

# Dissatisfaction - friend or foe?

Perhaps the reason that growth is slow or difficult in churches is that we're so consumed with keeping people happy and satisfied, that we never have enough dissatisfaction to tip the scales for growth to happen. Guarded as I am of "formulas," I know this one to be true. The formula for growth is simply this: Dissatisfaction plus Vision plus First Steps has to be greater than Resistance to change, or in clever symbolism:  $D + V + F > R$ . Why do you care?

How disappointing it is when you put all this work into a project, only to have it fall flat, or cease as soon as you're not giving your full energies to it. We get tired of trying to implement a cultural change in our church, only to find resentment or pushback awaiting us. We tell our people all the right, new, inspired plans and ideas we have, only to see their uninspired response: "oh." We go to "the conference to end all conferences" and hear these great ideas and are personally inspired, wanting desperately to share the experience [and its effect] with our team, but...I guess they had to be there...

But...

Have you ever suggested something, a God-idea, an undisclosed passion, or a passing brainstorm, and people picked up with it and ran! Can you imagine actually changing the part of your church's existing culture [the one you're convinced is keeping you from God's best]? Do you suggest big projects and your team volunteers to take parts of it on without even being asked? Does the congregation lead YOU in worship?

Take the formula for growth [ $D + V + F > R$ ] and write it on your notepad before every committee meeting. Write it on a sticky note and paste it on your computer screen at the beginning of every day. Think through it and how you need to apply it every time you are helping someone move forward. Look at your own ministry, and check it against the formula, asking yourself what part [D, V, or F] was missing or insufficient in the latest change you felt called to implement – then formulate a plan to boost that part.

See, here's how it works. You might have one part – you don't like something, or feel this sense of there being more. You might have clear, inspired vision for what something could become. You may have great, concrete ideas for implementing the plan. But if you don't have all three components [and their sum doesn't outweigh whatever is resisting the change] you won't grow.

That's why dissatisfaction can be your friend. It's one of the necessary ingredients to experience growth. The opposite of dissatisfaction is...satisfaction or complacent. The definition of "complacent: pleased, esp. with oneself or one's merits, advantages, situation, etc., often without awareness of some [check this] potential danger or defect."

## **Here are a few quotes that may get you and your team in touch with their dissatisfaction.**

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it' is the slogan of the complacent, the arrogant or the scared. It's an excuse for inaction, a call to non-arms."

Colin Powell, American statesman and retired four-star general in the United States Army

"This is just the first step on a long way. We cannot lean back and be complacent."

Wolfgang Bernhard, Senior Executive Vice President at Mercedes-Benz

"There has been a level of complacency that has helped the epidemic spread."

Deborah Levine, American TV writer and director

“Complacency is our worst enemy.”

Mike Apicello, United States Department of Agriculture

“We don't want to get complacent. We want to continue to push. We have a long list of improvements to make.”

Lawrence Frank, fired NBA head coach for the New Jersey Nets

“We're working awful hard. We had gotten kind of complacent. No more going half speed.”

Jason Montgomery, Head Coach for New Highland Cavalier women's basketball

“We've lost a lot of ground. We've gotten complacent.”

Clarence Graham, someone's son

“Complacent satisfaction is the killer of dreams.”

Kim Booher, Author *The Emergence of Love Leadership*

“The complacency of fools will destroy them”

King Solomon, Smartest man on the planet [from Proverbs 1:32]

[And did you notice that I tried telling you about this amazing formula using the formula itself? In the paragraph starting with “How disappointing it is...” I tried to get you in touch with experiences where you're dissatisfied. Then I begin to cast vision with “Have you ever suggested something...” and then I ended with some practical, concrete steps to “Take the formula for growth...” Question is...was it enough to overcome your resistance to change?]

It's not okay with me for you to be isolated and burned out, ineffective in growing the Kingdom of God. It's not okay with me for you to be distracted from your focus of God's vision for you. It's not okay with me when your church doesn't look, act, believe, live, communicate, worship, love like the Church does. It's not okay with me for you to walk in your own strength and wisdom, not empowered by the Spirit. It's not okay with me for you to live with broken relationships in your teams.

I believe you can be more effective as a leader. I believe your faith community is going to grow. I believe that you will produce more fruit than you ever dreamed. I believe you can hear from God. I believe your life is a gift to us. I believe you can walk in complete freedom within the DNA of a church. I believe the Father is completely pleased with you.

We hope you're encouraged by the Worship Fertilizer, a free resource from Ad Lib Music, *“in simple love and pure devotion to Jesus, we are eradicating isolation and burnout so that leaders bear much fruit!”*