

To Conquer, You Have To Confront

Probably the best advice my mother ever gave me came when I was finishing my senior year of high school. We were in one of those mother-and-daughter heated discussions because I had made some decisions that were breaking her heart. Like a broken record, she had repeated her speech over and over. It went something like this: “You lie in the bed that you make.”

Faced with my “Oh, no, here we go again” attitude, my mother was completely frustrated. She blurted out, “You can come in here and fool me, Paula. You can fool your family and your friends, but you’d better be honest with yourself!”

I knew she was right. She had hit a nerve, and eventually, it proved to be the advice that would change my life.

If I am going to conquer anything in my life, then I must first confront it. Whether it is my past, a character flaw, a weakness, an area of shame, or some unpleasant little secret, to overcome it, I must be honest about it. I must “own up” to it.

Sometimes this moment of truth is described as “personal insight”—seeing ourselves for who and what we really are. It comes when we get gut-level honest with ourselves. Often we spend great amounts of energy trying to mask our inner struggles. To gain personal insight, we must remove the mask and cease the role-playing.

We must be like the prodigal son of Luke 15. He had taken all of his inheritance and spent it on wine and women. When he left his father’s home, his life began to spin wildly in a downward spiral until he hit rock bottom. At that point, Luke 15:17 records, “And when he came to himself....” The prodigal son had a moment of personal insight: “What have I done? What

have I become?"

Isn't this the perfect day for you to confront yourself with the things you've been hiding? We are far too concerned about getting the speck out of our brother's field of vision when we have a beam protruding from our own eye (Luke 6:41). Transformation begins when we are willing to confront the beam.