



Impacting Others like a Domino

As I sat under the starlit night, I looked up in wonder and amazement of the power of God's Creation. I sat there that night in awe of the beauty of the stars in the sky, the intricacy of nature, and the finer details of Moon in the sky. I sat and reflected on all of the power and majesty of God realizing there are so many things that are out of my control and outside of my understanding. I sat and reflected on Jeremiah 33:3,

Jeremiah 33:3 – 'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

As I sat in that moment, God struck me with a realization that would change my future, change my plans, and change my life. It was in that moment that I realized that I could not spend my life consumed with the things I could not change and sidetracked by the things that are out of my control. It was in that moment that God challenged me to take action and be the change that would impact the world in a way that would honor Him forevermore. I made a resolution that night that I would start small, but I would start in making a change in my life that hopefully would bring about a cascading effect in the lives of others.

What brought about this idea? It was the prompting of the Holy Spirit as I sat under the stars and held a tiny "domino" in my hand. As I held that domino, I reflected on the way I played dominos as a kid. I would line each domino up one after another and push one over just to see it impact all the others. One after another, each domino would knock over the next until finally no single domino was left standing. As I held that domino, I realized that the little choices that I make each day can bring about a life changing enormous impact upon the world around me.

The Domino Effect

Over the years, I have learned much about the importance of the "Domino Effect." Webster's Dictionary defines the "Domino Effect" as 'a cumulative effect produced when one event initiates a succession of similar events.' Consider this simple illustration for a moment,

On its own, a domino isn't much. It's about two inches tall and weighs about as much as a small box of matches. But with the domino comes a force. In fact, one domino has the capability of knocking down another one that is 1.5x its size.

Imagine a long string of dominos lined up one after the other, with each one progressively 1.5x larger than the last. If you were to knock down the first two-inch domino, you would set off a chain reaction that would, knock down by the 18th domino something the size of the "Leaning Tower of Pisa," by the 23rd domino

QUESTION

What kind of impact can the "Domino Effect" have in your life?

something the size of the “Eiffel Tower,” and by the 57th domino it could produce enough force to knock over a domino stretching the distance between the earth and the moon.

Never forget this principle: Your small actions have a big impact. Take for example a father and the time he spends with his children each day. This may seem like a small fraction of time each day, but this seemingly small investment of time makes a large impact upon the day of his child. Actually, more often than not, the impact upon the child is the most life shaping and spiritual transforming investment into his or her day.

QUESTION

What kind of impact can small decisions make in your life? Explain.

The Three C's of the Domino Effect

What we learn from the Domino Effect is that majoring on getting the right things right in the little things will help you get the right things right in the big things. Otherwise, success builds on success. The Domino Effect changes your life and the lives of others around you. Think about how the Domino Effect can be applied in your life today by implementing the Three C's.

Commitment

Over the years of coaching Cross-Country and Basketball Teams I have noticed that one of the most important recipes for a “Winning Formula” is Commitment. Winning teams don't win by accident nor can they simply rely on their talent to win the competition. Winning teams display an unwavering commitment to one another as well as the common cause of victory.

There are two basic ingredients that are needed to develop the virtue of commitment. First, commitment always starts within the “Heart.” I once read that in the Kentucky Derby, the winning horse effectively runs out of oxygen after the first half mile, and he goes the rest of the way on heart. If you want to make a difference in this world and make a big impact, then develop the virtue of “commitment” as a core value. Never lose sight of this core value and never waiver from it. David McNally observed, "Commitment is the enemy of resistance, for it is the serious promise to press on, to get up, no matter how many times you are knocked down."

QUESTION

What does it mean for you to develop the virtue of commitment as a core value?

The second ingredient is “Action.” Commitment is more than words; it is a determination to carry out the action required to make a positive impact in the world. Arthur Gordon observed, "Nothing is easier than saying words. Nothing harder than living them day after day."

The Domino Effect Challenge #1

Choose to develop commitment as a core value in your life and you will make a big impact in this world for the Lord.

Start this process by answering these questions:

Question #1 – What is one area of my faith where I can grow in my commitment?

Examples: Increase my prayer time, Memorize one passage a week, start studying a specific book of the Bible: _____

Question #2 – What is my plan for developing this commitment on a daily basis?

Examples: Choose a specific time of day to read, pray, or study. Choose a Bible study to help guide you in studying a book of the Bible: _____

Consistency

Start small and consistently commit yourself to accomplishing your God given mission each day. I read about a study in 2004 that was completed by Temple University regarding Pablo Picasso's masterpiece "Guernica" considered to be the definitive piece of his career. The study discovered that the painting looks like the result of a sudden flash of inspiration with sporadic and unique brushstrokes. Gary Keller observes that within this study,

The analysis identified core pieces of his painting were found in his previous work, suggesting the masterpiece was the culmination of long chain of dominos that were knocked over continuously throughout his career. Picasso began with a simple vision and pursued it from a small starting point. His first sketch began with the end in mind and formed an extremely rough outline of a woman, a horse, and a bull - his first domino. From there he continued to knock over domino after domino, focusing on the outline, each character and object individually and, with few exceptions, sequentially. After 45 sketches and nearly a month's time, he had more or less created Guernica with no guesswork involved.

QUESTION

What are the small decisions that you can make today to shape a better future for tomorrow?

Picasso understood the power of consistent commitment in the little things. He lined up his dominos and moved from one task to the next creating the overwhelming impact of momentum that would impact the world. As he sharpened his ability, one stroke at a time, he remained focused on the overall goal of painting a piece of art that people would remember for centuries to come.

The Domino Effect Challenge #2

Small decisions are also known as "micro-decisions." They may seem small or insignificant at the time but as all these "micro-decisions" are added together then they begin making a major impact upon your future. Write down one "micro-decision" that you can make today to improve your life in three categories:

Category #1 - FAITH

My "micro-decision" for my Faith: _____

Category #2 - FAMILY

My "micro-decision" for my Family: _____

Category #3 - FUTURE

My "micro-decision" for my Future (Work): _____

Chain Reaction

Finally, you must always remember that the power behind the Domino Effect is found in its progress not results. Do not forget that you are striving to accomplish the cumulative effect of a chain reaction not just the success of one event or another.

Science has proven that the when you achieve success in one area of your life especially in carrying out a habit then it impacts the other areas in a positive manner. Accomplishing one goal leads you to desire to accomplish another and the list continues to grow along with the accomplishments.

Simply maintain the momentum of carrying out the right habits on a daily basis and these small, seemingly insignificant decisions will topple one obstacle after another and bring great achievement for the glory of God.

QUESTION

What are the dominos that you need to line up in your life to impact the world for the Lord?

The simple principle is life changing when it is applied in your life. It is easy to begin but it requires a diligent pursuit through trials and triumphs. Start small and watch God use the Domino Effect to accomplish great things in your life!

The Domino Effect Challenge #3

The Domino Effect works but only when applied in your life. Write down one domino in each of the three categories already mentioned and make it a goal to begin working on making that domino a reality in your walk with the Lord:

Category #1 - FAITH

The First "Domino" for my Faith: _____

Category #2 - FAMILY

The First "Domino" for my Family: _____

Category #3 - FUTURE

The First "Domino" for my Future (Work): _____

Special Challenge

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