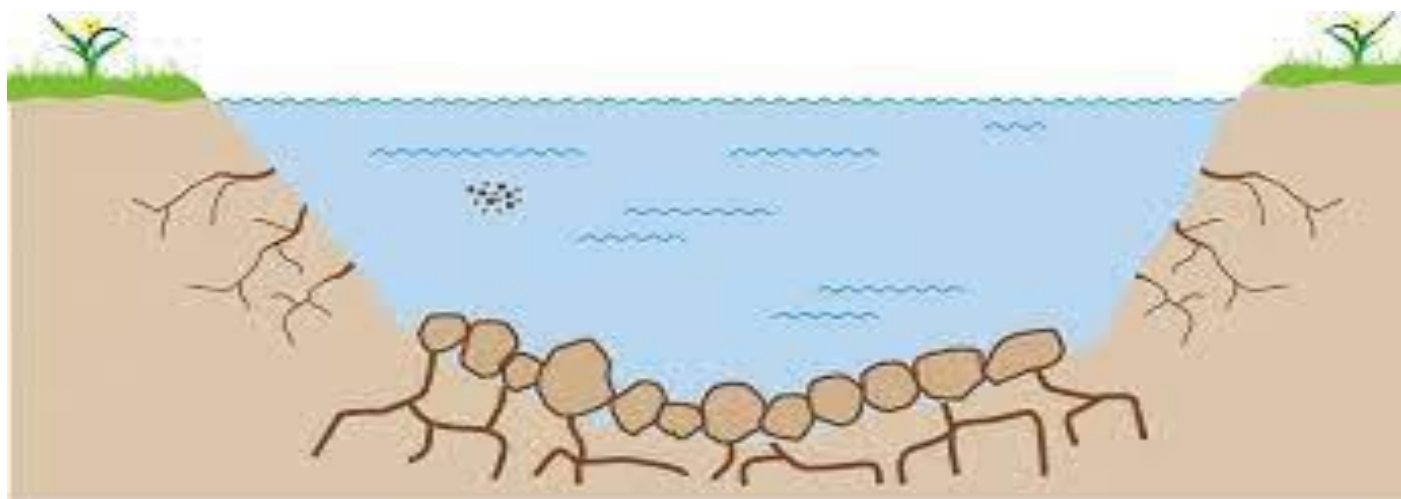


Serving Confidently Amidst Strain, Uncertainty and Change

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A guiding analogy: Uncertainty when traversing the river of change

(room left for drawing and notes 😊)



Loses associated with change that accentuate uncertainty:

- **Safety and Security:** One does not feel as certain that they will be ok.
- **Relationships:** Contact with people who matter is lost, or the nature of the relationship changes.
- **Competence:** One feels less certain of their ability to perform or accomplish valued tasks.
- **Mission and Purpose:** Deeply held convictions or purposes are no longer able to be realised.

God-given strengths, values, and personal convictions/callings

- They lift and provide meaningful direction and service amidst uncertainty

Identifying and expressing strengths

Tools that help with identifying strengths:

- Values in Action Signature Strength Test
 - Take it for free at <https://www.viacharacter.org>
- Personal reflection and feedback on your gifts, abilities, heart's desires, and talents
 - You may like to use the "S.H.A.P.E.O" acrostic as you ponder this (see appendix A).

Hallmarks of a person's signature strengths include:

- Ownership and authenticity (This is the real me)
- A feeling of excitement while displaying it, especially at first
- Natural affinity or rapid learning when first practiced
- Strong desire to find new ways to use it
- A sense of inevitability in using the strength (Can't stop me doing this; it does not have to be on a to-do list).
- Joy, energy and enthusiasm when using it.

Strength identification is not enough. In periods of uncertainty, create a designated time in your schedule when you will exercise one or more of your signature strengths (preferably in a new way) amidst the period of uncertainty at work or at home or in leisure.

- Power to Change's PDP tool assists with this reflection and application when considering **role development goals** and negotiating one's **critical role objectives**.

Strengths application:

Take the test at <https://www.viacharacter.org>

- My VIA results: _____

Discuss the following with others around you:

- Gifts, abilities, heart's desires, and talents others have commented on (see SHAPEO)

Pray for one another that God would make this clear

Values: Organisation and Personal

The espoused values of my Christian community or organisation:

Consider your own core values related to the following key areas of life:

Spiritual life	Physical life
Family/most significant relationships	Friendships
Vocation/work	Emotional life
Further education	Finances

For more detail or reflection, see Appendix A.

Clarify callings and convictions

This concerns both personal reflection and community discernment with one's team and expressions of the body of Christ.

See Appendix B

Acceptance and Commitment

Acceptance:

- Accepting the reality of the uncertainty that is, without entering into rumination or struggle, and "make room".
- Refocus on the present moment.

