

The Space for Grace Approach

Taking a Space for grace approach is explicitly integrating a spiritual dimension into professional organisational and individual change. We believe it is vital to build from extensive human wisdom about change. We follow recognised good OD practice principles such as client ownership; experiential methods; emotional engagement; contextual application and follow-through. We strive for professional excellence. But we also believe that individual and therefore organisational change involves a spiritual dimension as do many leading management writers. For OD to be effective with Christian NGOs, churches and mission agencies any major change process should intentionally connect with their faith base. Faith clearly influences behaviour.

The following principles distinguish a 'space for grace' approach from simply good OD. As space for grace facilitators we hold ourselves accountable to these principles:

DISCERN HOW GOD IS ALREADY AT WORK AND WHETHER THE TIMING IS RIGHT (AS WE BELIEVE GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF CHANGE).

This discernment can take a variety of forms, but a key indicator is the extent to which the leadership is open to change and genuinely owns the process. We may need to wait for the right time - God's timing.

PRAY FOR YOUR CLIENT AND GET OTHERS TO INTERCEDE FOR THEM.

Pray that they will hear God speak and ask God to give you genuine interest and love for them.

LISTEN TO GOD AND TO THE PEOPLE INVOLVED.

Discern what is really going on in the context and under the surface - what are the core issues? Ask for guidance in planning and facilitating the process. Seek to be in God's presence and consistently ask what God wants you to do. Trust God to use you.

DESIGN THE INTERVENTION BASED ON A BIBLICAL PROCESS OF CHANGE.

Real and sustainable change involves conviction, repentance, forgiveness and restitution. It is not just about learning new head knowledge and skills. Have the courage to catalyse transformative change at the level of heart (attitude and behaviour).

FACILITATE WITH GRACE BY SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND, EMPATHISE, SUPPORT AND APPRECIATE.

Resist the temptation to judge, compare or take sides. Take a solution-oriented approach. Inspire hope that change is possible. Strive to live out the fruit of the Spirit throughout the process.

CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR MORE TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS TO DEVELOP.

Give people the opportunity to tell their stories without feeling judged. Structure meaningful conversations and nurture healthy relationships. Create opportunities for people to pray for each other if appropriate.

CREATE AND HOLD SPACES FOR GOD'S SPIRIT TO INSPIRE CHANGE.

Use reflections, devotions or Bible studies to help individuals and groups to listen intentionally to what God is saying to them (in ways that fit the client's faith tradition). Give people time to hear from God on their own: about their contribution to an issue; where they experienced his presence or absence in a situation; or how to move forward.

WALK ALONGSIDE THE CLIENT AFTER ANY INTERVENTION.

Support them to take responsibility. Provide ongoing follow-through, whether practical, emotional or spiritual as they implement and adjust to change. Go the extra mile with them.

HUMBLY RECOGNISE THAT WE ARE ONLY INSTRUMENTS IN A CHANGE PROCESS.

We are not in charge. Ultimately it is God's work and responsibility. We cannot take the credit.