

Part 3 – Living Your Gifts

"Now that I know what my gifts are, or have an idea of what they might be, how do I go about using and developing them to the glory of God, the growth of His Church, and fulfilment of His purpose?"

IMPLEMENTING YOUR S.H.A.P.E.¹

You have begun the SHAPE discovery process. You have examined your spiritual gifts, your heart's desires, your natural abilities, your personality bent and your life experiences. Now you need to consider how you are going to use the way God has shaped you to serve within the church.

So far you've taken the following steps in discovering your gifts and shape:

STEP 1: Pray for God's guidance and fill out the *S.H.A.P.E. Questionnaire* as objectively as you can. Then tabulate the results on your *S.H.A.P.E.PROFILE* Form.

STEP 2: Ask three close disciples friends to evaluate your gifts using the (S) part of the questionnaire. Ask them to evaluate you honestly and openly and return the test to you as soon as possible. Once the tests are returned, tabulate the results on your profile.

STEP 3: Evaluate all these tests to find which gift(s) the majority of the test results revealed to you. If there are major discrepancies, go discuss it with the ones who evaluated you to find out how they were thinking. If you think you had a gift that all the others say you do not, this could be sobering moment to help you reevaluate yourself. If you think you do not have a gift that everyone else said you do, this might be a time to realise a new gift. After you have done this, list your gift(s) on the *S.H.A.P.E.PROFILE* under the "Gifts" column.

STEP 4: Determine your heart-felt desires. Take the three heart tests (to determine the role(s) you love to be involved in, the types of people you like to work with, and the causes you like to champion or support) in the *Monitoring My Heartbeat* section. Make sure you listen to your heart and don't just select things you think you "should" do. God has made you in a special way to serve him and this includes your true heart desires. Then tabulate all of these under the appropriate column. Do the same for Abilities, Personality & Experiences.

Once you have completed these steps, move onto the next section – "Finding your ministry application".

¹ We are indebted to the following sources for much of the material in this packet: The Saddleback website at <http://www.saddlebackfamily.com/ministry/images/discoverytool.pdf>, Douglas Jacoby, *The Spirit* (Woburn, MA: DPI, 1998), and C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1994), 253-58.

FINDING YOUR MINISTRY APPLICATION

Now that you have filled the SHAPE sections of the ministry profile form, you now have the exciting task of discovering ministry applications for your profile. As you identify ministry ideas, you can then consider how inreach to the congregation and outreach to non-Christians can be achieved. Be sure to do this activity with a friend so that you can brainstorm together.

To help you come up with relevant questions to use in a brainstorming session, fill out the blank sections of the question template below (Ministry application questions for brainstorming) with:

1. a gift you have identified
2. a role you are passionate about
3. a cause you are passionate about – narrowed down to the top 2 or 3
4. the type of people you are passionate to serve – narrowed down to the top 2 or 3
5. finally, include your identified abilities – narrowed down to the strongest 2 or 3

Once the question template is filled out (feel free to reword it so that it makes sense), begin with a fellow brainstormer to answer the composed question taking into consideration your profile and your experience (P and E columns).

Then choose one or two of the ideas that strike you most and go after them with all your heart, mind, and strength to bring God the Glory. You have now found ways to serve God and to give your body as a living sacrifice for him (Rom. 12:1) and can begin to implement one aspect of God's will for your life.

You may want to modify things as you learn more. Feel free to explore more combinations of elements of your SHAPE. You are on a learning and serving path with God. Have fun!!!

Some considerations:

- For this exercise, it is advisable to select the top items 1 to 3 items in the roles, people, causes and motivated abilities column to reduce the number of combinations to formulate your questions. Don't worry - you'll be quite busy even if you come up with a few questions.
- You may, in some cases, compose ministry application questions that you cannot answer – feel free to discard them and move onto the next combinations.
- You may want to select as your fellow brainstormer someone that has the gift of administration (see the definition in SHAPE profile)

MINISTRY APPLICATION QUESTIONS FOR BRAINSTORMING

Using my (GIFT) _____,

How can I (ROLE) _____

(CAUSE) _____ for (PEOPLE) _____

Considering I have (ABILITIES) _____

Ministry Ideas:

Inreach:

Outreach:

Using my (GIFT) _____,

How can I (ROLE) _____

(CAUSE) _____ for (PEOPLE) _____

Considering I have (ABILITIES) _____

Ministry Ideas:

Inreach:

Outreach:

Using my (GIFT) _____,

How can I (ROLE) _____

(CAUSE) _____ for (PEOPLE) _____

Considering I have (ABILITIES) _____

Ministry Ideas:

Inreach:

Outreach:

Using my (GIFT) _____,
How can I (ROLE) _____
(CAUSE) _____ for (PEOPLE) _____
Considering I have (ABILITIES) _____

Ministry Ideas:

Inreach:

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Using my (GIFT) _____,
How can I (ROLE) _____
(CAUSE) _____ for (PEOPLE) _____
Considering I have (ABILITIES) _____

Ministry Ideas:

Inreach:

Outreach:

Using my (GIFT) _____,
How can I (ROLE) _____
(CAUSE) _____ for (PEOPLE) _____
Considering I have (ABILITIES) _____

Ministry Ideas:

Inreach:

Outreach:

MAKING YOURSELF AVAILABLE TO SERVE

Real servants make themselves available to serve.

I. The nature of a disciple and his/her time.

A. II Tim. 2:4. “No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer”.

B. Do you want to serve Jesus? Will you make time to use your spiritual gift?

C. When was the last time you denied yourself to serve Jesus?

II. Make a plan to use your gifts

How much time would you like to commit to each week for specifically using your gift for Jesus in a specific way? Remember our gift is to be used for *in reach* (to help those in the church with their needs and to help them come closer to Jesus) *and out reach* (to help those outside the church with their needs and to help them come to Jesus).

My plan for this week:

Brainstorm in your group and make a plan to use your gift this week

5 Ways to S.T.A.R.T. to Deepen Your S.H.A.P.E.

Study – We have found these books to be helpful in the development of this programme and of one's SHAPE.

- S.H.A.P.E. - Finding & Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life, by Erik Rees
- Living Your Strengths, by Albert Winseman, Donald O. Clifton and Curt Liesveld
- Cure for the Common Life, by Max Lucado

Trial and error - Experiment with different areas of service. For some people it is easier to discover your gift through ministry than to discover your ministry through your gift. We encourage you to try a few ministries and see what fits and what does not, and then stay committed to what fits your SHAPE.

Analyse – Take the time to pray, journal and reflect on the way God has SHAPED you and how every aspect of your SHAPE interrelates. God often uses your entire SHAPE to be expressed in an area of service.

Rquest input from others - Ask others what gifts they see in you.

Take training – Explore the different classes and resources that the Church offers to enhance your ministry.