



Personal Growth Processor

Introduction

Growth: you can't journey through life without it. Can you recall standing against the kitchen wall, or perhaps it was your bedroom door, while one of your parents drew a line across the top of your head, indicating your growth since the last measurement. How many times were you admonished to just act your age, a sure sign that there was more to life than just growing big and strong? Most likely some of your earliest memories include the question, "Why don't you just grow up?"

Doctors look for the signs of healthy physical growth at every physical exam. Counselors and psychologists help us understand that along with our physical development comes relational, emotional and intellectual growth.

Even the Bible is not silent when it comes to this topic:

- We are told that as a child here on earth, Jesus, "continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." Luke 2:40
- We are instructed as believers in Christ to "grow up in all aspects into him, who is the head, even Christ." Ephesians 4:15
- Peter provides us with a growth analogy: "Like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation." I Peter 2:2
- Growth is the final instruction/charge to believers: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." II Peter 3:18

But, how do we know if we are really growing? For better or for worse, we have plenty of tools to help measure our physical growth and health. And there is an abundance of inventories and tests designed to help measure our emotional, mental and relational development.

However, when it comes to charting our spiritual growth, we don't find a whole lot of resources. Why not? The assessment of a whole person is more mysterious and not as easily defined. How do you measure the development of character and heart?

Given these parameters, the Personal Growth Processor is designed to help assess your overall development as a person. It is not meant to be something that produces feelings of condemnation and tremendous guilt, but is simply a tool to help process and evaluate where you are in your overall growth journey. It will help you identify any mid-course adjustments that are needed.

To get the most out of this experience, set aside an hour of your time and find a place where you will not be distracted. First, take a moment to pray and ask God to grant you wisdom, insight and the ability to process honestly. Then relax and enjoy the discovery experience.

Remember, as with any kind of assessment, celebrate the areas where you are doing well, and with renewed energy adjust those areas of your life that could still use some growth.

Blessings,

Mark Shupe
Pastor of Small Groups
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SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. What words would you use to describe your relationship with God over the past 12 months?

2. What practices help you grow in your relationship with God? (For example: reading, reflecting, journaling, Scripture memory, praying, listening to music, church attendance). How consistent have you been in engaging in those growth practices?

3. Spend some time reflecting on your level of commitment to the practices of a growing believer in Christ. How are you doing in terms of church attendance, giving of your time, talent and treasure to the work of God?

4. In a typical day, how often do you think about God's presence and how your thoughts and actions are aligning with or contradicting the priorities of Scripture?

- Rarely
- In times of panic
- Regular part of my thoughts

5. What are some recurring themes, struggles or issues that you believe God is asking you to give attention to? How will you specifically do that?



RELATIONAL GROWTH

1. How would you describe the relationships in your life?

- Non-existent
- Only happen if I initiate
- A few connected friends

2. Who are the people in your life that you pursue for wisdom and counsel?

3. Which phrase would best characterize your level of authenticity in your relating to God and others? Why?

- Closed minded towards God and others.
- Afraid to let others see the real me, so I work hard to present a good front.
- Tend to hide behind various masks to protect myself.
- Willing to open up to a few trusted friends.
- Honestly process my thoughts and feelings with God and/or some people who know me well.
- Tend to wear my emotions on my sleeve.

4. What are some practices or disciplines that have helped you grow relationally?

5. Are there any relationships that God is asking you to seek out or cultivate? What might that look like?



EMOTIONAL GROWTH

1. Which phrase would best describe your view of emotions?

- Just the facts! Don't see much value in emotions.
- It is okay for a woman to be emotional, but not for a man.
- Emotions are a window to the soul.
- Emotions are God-given and enrich our relationships and life experiences.

2. How comfortable are you in expressing what is really going on in your heart or soul to God or another person?

- Scared to death
- Somewhat comfortable
- A regular part of my communication

3. What are some of your emotional flags or trigger points that indicate something might be out of whack in your heart?

4. What practices could help you appropriately express your true feelings to God and others?

5. What could you do that would help you be more aware of the emotional condition of your life? What practices or disciplines could help you keep damaging emotions in check?



INTELLECTUAL GROWTH

1. What do you do on a regular basis to engage and sharpen your mind?

2. What has God used in the past year to shape and mold your thought processes and perspective on life? What are you reading? What books have influenced you?

3. What thoughts tend to occupy your mind? What do you daydream about? What keeps you awake at night?

4. Do you honestly feel like you are progressing away from a "me first" attitude and towards an "other-centered" mindset? Why or why not?

5. What will you do in the coming year to ensure the development, sharpening and refinement of your mind/attitude?



PHYSICAL GROWTH

1. How many times per week do you engage in some kind of physical activity for at least 30 minutes?

2. How many hours of sleep are you averaging per night?

3. Do you practice any kind of food or diet disciplines? If so, what are they? If not, are you sensing a need to be more aware of what you eat?

4. How do you handle and process the stresses and busyness of life? Are there any adjustments God is asking you to make to your schedule or daily practices?

5. What renews and refreshes you? How often do you engage in these renewing activities, events or practices? How can you more consistently incorporate these life-enriching practices into your regular routine of life?



ACTION POINTS

1. Based upon your processing of the above five areas of your life, list in order of priority three or four action points that you will implement into your life in the next 30 days.

2. Identify and contact a person (spouse, friend, pastor) who can come alongside of you by praying for you and offering support and encouragement as you implement some of these life adjustments.
