. At the same time God talks about relationships with others – loving others as we love ourselves. This certainly finds application with families, marriages, friendships, co-workers, neighbors, and others.

But what about the relationship with oneself? In *The Art of Virtue-based Transformational Leadership*, Christian authors Dr. Mark McCloskey and Jim Louwsma focus on this aspect of relationships. They maintain that for leaders to be good and godly leaders inwardly they need with God's help to pursue and nurture the following:

### **Dynamic Determination**

**Dynamic Determination** enables you to keep your focus on who you are and why you exist – core values and mission. It is an alignment of deep personality and godly traits energizing people to sustain constructive activity even in the face of adversity and to accomplish valued ends in the face of resistance. People with **Dynamic Determination** keep going in the face of obstacles and against odds; stay the course and cross the finish line; go the extra mile giving their best; translate good intentions into tangible outcomes; and turn vision into reality.

### **Intellectual Flexibility**

From a Christian perspective **Intellectual Flexibility** is knowing and respecting what God says; seeing what works in the real world of church, work, family, relationships, and life in general; and adjusting our lives and ministry with what we see. It is being imaginative, curious, humble, and teachable. **Intellectual Flexibility** desires to see life through the eyes of others as well as to see the demands of reality and created order. It is vital for ministry!

### **Courageous Character**

**Courageous Character** discerns what is right and what is wrong based on God's love and God's will. It speaks and acts publicly based on their moral principles and core values, even at the risk of personal sacrifice. It says "yes" to the right things and "no" to the wrong things, even if it's inconvenient and uncomfortable – because this is who you are and what you want to do.

### **Emotional Maturity**

**Emotional maturity** is the capacity to endure joyfully in the face of stress, adversity, and change. It is about living and leading from a secure and settled place, where issues of power, identity, and esteem have been substantially resolved. **Emotional maturity** is not about living without lingering stress or ever-present disappointment. That is part of life and leadership. But it is about maintaining our equilibrium and joy in times of crisis and stress.

How does one grow in this aspect of **relationships**? Certainly, through the faithful use of God's Word and Sacraments. Also praying for God's blessing in this area is important. There is value in learning from good leaders who model these aspects of leadership. Finally, reading good leadership materials can be helpful for leadership and moving ministry forward.