Commitment:

- Identify and clarify strengths, values, convictions and callings
- Choose to enact these while accepting the reality of your current experience

"... I tell you, do not worry about your life ...
Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air ...
See the flowers of the field ...
Do not worry about tomorrow..."

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness"

Matthew 6:25-34

APPENDIX A: Reviewing one's core ministry convictions and life values

Values are the heart's deepest desires for the way in which we want to interact with and relate to the world, other people, and ourselves. They are leading principles from which we can articulate convictions that guide and motivate our movement through life. Core ministry convictions are an important part of a vocational Christian worker's life values. Values and convictions are not the same as goals. Values and convictions are the directions we want to move in, whereas goals are destinations we want to arrive at along the way.

1. Family relations.

What you would like this aspect of your life to look like, or to have looked like overall in 50 years? _____

What sort of family relationships do you want to have? _____

What personal qualities would you like to bring to those relationships? _____

How would you interact with others if you were the "ideal you" in these relationships? _____

2. Marriage.

What sort of partner would you like to be in an intimate relationship? _____

What personal qualities would you like to develop? _____

How would you interact with your partner if you were the ideal you" in this relationship? _____

3. Parenting.

Would sort of parent would you like to be? _____

What sort of qualities would you like to have? _____

What sort of relationships would you like to build with your children? _____

How would you behave if you were the "ideal you"? _____

4. Friendships/social life.

If you could be the best friend possible, how would you behave towards your friends? _____

What sort of friendships would you like to build? _____

5. Career/employment.

What do you value in your work? _____

What would make it more meaningful? _____

What you would like this aspect of your life to look like, or to have looked like overall in 50 years? _____

What kind of worker would you like to be? _____

If you were living up to your own ideal standards, what personal qualities would you like to bring to your work? _____

6. Education/personal growth and development.

What do you value about learning, education, training or personal growth? _____

What new skills would you like to learn? _____

What knowledge would you like to gain? _____

7. Recreation/fun/leisure.

What sorts of hobbies, sports, or leisure activities do you enjoy? _____

How do you relax and unwind? _____

How do you have fun? _____

What sorts of activities would you like to do? _____

8. Spiritual life:

What is important to you in this area of life? _____

What would you like to be true of you when you look back at the end of your life concerning your faith? _____

What does this suggest about your values in this area of life? _____

9. Environment and community life.

How would you like to contribute to your community and environment? _____

10. Health/physical wellbeing.

What are your values in relation to maintaining your physical well-being? _____

How do you want to look after your health with regard to sleep, diet, exercise, smoking, alcohol, etc.? _____

Why is this important? _____

List the top 3 values below so that they can be referred to and kept in focus throughout other activities of goal setting and exploration of new activities.

My top 3:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

APPENDIX B: Self-reflection exercise on calling/ministry convictions

Step 1: Relating with God

What originally motivated you to join and serve in ministry? Another way to ask this may be: "The reason I got into ministry was..."

Ask God to unearth, refine, or reaffirm some central convictions. Then you may like to take some extended time to simply read a relevant section or two of Scripture, and as you read noting anything that "stands out" as particularly significant or impacting for you. Below are some ideas of relevant texts:

Initial texts of prayer: Psalm 25 Psalm 86

Select one of the portions of Scripture to read:

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Whole gospel of Mark | <input type="radio"/> Luke 9:18-24:53 | |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 Timothy | <input type="radio"/> 2 Timothy | <input type="radio"/> Titus |
| <input type="radio"/> Ephesians | <input type="radio"/> Colossians | <input type="radio"/> Romans 1-3; 5-8; 12-15 |
| <input type="radio"/> 1 Peter | <input type="radio"/> 2 Peter | |

My reflections:

In light of the above, what remains as your core convictions? Has anything morphed, been added, or lost?

Step 2: "...for we are God's handiwork...created ... to do good works..." (Eph. 2:10)

Utilise the following as a means of self-assessment of the handiwork of God you are.

Spiritual Gifts: Ministry abilities of particular fruitfulness or effectiveness identified by others.

- I feel that God as gifted me in...
-

Heart's desire: Just what you enjoy! Passions that you have and values you consider very important.

- My passion in ministry is...
 - What I really enjoy doing is...
-

Abilities - Training/talents: The things you have been trained and have become skilled in

- Skills I have developed include...
-

Personality preferences: Your tendencies towards relating with others, working and coping.

- Qualities other people admire in me include...
-

Experiences: Past experiences that have shaped you generally or convictions that hold you.

Opportunities/Needs: Peculiarities of a place and time that may also play a role in identifying a call at this time.

Step 3: Summary Comments:

From God's word I am convicted about: _____

From my "SHAPEo" what stands out is ... _____

As a response to Jesus, I need to make sure I ... _____