



GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

FORWARD SHIFTS: The Keys to Galvanize Positive Change

Speaker: Rev. Dr. TaNikka Sheppard, Regional Executive Minister of CBA

1. Write down a “primary objective” _____. If you feel comfortable, please share it with you conversation partner.

2. Dr. Sheppard shared “5 Things That Don’t Produce *Positive Change*”: (Fear, Facts, Force, Falsehood, Futility)
 - a. Have you used any of these to achieve your primary objective? If so, how?
 - b. What was the result?
 - c. What do you foresee being the long-term effect of using this method?

3. Filter your “primary objective” through “The Five Critical Components for Making Positive Shifts”
 - a. **Authenticity** — creation of an atmosphere that welcomes persons to engage as their true selves; sharing their genuine perspectives; it is also *appreciative*
 - i. Is this *really* your “primary objective”? How does it align with your identity?
 - ii. What needs will be met (or problems solved) by the achievement of this primary objective?
 - iii. How does this primary objective engage your strengths, gifts, talents, skills, etc.?
 - iv. How is this primary objective nurtured or undermined by your organizational “culture”?

 - b. **Mutuality** – shared interests, vision, mission, information, and goals among leadership and membership, but it is not *monotonous*; it is also *relational*
 - i. Who passionately shares this primary objective and want to pursue it as an adventurous opportunity?
 - ii. How does it engage their sense of purpose and fulfillment?
 - iii. How will the pursuit of this primary objective challenge *and* strengthen relationships?

 - c. **Intentionality** – understanding that progress does not happen by accident or automation. It takes a committed and consistent investment and action; it is also *invitational*
 - i. What investments and sacrifices will be made to accomplish this primary objective (spiritual, financial, temporal, etc.)?
 - ii. Who is invited into leadership, ownership, and co-creation of the pathways that will be taken to achieve this primary objective?

- d. **Accountability** – disciplined and humble responsibility accepted and shared by both leaders and members; it is also *evaluative*
 - i. In terms of your primary objective, what are you modeling for others?
 - ii. Are there any conflicts or inconsistencies between what you say you are “for” and what you prioritize? If so, what are they?
 - iii. What will you do to make/maintain your primary objective as a top priority?
 - iv. How will you evaluate your effectiveness and progress?

- e. **Adaptability** – contextualized knowledge, language, and habits are integrated into the leadership, membership, culture, and life; necessary shifts are made to continue to collectively make constructive progress; it is also *capacity-building*
 - i. What type of training or learning/unlearning will be required to achieve your primary objective?
 - ii. How will you invite and nurture innovation? What is your failure tolerance?

4. The Forward-Shifting Mindset (Regression vs. Renewal)

- a. **Regression** – the act of going back to a previous place or state; return or reversion back to a mental or emotional state. We should reflect and remember to learn from the past, but our “primary objective” should not be in the past.
 - i. In what ways are you (your organization) stuck?
 - ii. In what ways are you resistant to change?
 - iii. Specifically, what needs to be released or changed so that you can move forward and build momentum (e.g. traditions, systems, practices, power dynamics, mindsets, fears, etc.)?

- b. **Renewal** – the act of beginning or taking up again to restore to freshness or vigor; to make new spiritually through regeneration. This will require us to “strain forward” and *release* what lies behind us.
 - i. How is God calling you into repentance?
 - ii. What areas have you experienced hurt, trauma, disappointment, etc. and now need to experience healing and restored hope?
 - iii. In what ways do you need to reframe and reimagine church?
 - iv. How do you feel The Holy Spirit is *stretching* you? (theologically, culturally, socially, politically, etc.)
 - v. What new practices or mindsets do you need to adopt or increase to shift *forward*?