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CHAPTER

# 5

## Down to the Basics

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## “Cameron’s Teachable Moment”

*I*sn’t it interesting how a thought-provoking story like Cameron’s can make us think about life’s situations in a different light?

I’m sure we could all empathize with the frustration that Cameron felt over the result of his Math test. When he tried to justify himself, many of us may even have smiled as we recalled situations when we’ve done the same thing. Justifying provides a temporary escape from reality, just as it did for Cameron. It’s an easy trap to fall into, isn’t it?

The big problem is that many people carry on this justification process for years, often not realizing the effect it has on their lives.

You may even be able to think of someone you know who has never learned to *face the music* as Cameron did with the help of his mother. These people miss out on the teachable moments of life and rob themselves of growth opportunities.

Even though we may not always be happy about it, life delivers many of these learning moments. The most interesting part is that they seem to be uniquely tailored for each and every one of us. Often, we don’t even notice them, much less learn from them; we just continue to plod along, wondering why we don’t pass the *tests of life*. Ironic, isn’t it?

The sad reality is that many don’t know how to recognize these moments or learn from them. Part of the problem is a lack of awareness of a very important key –proactive reflection. Through reflection, one can *experience* these moments by putting oneself into a given situation and *relating* to and *learning* from it, without actually participating in it.

Let’s try this process of reflection with Cameron’s situation.

Could you relate to him? Have you ever walked through the rain with your boots dragging? Have you looked for the deepest puddles

## Rene Says

Organization is the greatest form of responsibility in this life. When you choose to exercise your spirit's will upon the people, objects or thoughts that form your environment, you are taking responsibility for your life. You immediately portray a sense of direction that others recognize and respect.

Instantaneously your life improves.

Otherwise, you float through life being acted upon like a ship without a rudder – that's not very comforting. As a matter of fact, it's plain frightening. Try running a production plant without a schedule. Better yet, take your scout troop out for a 6-day camp

Continued next page...

to walk in, as most children do? Have you ever felt the utter hopelessness that Cameron felt when he acknowledged that *math had defeated him*? You know, that total feeling of disgust in the pit of your stomach when you know you've really blown it – a time when your self-esteem has taken a major beating? Have you sometimes felt paralyzed by your feelings of defeat, as Cameron did?

Many of you could also relate to Angela as she took one look at Cameron's face and instantly recognized his need for a mentor, not a lecture.

Challenging, isn't it – trying to facilitate learning for someone else? It's especially difficult when the learner won't allow humility to replace stubbornness.

We've all taken turns being *the Cameron* of the story at some point in our lives. While some of us learned and moved forward as he did, others continue to blame *the math teacher* for the failing grade on *the test of life*.

Fortunately, Cameron was not left alone to try to solve his problem; he had help in the form of an experienced sage mentor – his mother, Angela. She knew how to effectively use *FaithSkills* with their associated Essential Foundations to help Cameron learn how to satisfy his *inward* needs for *acceptance* and

knowledge.

Angela chose the common and familiar element of water to facilitate the learning process. Why? Because water illustrates many of the all-encompassing basics of the *fundamental* foundations that Cameron needed to learn about to be successful in math.

Let us consider **Organization** the first of the fundamental foundations.

All things in this world, including you, are *organized* in some fashion. Water is no exception. If it is not organized, it will carve out its own path without regard for anyone or anything else, often wreaking havoc in Nature. Think of the damage caused by flooding – water *unorganized*, if you will. When it is organized, however, such as for use in dams that generate hydro-electric power, or reservoirs used for irrigation, it serves useful purposes.

Sages understand that the same applies in life. Without organization to control our direction, we become distracted and frustrated, unable to achieve our desired goals. Just as Cameron realized that water must be organized in order to be useful, we, too, must organize ourselves and the elements in our lives to accomplish our

## Rene Says

without an itinerary.

I'll guarantee you a breakdown if you don't organize the events. Notice how organized individuals always seem to radiate a sense of purpose.

