

Hendricks' *Teaching to Change Lives* is one of the best books I have read, well written and immediately useful. I encourage every disciple of mine and every teacher in my church to read it. I identified the following points as particularly relevant to me.

1. We must continue to grow, learn, and improve.

We can know our need for continued growth by looking to the life of Jesus. Jesus [whom we follow] continued to grow in wisdom [mentally], stature [physically], favor with God [spiritually], and favor with men [socially; 24]. As Hendricks elaborated, "You cannot neglect one of these areas without endangering your growth in all of them. Likewise, you cannot grow in any one of these areas without also having an effect on all the others" [24]. In my life, I have made it a priority to continue developing in each of these areas.

From a teaching standpoint, "The effective teacher always teaches from the overflow of a full life" [17]. If we stop growing, then we will not be healthy enough to teach well; "Learn – or you will slowly die mentally" [22]. Also, "...effective teaching comes through a changed person. The more you change, the more you become an instrument of change in the lives of others" [20]. Toward this end, we need to continually read and get training [25-27], and we need to assess our own strengths, weaknesses, and needs for change, periodically [33]. I have done extensive analysis of my character, SHAPE for ministry, teaching methods, and relationship with God, which helps me to ensure continued improvement and that I have something to offer.

2. We must live out what we believe and teach.

How we live – the integrity of our message – is essential to the effectiveness of our teaching: the students must trust and respect us if they are to learn from us [82]. Furthermore, teaching is the supernatural grace of God transforming us so we can reach out and transform others by the same grace [81]. Thus, we need to be living out that transformation to be effective in bringing it to others. Also, our lives – and teaching methods! – should reflect our passion: if this is exciting stuff, we should act excited [106]! We need to bring in passion and emotions, not just intellect.

In the past ten years, I have experienced a great deal of transformation, and I am honest with my students about the changes that God has wrought in me and my life. When I struggle, I try to show my students that I am dealing with the struggle in biblical ways, and succeeding with God's help. I live a life passionate for God and his work, and that is evident to those who hear me teach.

3. We must be motivational.

We must first create a desire to learn in them [37]; then we can and must teach them to think [41]; only then can we teach them how to learn and work well [43-44]. When I taught economics, I used to say teaching was 70% cheerleading, by which I meant 70% motivation. Most students can read the book, so the teacher is there to guide the discussion, draw out the correct answers, and – most of all – to empower the student to learn, which requires motivation. "As a teacher – a motivator – you want to help people develop into self-starters. You want them to do what they do, not because you ask them or twist their arm, but because they themselves have chosen to do it" [97]. Thus, we need to help them see their need for what we have.

What motivates people is "ownership, curiosity, meeting needs, usefulness, challenge, recognition, approval" [94]. Compassion also can be a great motivational technique [82]; after all, "God never asks you to do anything for him until he fully informs you of what he has done for you. When finally you are gripped by all he has done for you, your most logical, reasonable, intelligent, and natural response in return is to give everything you've got – your mind, your emotions, your will – to his lordship. Now you are internally motivated and on your way to maturity" [96]. Lastly, we should not bribe or intimidate;

rather we should show them what God has done for them and create in them a desire to do what is right [94-95]. I try to motivate first by inspiring them, capturing their interest, providing a vision for what could be, and exuding confidence that I can help them get there if they are willing to walk with God.

4. We must create life change.

Rather than try to impress them, we should try to have an impact on them; rather than try to convince them, we should try to change them [53]. Teaching is causing people to learn and learning is change [83]. Furthermore, “Until the mind has been changed, and the emotions have been changed, and the will has been changed, biblical teaching and learning have not taken place” [88].

