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CHAPTER

13

Sage Reflections

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We realize that the information presented in the last four chapters is new to many of you and for some may seem overwhelming! So, before we proceed any further, we want to reassure you that you are not alone in these feelings. This may be the first time that many of you have been exposed to such different perspectives. You will need time to digest them and determine how they can fit into your *auto pilot* behavior.

The chapter on the *Identifying* Foundations of intelligence, body and spirit may be the most unusual and perhaps the most difficult to absorb because it discusses ideas that are not concrete – you can't see, or touch, or taste, or smell the *intelligence* or the *spirit*. You can, however, feel their influences.

Could you identify with Bobbie's awakening experience as she talked with Bill? He opened her understanding to things that had always operated in her life, but she hadn't recognized them, or, if she did, she didn't know what they were.

Can you recall a life-changing experience – one where you felt that you would never be the same again? Why did you feel that way? What distinguished that experience from others you'd had? Would you say you were different because of something that happened deep within you – because your *spirit* was touched? Has this *changed feeling* remained with you? If so, it's because your spirit was involved.

As Bill explained to Bobbie, it is only through the physical body that the spirit can truly manifest itself.

Understanding the interrelationship among the spirit, body and intelligence satisfies our need to know who we truly are – it helps us to establish our unique identities.

However, if we hope to adequately meet this need for identity, we must have satisfied the 3 *fundamental needs* that precede this one, namely, Acceptance, Knowledge and Harmony; they build

upon each other.

We've mentioned this point often – that the needs build upon one another, as do the foundations, skills and virtues. Is it becoming clearer to you why we say that? Think of a ladder. In order to use one effectively, you need to climb one rung at a time in consecutive order. The needs and foundations build upon one another in a similar fashion. The concepts and principles acquired at one level are necessary in order to have success at the next.

Think about it. Without an appreciation for acceptance, knowledge and harmony, you would have trouble comprehending or even considering the value of knowing the three dimensions of your being and the relationship they have with one another. Why? Because you first need to feel comfortable within yourself – in other words, satisfy your *inward* needs for acceptance, knowledge and harmony. Consider this situation. If, for instance, you struggle with feeling accepted at work, home, at the gym, or any other place, and most of your energies are consumed with meeting that need and thus accepting yourself, how can you focus on finding out who you really are, when you're not even comfortable with who you presently perceive that you are? An interesting thought, isn't it? Why not acknowledge your own deep need for acceptance first. Satisfy it by consciously starting the process, and then enhance the process by reading your reflection off of other people from the actions you have with them. Use your *spiritual glasses* to read those reflections and you'll be amazed to discover how invigorating this process of *self-esteeming* is.

You also discovered three new *FaithSkills* associated with the *Identifying* Foundations. They are reflection, humility and discipline.

You've probably realized by now that we've frequently encouraged you to use the skill of reflection. We hope that you're gradually feeling more comfortable with your ability to exercise it. It is more than just thinking; it involves putting yourself into a given

situation and learning from it, without having the actual experience. As you did this in Bobbie's story, you could follow her through her thought processes and get answers to questions that you may not have thought of yourself. Learning can happen by utilizing your own experiences or those of others. Reflection is an interesting method of self-examination, isn't it?

Humility is another *FaithSkill* that helps one to look inward. It may be defined as *teachability*, or a willingness to learn. Sometimes, we humble ourselves because we recognize the need. Other times, circumstances humble us – we may have little choice in the matter.

It takes humility to consider the perspectives we've presented, especially if they don't fit into what you already know and understand. You may be venturing out of your comfort zone by even considering these concepts and their application in your life. You're not alone. Many people are just beginning to discover that they too have a spirit that drives them. We applaud you for having enough faith in yourself to exercise the courage needed to explore these new frontiers. Your spirit won't regret it.

Discipline is the third *FaithSkill* that is developed through the *Identifying Foundations*.

What comes to mind when you hear the word discipline? A new diet that you're trying hard to follow?

A New Year's resolution that you've managed to keep? Keeping quiet when you really want to say something unkind? Going to work every day whether you feel like it or not?

Sages explain this word as follows: matching your physical

Think about it

Do you now recognize what those *forces* are that act upon you and where they come from? It's amazing isn't it, how your *fundamental needs* act like currents on your daily actions. Imagine what you could do if you harnessed them through conscious application of these new understandings?

Rene Says

Discouraged? Have you ever wondered why it is so easy to get discouraged? I have. Remember that this world is not our natural state of existence. As spiritual beings having a physical experience, we're growing at a rapid pace. We want to learn about our identities and enormous capacities.

Yes, it may seem simple but that doesn't make it easy; that's why we can get so easily discouraged, especially if we forget that we chose this path. It's natural for us to enjoy those moments of relaxation that allow us to shed the burden of the physical vessel we occupy in order to regain a sense of our natural state. Sadly, for many it is the desire for those

Continued next page...

desires with your spirit's needs, then channeling them in such a sustained way that, despite distractions, you can accomplish your goals. Does it sound easy? It's not!

Disciplining ourselves is probably one of the most difficult things we need to do while we're here. Everyone has areas to work on, but we use our agency to choose whether or not we will. Others can try to discipline us, but the most effective kind comes from within – only you can really discipline yourself – only I can truly discipline myself.

Reflect for a moment on these questions. Have you exercised self-discipline in the past? What circumstances determined the area in which you would focus? How did you begin the process? Did you always maintain your *self-control*? If not, how did you regain your determination to get back *on track*? It didn't happen overnight did it?

If you've had difficulty with developing this skill – we all have at one time or another – could it be that you confused your spirit's needs with your physical wants? Or, worse yet, did you allow your intelligence to justify your physical wants regardless of what your spirit said? No wonder discipline is hard to maintain.

However, it is possible to make major strides, if we choose to. How? By following this step-by-step process that begins with satisfying the *fundamental need* for acceptance, and then building upon that success, need by need.

This book is presenting to you the fundamentals necessary for building that enduring, permanent success process.

However, you are the one that must absorb them. You are the one that must implement them if these successes are to occur.

The process is simple, but not easy. It's never-ending and ever-changing because circumstance, people, and needs are always changing. So don't be too hard on yourself at first, don't get discouraged with your efforts: patience will win this battle!

I can't emphasize this enough.

Catch the rest of Chapter 13 in:

FaithSkills
Discover
the
Essential Foundations
of
Permanent Success

Rene Says

moments of comfort that allows them to blindly respond to the powerful allure of alcohol and drugs. You see, when under the influence of these awful vices, we deaden our physical bodies and gain a false sense of our natural state, or spiritual beings. Because many have forgotten their purpose, or are uncomfortable with the degree of difficulty that life's challenges have presented, they choose the path of denial and float through life unconsciously. Now that's discouraging. So, pick up your socks and take another step. It's a journey we're on and I've yet to see a trip without a valley or two. Remember – the greatest growth occurs in the valleys, not on the mountains tops.