



## Happy Thanksgiving!

### Sticks and Stones

We're all familiar with the command from the Bible in Matthew 7 which says, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged." This passage goes on to say, "Why do you worry about a splinter in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own?" Your friend may have an issue that he or she needs to deal with, but before you step in with some 'wise counsel' do a thorough inspection of your own life first. Good advice. This passage resonates with so many because we've lived it either as the judge or the person being judged.

Another passage we're familiar with is the woman who was about to be stoned to death for adultery. Jesus said to the crowd of men surrounding her, "He who is without sin let him cast the first stone." Of course no one was, or is, sinless and they all dropped their stones and walked away. Sticks and stones. Which are you more prone to use? Are you one who is ready to 'straighten out' a friend, workmate or family member? Or perhaps you find yourself rushing to judgment and hurling verbal 'stones' at them forgetting the mercy we appreciate so much from others. For those who aren't quite so bold the words may never leave your lips but they do come out in your mind and heart.

Points to ponder:

If your vision is getting blurry the first step you must make, even before getting an eye exam is to admit that change is needed. This is especially hard for those of us (okay I admit it) who need bifocals to read! Seeing clearly is the point Jesus is making in both situations above. The person doing the judging has not seen their own state of affairs clearly. This 'vision check' happens for me when I listen to my tone of voice and see the response in the person I'm talking with.

*"Education consists mainly of what we have to unlearn."*

*Mark Twain*

If I am baking with my nine year old daughter and she makes a mess while mixing up a cake mix how do I respond? Too often I get caught up in doing it 'right' instead of just allowing her to be a kid.

Second, reframe the conversation in your head and heart. Instead of thinking, "What is wrong with this person or situation?" begin to say, "What can I be thankful for about him or her?" The Thanksgiving holiday may bring you into contact with family members that will test you in this area. Instead of trying to fix blame and fault, be patient and seek to discover what can be learned about your attitudes when conflicts or setbacks occur.

Third, commit to cultivate a learners heart. This is taking step two and making it an intentional daily exercise. I have been working on a new way of seeing people by asking, "What can I learn from someone else today?" This postures me as someone who doesn't have all the answers and seeks value from others. Do this for a week and see what a shift occurs in your thinking.

Finally seek the help of a coach. Mindset is a very difficult thing to change on your own. (Remember step one!) Your blind spots, waning dedication to change and just busyness will snuff out your desire to change. Working with a coach will ensure that you are being real with yourself, being accountable for what you want to change and support you when you get discouraged with your progress.

### Announcements

I am starting a coaching group this January. The group will be focused around life mission and life balance. These two topics are key for many people (73% of people who hired a coach identify one of these as the reason). A group is a fun, supportive and economical way to pursue discovering your life mission and bring balance into your life. The group will meet twice a month and last for six months. I'm limiting the group to the first six people who sign up so contact me today if you have interest.

Blessings,  
Michael J. Pfau, M.Ed, PCC, CPCC

