

The Power of Partnership... The Practice

In an earlier page-length summary I explored “THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP...the principle,” laying some of the biblical and historical foundation for an accountability partnership, from which I have benefitted since January of 1985. This is a summary of practical dimensions.

Beginning an accountability partnership.

Start with a “pilot” project with someone of the same gender (you may know them well or just casually) and that you believe also seeks to honor God with his or her life. Seek someone who will meet with you every other week for three months and help you focus on a few specific goals you have set for yourself.

If it goes well, make a commitment for a year with a “covenant” that includes your mutual desire to honor God in the whole of your life and ministry.

Setting some accountability goals.

The point is to reinforce consistency in areas you have already demonstrated are of value to you, not to try to do a dozen things that have never or rarely been part of your life previously. Perhaps you have daily devotions sporadically a couple of times a week, and you desire for them to truly be part of your daily life. Or you periodically make attempts at diet and exercise to better care for yourself physically, but you want to maintain a certain weight and exercise pattern.

You may want to brainstorm a possible “top ten” list of accountability goals, to which you can answer “yes, I have” or “no, I haven’t” in your regular meetings. These goals should cover the different arenas of your life, for instance:

Spiritually: I will read my Bible daily.

I will pray on a daily basis for those on my prayer list.

I will write in a journal each day to reflect upon God’s work in my life.

Physically: I will exercise for at least 30 minutes at least 3 days a week.

I will maintain a weight of ____ through eating properly.

Family: I will date my spouse (alone, in a setting where we can talk) weekly.

I will set a time to “enter the world” of each of my children weekly.

Mentally: I will read ____ books a month.

I will enroll in Wesley Seminary at IWU (I had to work that in!)

Financially: I will review with my spouse our budget on a monthly basis.

I will give each week \$____ to my local church or to missions.

I will save each week \$____ toward goals important to me and my family.

There are goals that can be set for your ministry activity, the development of your social life, etc. Again, these are not all new activities, and if a “top ten” list is too long, go for a “super six” or a “formational five.” A high probability of success is important!

Making the most of your accountability “appointments.”

Start with an every-other-week rhythm. First one person goes down their list, answering “yes” or “no” to each goal, then the other takes their turn. Start by covering the goals, then any other struggles or successes you’d like to share. Conclude by each praying for the other.

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