Doesn't that give you a sense of self worth? No wonder organizers are often propelled into positions of leadership. Have you ever noticed people's reactions when they realize they don't have to do the organizing because you've already done it? It's great, isn't it? OK – besides your mother-in-law who has everything already organized. There is comfort when there's organization – it's critical to our very existence..

purposes.

When we do this, we are satisfying the first of our *fundamental needs*, that of acceptance. We need to feel that we belong, so we organize ourselves and our circumstances accordingly. We try to spend most of our time with people that like us and accept us for who we are. We attend events where we feel comfortable and try to avoid those that threaten our sense of belonging. We often arrange to go to social events with friends, rather than go alone, so we know that we can rely on at least one group to accept us. At the extreme end of this longing, we may even be willing to sacrifice our freedoms, integrity, health, and dreams to try to ensure our acceptance by someone else.

Reflect for a moment on your life. Do you feel accepted within your circles of influence? If not, why not? What do you do to try to facilitate it? Have you sometimes *organized* people or events in your life according to the patterns as previously mentioned? When you do feel accepted, does this change the way you *organize* yourself and the people or circumstances in your life? Why?

Sage individuals understand that they must take action and *organize* essential parts of their lives if they expect to meet their desired goals. They fully recognize that they can't expect results without effort.

Sages also realize that everything existing in this world is the result of a pattern of organization. They know that since matter cannot be destroyed, its opposite must also be true – matter cannot mysteriously appear; it's simply organized or re-organized into the state in which we see or experience it. This principle explains why Sages have the following attitude:

“There’s nothing new under the sun.”



Do you now recognize the role that organization plays in satisfying your need for acceptance? When you use this knowledge in your own life's circumstances, how could the results be different from those you've known before? How could the sage attitude have an influence in your life?

Go ahead, take the time to write your thoughts down in the adjoining boxes we've provided.

Did you consider these benefits?

- You know that everything that exists in this world is formed according to some pattern. When you analyze and determine what that pattern is, there are no more mysteries, only discoveries that can enhance your quality of life.

- Once you discover the relevant patterns applicable in your circumstances – whether they involve following particular methods for finishing renovations on your house, or arranging a training conference for your employees – you will no longer feel intimidated or powerless because you will now have control over the situation.

Organization suggests **Order**

## Focus Box

My thoughts...

the second of the *fundamental foundations*.

Consider this thought. When there's been confusion in your life, did you feel a sense of order? On the other hand, when you've enjoyed harmony, did you recognize an order? This understanding emphasizes the truth of the related sage attitude:

“There's an order to all things.”

Cameron was also reminded of this truth when he and Angela discussed cooking macaroni. It could not have been cooked first and the water added later – the water had to go into the pot first.

Many routines in our lives are completed according to an order, but we probably don't even think about it – things like morning rituals, dishes, running errands, and so on. Order usually makes our necessary tasks easier and faster to complete.

This foundation of order helps to satisfy our *fundamental need* for **acceptance**.

Angela knew that as she directed the conversation to present information to Cameron in an orderly way, logically moving from one idea to another, he would be able to make sense out of his situation and find his own successful solutions to his problems. The result? He felt useful and thus, acceptable – his self-esteem was restored.



Is it empowering to know that there is an order to all things – that there really is nothing you can't understand if you discover its order? How could this foundation and its associated attitude have empowered you in the past when you were making a difficult decision? Don't hesitate. Be spontaneous. Jot down your thoughts in the box to the right.

Order is often recognized in the form of patterns. Can you see

the tremendous benefits you can derive from creating your own patterns, such as working out daily, changing your eating habits, or choosing an employee of the month? Do you now recognize how this ability to form patterns can empower you to form the new habits you want and dismantle the ones that hold you back?

This brings us to **Purpose**  
the third of the *fundamental*  
*foundations*.

Catch the rest of Chapter 5 in:

***FaithSkills***  
*Discover*  
*the*  
*Essential Foundations*  
*of*  
***Permanent Success***

## Focus Box

My thoughts...