Teaching [especially discipleship] is a ministry of multiplication [27]! We are passing along our ideas and the desire to share them. Toward this end, we must teach active obedience, not just knowledge [57]; but we also must ensure their thinking changes, not just their outward behavior [41]. We must make the teaching personal, directed at the individual student [103]. We must tell them, then show them, then let them do with our help, then send them out [98-99]. This is the pattern Jesus set with his disciples. If we have generated their confidence in us, we must help transfer it to themselves [114]. And we must trust [and pray for] the Spirit to work in their lives [103]. I try to make all my teachings inspirational toward the student seeking a closer walk with God, and I have been especially effective in my church at mentoring others and helping them realize life-change through transformation into Christ-likeness.

5. We must teach such that they can learn.

We must help the students discover things for themselves, not handing answers to them, but rather showing them how to use the Bible [114] and how to take notes [118]. We need to get them involved in purposeful, well-guided, and well-evaluated, exercises and activities, because they can retain only 10% of what they hear but up to 90% of what they do, see, and hear [56]. Good teaching is simply a series of teachable moments [42]. We should draw them out, not dictate or lecture, but rather lead a discussion, helping them see why, not just what. We should not teach more than they can absorb, or they won't get any of it [60]. We should help them understand, “Failure is a necessary part of the learning process” [47], and therefore not to be feared. We should watch their feedback for signs of problems and then adapt as necessary [76].

6. We must prepare well.

We need to plan how we will teach as much as what we will teach, planning how to effectively use illustrations and a variety of methods, tailored toward our target audience [75]. We should create introductions to our talks that capture their attention [74] and good conclusions they will remember [75]. We should develop assignments that are creative and have a clear objective, which are thought-provoking and doable [111].

7. We must build relationships.

“Before we can communicate, we must establish commonness, commonality. And the greater the commonality, the greater the potential for communication” [67]. We need to get to know our students [27]; we must learn about our students and “earn the right to be heard” [88-90]. They must know we care to care what we know [85]. The greater is our relationship with them, the greater the potential for learning. This is a challenge for me, because I enjoy the development and delivery of the teaching more than I do the relationship building. However, I am learning to do this, even for large-group presentations.

8. We must emphasize good technique.

Into this category, I have stuck a hodgepodge of good notes. We must learn how to handle issues like dominant and quiet people [116-117]. If we give an assignment and nobody does it, we should do it with them, allowing them to teach us [111-112]. We must strive to not be predictable, for the more predictable

we are, the lower our impact [112]. We must give them responsibility with accountability [102]. We should not prohibit something without offering an alternative [105]. We must remember, “The most effective communication always includes an emotional ingredient – the feeling factor, the excitement element” [70].

9. We must craft meaningful learning activities.

Assignments precipitate thinking, they are a mental warm-up, preheating the mind so it is working before class begins; they provide a background, a foundation on which to build, making the student aware of issues concerning the passage and how it relates to his life; they develop habits of independent study [111]. Meaningful activity provides direction without dictatorship; we are to draw out the answers from the students, for “‘to draw out’ is the root meaning of the word education” [58-59]. Meaningful activity stresses function and application [60], has a planned purpose [60], is concerned with the process and product [61], and includes problem-solving situations [62].

“Maximum learning is always the result of maximum involvement” if the activity of the learner is meaningful [53]. “Properly evaluated experience is the best teacher” [55]. “We learn by doing the right things” and sometimes by doing the wrong things [55]. “...there is a direct correlation between learning and doing. The higher the learner’s involvement, the greater his potential for learning” [55]. As mentioned earlier, meaningful activities can bring the retention level from 10% to as high as 90% [56].

10. We must consider ourselves obligated to pass on what we know.

We must make a conscious effort to communicate what God has revealed to us: “...when God reveals himself to you, you are responsible” [85]. “If witness through our lives alone was enough, then everyone exposed to Jesus Christ during his time on earth should have been converted. He was the only person who ever lived a perfect life, yet even he shared his message verbally as well” [73]. I believe we are all called to “make disciples,” which means we are all called to do personal evangelism, and then to teach and encourage people to grow spiritually.